

A

COMMENTARY,

CRITICAL, EXPERIMENTAL, AND PRACTICAL,

ON THE

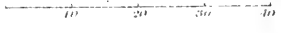
OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS.



The map shows the physical features of Palestine, including the Jordan River, Dead Sea, and various basins and hills. Major cities and towns are labeled, such as Jerusalem, Haifa, Beersheva, and others. The map includes a grid with latitude and longitude markings. A scale bar at the bottom right indicates distances in English miles.

PHYSICAL MAP OF PALESTINE

English Miles



Central Palestine
Section from north to Jerusalem and the Dead Sea

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BY THE

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VOL. II.

JOSHUA—ESTHER.

BY THE REV. ROBERT JAMIESON, D.D.

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INTRODUCTION.

JOSHUA.

[Hebrew, יְהוֹשֻׁעַ; Septuagint, ΙΗΣΟΥΣ ΝΑΥΗ.] This book holds an important place amongst the historical books of the Old Testament. Genesis was prophetic of, and the other books of Moses were preparatory to, the grand events it relates. Without the Book of Joshua the Pentateuch would be like an unfinished building: the narrative it gives of the sudden transition of Israel, from the state of a nomadic horde in the wilderness, to the character and occupations of a settled nation in a land of their own, was indispensably necessary to give significance and effect to all the provisions of the Sinaitic legislation. Accordingly, in the Hebrew original, and in almost all the different versions, the Book of Joshua uniformly follows the Pentateuch, and serves to it the same purpose as the Acts of the Apostles to the Gospel histories. While the Book of Joshua thus stands in close relationship to the Pentateuch, it has no less important a bearing on the subsequent historical books of the Old Testament. It is the source from which alone the Israelites in after ages derived all reliable information as to their Divine title to the possession of Canaan, and as to the territorial possessions and relative boundaries of the different tribes. The want of a historical record at such an eventful era of Israelitish history would have been a serious defect; and the sacred writer was prompted by the Spirit of Inspiration to furnish the required details.

The title of this book is derived from the name of the pious and valiant leader who presided over the interests of Israel at that period. It does not purport to be a full biographical memoir of that eminent individual, recounting all his public acts and his gallant achievements; nor does it undertake to narrate in regular chronological order all the events that signalized the entrance of the Israelites into Canaan. The leading design of the book is to exhibit the Divine power and faithfulness in the rapid and secure introduction of Israel into the promised land; and as Joshua was appointed leader and commander of the people in that great enterprise, the main object in narrating the military campaigns, and afterwards the political and ecclesiastical measures, of that faithful, patriotic ruler, was to show how fully the promise of God to their patriarchal ancestors had been fulfilled in the experience of their descendants.

Authorship.—As to the origin of this book, Scripture nowhere asserts that it was written by Joshua. A claim to its authorship was advanced on his behalf, first, by the Talmud; and as that work is not regarded as a high or infallible authority, ample scope for speculation upon the subject has been afforded to modern critics, several of whom have not scrupled to advocate theories of the wildest description. The Neological writers, who fix the composition of the Pentateuch at the date of the Babylonish captivity, are led, of course, to place the composition of Joshua at a similarly advanced period. Accordingly, *De Wette* ('Beitr.,' i., p. 151) and *Bleek* ('Repert.,' i., p. 49) maintain that this book, from its close connection with the Pentateuch, and its similarity of spirit and language, must have been the production of the author who

wrote Deuteronomy. But *Keil* has very satisfactorily shown that, while it necessarily bears a close resemblance to the style and phraseology of the Pentateuch, especially in those portions which mention the commands of Moses and the execution of them, the Book of Joshua, from the absence of archaisms, the use of peculiar words, and the extent of its geographical details, is a separate and independent work (cf. *Hengstenberg's* 'Balaam and his Prophecies'; *Havernick's* 'Introduction to the Pentateuch,' pp. 369-371). The repetition of Moses' prospective arrangement as to the cities of refuge, and the actual selection of these by Joshua, together with the relation of the settlement of Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, in the region east of the Jordan, confirms this view of a different authorship. With regard to the time when it was written, some (founding on 1 Sam. xxvii. 6, where it is said of Ziklag that it "pertaineth unto the kings of Judah unto this day") have thought that this book must have been written by Jeremiah or a late writer; for this form of expression was not used till after Solomon, and ended, of course, at the captivity. But there is direct evidence of its existence in the reign of Ahab. Again, from the mention of the mountains of Israel and Judah (ch. xi. 21), it has been inferred that the date of its composition must be fixed at a period subsequent to the revolt of the ten tribes and the erection of the rival kingdoms of Israel and Judah. But this was a general distinction recognized much earlier, as appears from Ps. lxxvi. 1, which is universally believed to have been composed by David. And the fact mentioned (ch. xv. 63), of the Jebusites dwelling in Jerusalem with the children of Judah, points to a time earlier than the era of David's reign. Moreover, some of the phrases which appear to countenance the hypothesis of a late composition, are found, from their connection, to bear a restricted meaning. Thus, for instance, the words "unto this day," which occur several times (ch. iv. 9; vi. 25; viii. 28), and the use of which, when applied, as they often are, to public memorials, seem to indicate the lapse of many generations, are found, when carefully examined, to refer to a definite or very limited period. In ch. ix. 27, it is said, Joshua made the Gibeonites "hewers of wood and drawers of water for the congregation, and for the altar of the Lord, even unto this day, *in the place which he should choose*,"—a clause which limits the composition of the book to a period previous to the building of Solomon's temple; and in ch. vi. 25, Rahab is said to be dwelling in Israel, "even unto this day,"—which, considering the average duration of human life, could not be a very distant period. On the other hand, there are various passages in which the author speaks of being a contemporary and an eye-witness of the events he describes (ch. v. 1, 6), and that he was one of those who entered into Canaan. The popular and prevailing belief is that Joshua himself was the author, and this persuasion is founded on the fact that as he *did* record some of the remarkable occurrences which happened in his time (ch. xxiv. 26), it may be presumed he registered the other contents of this history also. This presumption is supposed to be strengthened by the frequent and marked manner in which notice is taken of Caleb, and other persons and objects in which Joshua felt a personal interest. Internal evidence, however, seems to be against this conclusion; and as it is clear that several of the later conquests related here were, as we are informed in the Book of Judges, not made in Joshua's lifetime, so we must conclude that the author was one of the elders, who, having outlived Joshua, may have had access to the journal of the great leader, and made use of other contemporary documents, so as to make this history of the wars of the Lord.

Unity of the Book.—Without entering into a minute enumeration of the varying

opinions of Neologists, who, as *De Wette*, *Eichhorn*, and *Bertholdt*, have laboured to reduce this book to a mere collection of fragments, or to describe the processes by which, according to *Ewald* and *Bleek*, the original Elohist and Jehovistic documents were moulded into their present shape, it may suffice to remark that the arguments, or rather dogmatic assertions, of those critics have been completely refuted, and the unity of the book established, by *König*, *Hävernick*, *Keil*, and others. The first division of the book, comprising chs. i.—xi. inclusive, forms a continuous narrative, having a natural introduction and an appropriate close; and the second portion, though apparently containing a greater number and variety of materials, is still arranged conformably to the leading object which the services of Joshua were employed to advance. That mission, as stated at the commencement, was to lead the people of Israel into the promised land, and the book was composed with the express view of showing how that important trust was executed. The remembrance of that pervading design of the book will serve to explain peculiarities in the selection and arrangement of the materials:—how the sacred writer records some things, while he omits others; why he enters into a minute and circumstantial detail of transactions in one part of the country, and gives merely a passing notice of others of a similar character elsewhere; why he continues in unbroken continuity the historical narrative in the first half, and then leaves a long chronological gap before entering on the geographical statements in the latter part.

Credibility of the Book.—The objections brought against the book, from the miracles recorded in it, apply equally to other sacred books. But a candid and unprejudiced reader will be satisfied that the relation of miraculous interpositions, in placing the people of God in possession of the promised land, is just what might have been expected; and that, on the other hand, great suspicion must have attached to the account, if it had recorded the rapid and easy discomfiture of so numerous and fierce tribes as inhabited Canaan, by such an unwarlike people as Israel, without the intervention of superior power. The occurrence of miracles, like the drying up of the Jordan, and the preternatural prolongation of the day at the battle of Aijalon, is in keeping with the antecedents of Israel's early history, and, instead of affecting its truthfulness, tends to confirm the account of the divinely-chosen origin and destiny of that nation. A different view must be taken of contradictions and discrepancies alleged to exist in the body of the history. These contradictions, however, are found, on careful examination, to be either entirely groundless, or capable of an easy and satisfactory explanation. Thus, the general statements which here and there are made relative to the conquest of the land, and the extermination of the Canaanites (ch. xi. 16-23; xii. 7, 8; xxi. 43; xxii. 4), have been pronounced to be at variance with the fact, which is admitted elsewhere, that in numerous parts of the country the Canaanites continued in the full possession of their ancient settlements (cf. ch. xiii. 1, with xvii. 14-18; xviii. 3; xxiii. 5, 12). But, in reality, there is no discrepancy in such statements; for not only is it asserted, as plainly and fully as language can express it, that the Canaanites were, in several cities and districts, left in occupation of their territory, but the objection is founded on inattention to the circumstances in which the respective statements are introduced, and on the due consideration of which it could be clearly perceived that the Divine promise was fully verified by the general conquest of the land through Joshua, even though the occupation of it was not acquired all at once, nor the native inhabitants universally exterminated (cf. Exod. xxiii. 28-39; Deut. vii. 22). It is natural to suppose that a record of the conquest and the division of the land should be made soon after those events occurred;

and, accordingly, in a similar way may be disposed of the charge of inconsistency brought against the character of the book, from the distribution of the whole land amongst the Israelites, at a time when large portions of it were yet unconquered. The answer is, that Joshua was commanded to divide the whole land, because the Divine promise guaranteed the possession of it all in due time to Israel. And in like manner may be met a third charge of inconsistency, founded on the representation of the religious state of the people as a pious, obedient generation, compared with the public accusation Joshua is described, in the close of the book, as bringing against them for their cherished idolatry. "Now therefore put away the strange gods which are among you, and incline your heart unto the Lord God of Israel" (ch. xxiv. 23). This earnest exhortation, however, could not be addressed to the general community of Israel, for they were at this time happily free from national apostasy, but to the "mixed multitude" from Egypt, who retained a hankering after the gods of the Nile, or to those of the Israelites who, settling down in juxtaposition with the Canaanites, had allowed themselves to be seduced into attachment to the Syrian idols. In regard to other alleged discrepancies and contradictions—such as the different methods pursued in the division of the land; the fact that Joshua is represented in the early part of the history as the sole director of affairs, while in the latter, Eleazar the high priest is associated with him in the account of the general circumcision at Gilgal; the episode of the Gibeonites; the extermination of the Canaanites; and several other parts of the history, the genuineness and authenticity of which have been impugned—the reader is referred to the expositions given in the Commentary in the places where those subjects occur. Various testimonies to the historical truth of the leading events in this book are furnished by classic or profane writers. *Procopius*, a writer who flourished in the sixth century, relates that numbers of the Girgashites, Jebusites, and other Canaanitish nations, settled at Tangis (Tangier), in Africa. 'There,' says he, 'near a large fountain, appear two pillars of white stone, having this inscription engraved on them in Phœnician characters,—*We are those who fled from the face of Joshua, the son of Navè, the robber,*' ('Hist. Vandalic,' lib. ii.) This testimony of *Procopius* is confirmed by other writers of unimpeachable authority. *Augustine*, bishop of Hippo, relates that if any of the boors in the neighbourhood of Hippo or Carthage was asked who he was, or of what country, he answered that he was a Canaanite, (*Bochart*, 'Chanaan,' lib. i., ch. xxiv.) And *Eusebius*, the church historian, also asserts that the Canaanites, who were routed by Joshua, led colonies into Africa, and settled at Tripoli, ('Chronicon,' lib. i.) Even *Mela*, the geographer, who lived in the reign of Claudius Cesar, and was a native of Tangis (Tangier), allows the people of that neighbourhood were of Phœnician origin—the Canaanites being generally called Phœnicians by classic writers. *Nonnius*, the Greek poet, on the authority of some ancient authors whose works are now lost, says that Cadmus and Cecrops were amongst the fugitives who fled from Joshua, and sought refuge in Greece. Many other corroborative testimonies might be adduced, did time and space permit (see *Jamieson's* 'Sacred History,' ii., p. 155).

Canonical Authority.—The Book of Joshua was placed amongst the prophets in the Jewish canon. Its canonical authority is fully established by a consideration of the following Scripture references:—1 Ki. xvi. 34, compared with ch. vi. 26; Ps. xlv. 2, 3; lxxviii. 12-14; lxxviii. 54, 55; xciv. 3, 5; Hab. iii. 11, compared with ch. x. 13; Acts vii. 45, compared with ch. iii. 14; Heb. iv. 8; xi. 30, compared with ch. vi. 17-23; Heb. xi. 31; Jas. ii. 25, compared with ch. ii.; vi. 22-25.

The book comprises a period of seventeen years, or, according to some chronologists, of twenty-seven years.

'Commentary on the Book of Joshua,' by *Karl Friedrich Keil*, D.D., Ph. D. Translated by *James Martin*, B.A., T. & T. Clarke. 'Hess, Geschichte Josua und der heerführer.' 'Gaza und die philistäische Küste,' von *Dr. K. B. Stark*, Jena, 1852. These two latter works give a full account of the township confederacies which obtained among the ancient Canaanites.

JUDGES.

THE title of this book [Hebrew, שופטים; Septuagint, KPITAI; Vulgate, *Judices*] was obviously suggested by the circumstance of its containing the history of those non-regal rulers who flourished in Israel between the death of Joshua and the time of Samuel. The English word, *Judges*, interprets the original with correctness, and yet other ideas besides the administration of justice were included in the practical use of the Hebrew term. The office of judge was so important and indispensable a function of ancient princes, chiefs, and magistrates in the East, that the discharge of its duties was an almost daily employment, and hence, by a very natural and gradual extension of meaning, the designation, judge, came to be synonymous with *ruler* or *governor*. This usage prevailed amongst the Phœnicians and Carthaginians, who, speaking the Hebrew language, called their chief magistrates by the same name, transmuted by the classic authors into the Latin form of *Suffetes*. But amongst the Israelites the name *Shophetim* was exclusively applied to those occasional leaders or high functionaries, who, in periods of national emergency, led the people to war against their public enemies, and, having delivered them from the bondage of foreign oppression, were allowed by common consent to retain their authority in time of peace.

Authorship.—In the absence of any precise data, the origin and composition of this book have been ascribed to Phinehas, to Hezekiah, and to Ezra. The suggestion of the first two rests upon no better a basis than that of mere conjecture. But Ezra's claim has an apparent support, being founded on the statement (ch. xviii. 30) that "he and his sons were priests to the tribe of Dan, until the day of the captivity of the land,"—whence it has been inferred that the date of the book must be fixed at the time of the Babylonish captivity. But the passage by no means warrants such a conclusion; for, on comparing it with 1 Sam. iv. 11, and Ps. lxxviii. 60, 61, it will be seen that "the captivity" which the sacred writer referred to was a partial, not a national, captivity,—confined to the portion of the Danite tribe who were established in the north of Canaan, and to the captivity of the ark by the Philistines. Besides, the language of this book is very different from the Chaldee dialect, the characteristic phraseology that distinguishes the book that is called by the name of Ezra. A more probable opinion is, that it was compiled by Samuel, who, in addition to his office of prophet or seer, is described (1 Chr. xxix. 29) as a historian, and who, after his retirement from the administration of public affairs, may have employed his leisure in arranging the records of the eventful period that preceded the establishment of monarchy in Israel. The internal evidence is strongly in favour of the hypothesis of Samuel's authorship. Thus, it is certain that this history was in existence, and well known, before the Second Book of Samuel (cf. ch. ix.

35, with 2 Sam. xi. 21), as well as that it preceded the conquest of Jerusalem by David (cf. ch. i. 21, with 2 Sam. v. 6). Moreover, the frequent recurrence of the phrase which occurs in the concluding portion, "In those days, when there was no king in Israel" (ch. xvii. 6; xviii. 1; xix. 1; xxi. 25), seems evidently to point to a time when the regal government was but recently established. All these circumstances combined, fix the date of the book to an early period in the reign of Saul, and suggest the strong probability of its having been drawn up by Samuel, the last of the judges, who survived the elevation of Saul to the throne a good many years. In the compilation of this book it is presumable that, in addition to the popular traditions, and matters of public notoriety, which, to some extent, were doubtless embodied, the author made use of written records, left by the judges or others, relative to the times and principal events of their respective governments. Many passages contain such vivid descriptions, not merely of the principal and important occurrences that distinguished those periods, but even of the minutest details, that the reader is irresistibly led to the conclusion they were registered while the impression was recent. A state of society is described, customs are alluded to, and names are introduced without any explanation (see particularly chs. v., vii., and viii.)—a clear indication that the record was made by a contemporary. Moreover, some of the events narrated in this book belong to the period immediately subsequent to the death of Joshua, and they are related in words so closely similar, that the passages almost seem to have proceeded from the same hand (cf. ch. i. 9-15, with Josh. xv. 13-19; ch. i. 21, with Josh. xv. 63; and ch. ii. 6-10, with Josh. xxiv. 28-31). So striking is this resemblance or identity in many portions, that *Lord A. Hervey* ('Genealogies,' p. 227) suggests that this book is a continuation of Deuteronomy, not of Joshua (taking the words of ch. i. 1 to have been written by the sacred writer "after the death of *Moses*," and changed by some transcriber into "Joshua"); and that both books contain, in the opening chapters, a brief history of the settlement under Joshua, the one being the *West Israel*, and the other (this book) the *East Israel* account. But unfortunately for this part of his theory, the instances he adduces in its support, obviously requiring a different interpretation from that which he has given, prove the book to be not a duplicate, but a sequel, of the book of Joshua. Thus, the capture of Kirjath-arba, the marriage of Othniel and Caleb's daughter, with the attendant circumstances, are narrated almost verbatim in both books (see Josh. xv. 13-19). But that notice is evidently parenthetical, appended as a note to the memoir of Caleb, and it is distinctly stated (ch. i. 9-15) that these events occurred *after* the death of Joshua. Again, the account of the great gathering of the petty princes of northern Canaan under Jabin (which is contained in ch. iv.), is regarded by *Lord Hervey* as a mere repetition, with a slight change of names and circumstances, of the mighty contest 150 years before, that is described in Josh. xi. But a close examination shows that such an identification is not reconcilable with the geography (see *Stanley*, 'Sinai and Palestine,' p. 331). Once more, an account of the dismissal of Israel by Joshua, each man to his own inheritance, of the death and burial of Joshua, and of the faithful adherence of the people to the service of Jehovah during the lifetime of the elders who were contemporaries of that eminent leader, is given in the natural order and chronological succession of events at the end of Joshua. But it is here introduced in a different connection—after a general description of the state of Israel—and designed to form the commencement of the general epitome of this book. Similar remarks are applicable to other subjects referred to by *Lord Hervey*, and

go to prove that Judges is a separate and independent book, detailing events that belong to an age posterior to that of Joshua.

Unity.—The book may be described as consisting of two parts,—the first extending from ch. i.—xvi., containing an account of the judges from Othniel to Samson; and the second comprised in the five concluding chapters, recording several remarkable incidents which occurred about the same period. It does not propose, however, to give a full and continuous history of Israel, or even to transmit a detailed biography of the judges and the principal occurrences that marked their respective governments. It is rather a fragmentary history, being a collection of important facts and signal deliverances at different times and in various parts of the land, during the intermediate period from the death of Joshua till near the establishment of the monarchy. A programme of the work is given in ch. ii. 6-10, from which it appears that the design of the author was to instruct the people of Israel by a record of their own national experience in the principles of the Divine government—showing them how, when they continued faithful in their adherence to the true religion, they enjoyed universal peace and a high measure of temporal prosperity; and that, whenever they declined and fell into corruption and idolatry, they suffered disastrous visitations from war and foreign oppression. This is the professed design of the book as announced in the passage last quoted, and in illustration of his theme the sacred writer found abundant materials in almost every part of the land. A select enumeration of these he has given. At a period of the national history when the character of the Israelites was greatly deteriorated—when, through want of a regular magistracy except the hereditary chiefs or elders in each tribe, the Hebrew republic was in a state of anarchy—social disorder and violence were rampant—neither religious instructors nor civil governors existed, or, if they did exist, possessed influence to guide or control the people; but “every one did what was right in his own eyes.” It was a period of almost constant warfare between true religion and superstition, and of which we have no record but what is afforded by the detached but highly interesting and instructive particulars furnished in this book. The concluding stories in the book, together with that of Ruth, seem to belong, in strict chronology, to a period shortly after the death of Joshua, and will be best read after the third chapter.

Credibility.—The interest of these dark annals of civil discord and foreign domination is heightened by glimpses of domestic manners and pictures of civil and military usages, which, however singular they appear to us, are illustrated by the immemorial traditions of the East. The physical prowess and extraordinary exploits of the judges, in reference to which this period has been sometimes called the heroic age of Israel, have been sneered at by modern Rationalists as the legends of a fabulous antiquity, and generally consigned to the department of Jewish mythology, as the origin or germ of many classic fables. But the narratives bear the unmistakable marks of truth; and in the account of the war-chariots of Jabin, of Sisera’s defeat and the mode of his death, of the military stratagem of Gideon, the fratricidal acts and end of Abimelech, and of other remarkable incidents related in this book, we find stories to which many parallels may be found in the ancient and modern history of the East. Subjects of far higher interest, however, than deeds of Homeric gallantry, are contained in this book; and the devout reader is refreshed and edified by the inspired commentary of the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, who eulogizes in the most animated style of apostolic eloquence the strong and steady faith

that reigned in the characters and stimulated the conduct of Barak, Gideon, Jephthah, and Samson, pointing to them as stars of the first magnitude, whose splendour shone all the more brightly and attractively in contrast with the surrounding darkness. But many of the actions of those eminent persons, as also of Ehud and Jael, though instrumental in advancing the purposes of Divine Providence, were characterized by falsehood, perfidy, and savage barbarity, and therefore cannot, on the principles of the moral law, admit of vindication, except on the assumption of a Divine warrant, which would dispense with the ordinary rules of human conduct. Let the governing motives be ever so pure and excellent, the end cannot sanctify the means; and it is remarkable that, except in the case of Jael, whose patriotic deed is highly lauded in the triumphant ode of Deborah, the Spirit of God records all the doings of the judges without a word either of commendation or of censure. 'With respect to some other particulars,' says *Dr. Gray* ('Connection between Sacred and Profane Literature'), 'it is obvious that the sacred author by no means vindicates all that he relates. The indiscriminate massacre of the people of Jabesh-Gilead, and the rape of the virgins at Shiloh, must be condemned on those principles which the Scriptures have elsewhere furnished, though in the brevity of the sacred history they are recorded without comment. The characters, likewise, of God's appointed ministers, however spoken of in this book and in other parts of Scripture as commendable for their general excellence or particular merits, are presented to us, in some points of view, as highly blameable. It is easy, however, to discriminate the light from the shade; and in the description of such mixed characters as that of Samson, while we are led to admire his heroic patriotism, we are taught also to condemn his criminal infatuation and blind confidence in Delilah.'

Chronology.—The time embraced by this book is a subject which has elicited much discussion. There is a wide discrepancy between the received chronology and the genealogies; and yet in all attempts that have been made to reconcile them, so many changes and alterations in the arrangement of the book have been proposed, that devout readers of the Bible shrink from what they are apt to regard as the unhallowed boldness of criticism. The difficulty of ascertaining the exact chronology arises in a great measure from the method adopted in giving the details of this history; for, according to this method, the religious declensions which incurred punishment, and the Divine deliverances which followed repentance and reformation, are related at such length as to form the chief portion of the book, while lengthened periods under the wise administration of an enlightened and patriotic judge, when the people, through their faithful adherence to God, enjoyed profound peace and great national prosperity, receive only a passing notice in a single sentence, as presenting no occurrence of striking character or historic interest. Besides, those intervals of peace and prosperity, as well as seasons of punishment and adversity, do not appear to have been universal, but partial or local, relating to a part only of the children of Israel, or limited to a particular district of the land (see ch. iv. 2, 31; x. 8). But periods there were, of greater or less duration, when true religion flourished in Israel, and consequently order, tranquillity, and happiness reigned amongst the people at large. Those periods have been recorded, and their collective amount is exhibited, in the following tabular view (see *Rosenmüller's* 'Prooemium' to his Commentary):—

SERVITUDE.	REST.	YEARS.
Under Chusan-Rishathaim (ch. iii. 8),		8
	Under Othniel (ch. iii. 11),	40
Under Eglon (ch. iii. 14),		18
	Under Ehud (ch. iii. 30) and Shagar,	80
Under Jabin (ch. iv. 3),		20
	Under Barak (ch. v. 31),	40
Under Midian (ch. vi. 1),		7
	Under Gideon (ch. viii. 28),	40
Usurpation of Abimelech (ch. ix. 22),		3
	Judgeship of Tola (ch. x. 2),	23
	„ Jair (ch. x. 22),	22
Under Ammon (ch. x. 8),		18
	Judgeship of Jephthah (ch. xii. 7),	6
	„ Ibzan (ch. xii. 8, 9),	7
	„ Elon (ch. xii. 11)	10
	„ Abdon (ch. xii. 14),	8
Under the Philistines (ch. xiii. 1),		40
	Judgeship of Samson (ch. xv. 20; xvi. 31),	20
	„ Eli (1 Sam. iv. 18),	40
		450

This is the number of years during which, according to the apostle Paul, the government by judges lasted in Israel, “until Samuel the prophet” (Acts xiii. 20). But the years are given in large round numbers. Many of the judges may have flourished collaterally in different parts of the land; and the authority of some of them was exercised only over one tribe, or a few neighbouring ones—not over all the chosen people. Besides, *Lord A. Hervey* has pointed out several striking points of coincidence, from which it appears probable that the successive narratives of Ehud, Gideon, and Jephthah refer to one and the same time, indicating pretty plainly a simultaneous movement of the Israelites, under those energetic leaders, to throw off the yoke of the Moabites, Midianites, and Ammonites, who had for a long time oppressed them. And in regard to the five concluding chapters of this book, the same writer shows, from the circumstance of Jonathan, the priest of the Danite tribe, being the grandson of Moses (ch. xviii. 30), and Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, being still alive (ch. xx. 28), that the events related in that portion of the history must have taken place within a hundred years from the death of Joshua. Taking these and other circumstances, which we cannot afford space to mention, into consideration, he concludes that ‘if we string together the different accounts of the different parts of Israel, which are given us in this miscellaneous collection of ancient records, and treat them as connected and successive history, we shall fall into as great a chronological error as if we treated in the same manner the histories of Mercia, Kent, Essex, Wessex, and Northumberland before England was a kingdom. Whatever uncertainty may still hang over the exact chronological arrangement of the affairs of Israel between Joshua and Eli, there are no sufficient grounds, so far as the specified times of war and rest go, on which to overthrow the evidence drawn from the genealogies (1 Chr. i.—vi.); but, on the contrary, that there is a great deal in the histories themselves very favourable to the shorter period indicated by the genealogies’ (‘Genealogies,’ p. 238). It may be proper to add, however, that *Jackson* and *Hales*, in their ‘Chronologies,’ *Dr. Mill*, *Kennicott*, follow the received chronology, considering that errors have crept into the genealogies. If any should be startled by this conclusion, as affecting the statement of Paul, already referred to, the following

remarks of *Scott*, the commentator, are commended to their consideration. After a quotation from *Whitby*, to the effect that Paul here followed the chronology adopted by *Josephus* and the Jews, who make 591 years from the exodus to the foundation of the temple, he proceeds to say,—‘Perhaps this learned writer (*Whitby*) did not recollect that the computation of *Josephus* alters the whole system of Biblical chronology; for the chronology of the Hebrew Scriptures to the exodus, and from the building of the temple till the coming of Christ (1 Ki. vi. 1), is founded on grounds sufficiently firm. But if 112 years more than the general computation passed between the exodus and the building of the temple (as will be seen by the received chronology of Judges), then the birth of Christ took place in the year 4115, instead of 4004. It is well known, or at least generally acknowledged, that the chronology both of the Septuagint and of *Josephus* is erroneous and perplexed in no ordinary degree. But how far the apostle and Luke, in recording his discourse, took these unimportant matters as they found them, is another question; and if they did so, the circumstance of learned men in their studies having discovered that these generally-admitted calculations were inaccurate has, in my view, nothing to do with the divine inspiration either of the preacher or the historian. For they were inspired to deliver Divine truth to mankind, unsophisticated and un mutilated—not to correct genealogies or give chronological calculations. Even on the supposition that the apostle was aware of the inaccuracy, it would have obstructed his grand object to advance any new opinion, or to go out of his way to correct the wrong one’ (*Scott’s* ‘Commentary’ on Acts xiii. 20). (On the chronology of the Judges, see *Brett’s* ‘Chronological Essay;’ *Hervey’s* ‘Genealogies,’ pp. 204-276; *Kennicott’s* ‘Dissertation,’ lxxx., sec. 3; *Rosenmüller’s* ‘Scholia,’ vol. ii.; *Bertheau*, ‘Das Buch der Richter und Rut.’)

Canonical Authority.—The inspired character of this book is confirmed by allusions to it in many passages of Scripture (cf. ch. iv. 2; vi. 14, with 1 Sam. xii. 9-12; ch. ix. 53, with 2 Sam. xi. 21; ch. vii. 25, with Ps. lxxxiii. 11; ch. v. 4, 5, with Ps. vii. 5; ch. xiii. 5; xvi. 17, with Matt. ii. 13-23; Acts xiii. 20; Heb. xi. 32).

RUTH.

[Hebrew, רות; Septuagint, ΡΟΥΘ.] This book, together with the concluding chapters of Judges, is supplementary to that book, containing, as it does, a domestic narrative, which refers to the period when the judges ruled. Accordingly, in the Hebrew canon, it was incorporated with the Book of Judges as an appendix; but the modern Jews class it with the five *Megilloth*, or volumes comprising the Song of Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, and Esther; but its position in the order of their arrangement is various, being put sometimes first, at other times last: while in *Van der Hooght’s* Bible, from which we take this list, it occupies the second place. As to the chronology of the events which it records, certain knowledge cannot be arrived at. *Lightfoot*, following eminent Jewish writers, fixes the date under the judgeship of Ehud or Shamgar, when Israel was tributary to the king of Moab; and in that case the episode should come in between the third and fourth chapters of Judges. Others, influenced by the opinion of *Josephus* (‘Antiquities,’ b. ix., ch. ix., sec. 1), make the time of the occurrences so late as the administration of

Eli. But the generality of the Jews assign it to the period of Ibzan's government—the successor of Jephthah—conceiving Ibzan is another name for Boaz, as both belonged to Bethlehem. But at none of all these periods is there any record of a scarcity or famine pressing upon the people, such as that which compelled the family of Elimelech to migrate into Moab; and the only occasion, during the whole period of the judges, when the Israelites did suffer extreme privation, was in consequence of the Midianite oppression, (Judg. vii.) Accordingly, *Usher*, in his chronology, which is followed in our authorized translation, assigns it to that period of national suffering which preceded the appearance of Gideon.

Authorship.—The remarks made in the introduction to the preceding book are equally applicable to this—viz., that in the general opinion both of Jews and Christians, it was composed by Samuel. So far as the language is concerned, the narrative Hebrew is not that of a later age, and what appear to be Chaldaisms are used in familiar conversation. It appears certain that it could not have been written prior to the time of the prophet (see ch. iv. 17-22); and this opinion, in addition to other reasons on which it rests, is confirmed by ch. iv. 7, where it is evident that the history was not compiled after the transactions recorded. That the date of its composition was considerably posterior to the occurrences narrated, appears from the necessity of explaining in that passage a singular custom which, in the author's time, had fallen into desuetude; and the general phraseology used at the commencement, "in the days when the judges ruled," furnishes a clear proof that it was not written till the establishment of monarchy in Israel. Nay, further, it may be inferred from the genealogy at the close, that the date of the composition must be placed so late as not only the birth, but even the anointing of David to the kingdom, for it seems to have been a leading design of the sacred writer to supply in this book a missing link in the genealogical chain which connected the lineage of Boaz with Pharez, the son of Judah, and grandson of Jacob, and thus to show that, in the elevation of David, their descendant, to the throne, the prophecy of Jacob would be fulfilled.

Credibility.—The story detailed in the book is extremely interesting. The distress of Naomi, the bereavements in her family, her stedfast principle and pious life, which won so completely the affections of Ruth, as induced her, though a foreigner and bred a heathen, to prefer the society of her aged mother-in-law to that of her Moabite relatives, to remove with her to the land of Israel, and finally to adopt her religion, form the elements of a domestic narrative, in the progress of which our sympathies are strongly enlisted. And then the happy turn which things are found to take in the sequel—the re-establishment of Naomi in her native Bethlehem, the commotion which her arrival excited amongst the villagers, the simplicity of the rural scenes and patriarchal manners described, the winding up of the eventful narrative by the generous liberality of an opulent proprietor toward the two impoverished strangers, and his ultimate marriage with Ruth—invest this little picture of country life with all the interest of a tale of fiction. That the country of Moab should, in the circumstances described, become a refuge to the famishing Israelites in Bethlehem, was most natural. The distance from the land of Judah was not great, for the Moabite possessions bordered on the extremity of the Salt Sea; and that such a primitive state of society as this history discloses should be found existing there in so advanced a period of Israel's history, is rendered highly credible from the character of the country, Bethlehem being environed by an amphitheatre of hills, and never disturbed by the raids and invasions which desolated other districts and dispersed

their inhabitants. In fact, the history in this instance is remarkably illustrated by the character of that region. For 'just there, on the mountain surface between Jerusalem and Hebron, it is in that medium condition, between the arid desolation of some parts and the luxurious beauty and richness of others, which would eminently favour such a life and social condition as we find in the history of Ruth' (*Drew's* 'Scripture Lands, p. 101). One additional element of credibility is found in the circumstance of Ruth, a Moabitess, being an ancestor of David; and as this was considered a disgrace, it is said by Jewish writers to have been one of the opprobrious taunts which Shimei threw out against the fugitive monarch, when "he came out and cursed still as he came" (2 Sam. xvi. 5). This descent, then, so little flattering to the renowned king of Israel, affords internal evidence of the truthfulness of the book which records it.

Canonical Authority.—The inspiration of this book is attested by the fact of Ruth's name being inserted by Matthew in the Saviour's genealogy; and, indeed, some writers are of opinion that the chief object of this history was to bring before the church, in the person of Ruth, a typical representation of the introduction of Gentile believers into incorporation with the spiritual church of Christ. ('The Book of Ruth in Hebrew, with Grammatical Notes, &c.,' by *Rev. Charles H. Wright, M.A.*, of Trinity College, Dublin; *Umbreit*, 'Über Geist und Zweck des Buches Ruth,' 'Das Buch der Richter und Ruth erklärt,' von *Ernst Bertheau*; 'Bethlehem in Palestina,' by *Dr. Titus Tobler*; *Bush's* 'Notes on Ruth,' *Lawson's* 'Lectures.')

1 AND 2 SAMUEL.

[Hebrew, שמואל.] The two books so called were, by the ancient Jews, conjoined so as to make one historical record, and in that form it could be called the Book of Samuel with more propriety than now, the second being wholly occupied with the relation of transactions that did not take place till after the death of that eminent judge. It may have been that the book had originally a different title, at least if any inference can be drawn from the Septuagint calling it ΒΑΣΙΛΕΙΩΝ ΠΡΩΤΗ ΚΑΙ ΔΕΥΤΕΡΑ, 'the First and Second Book of Kings,' or (as the term they use is not βασιλειων, but βασιλειων) of "reigns," or "kingdoms." The Vulgate has followed their example; and in our authorized version the designation is The First and Second Book of Samuel, otherwise called the First and Second Book of the Kings. The propriety of such a title is obvious, for the largest portion of the book is occupied with the establishment and the policy of monarchical government in Israel.

Authorship.—It is not easy to determine how the name "the Book of Samuel" originated; whether because it relates the life and times of Samuel, or because he commenced the composition of this history. The Jews universally believed that the early portion of the First Book, down to the end of the twenty-fourth chapter, was written by Samuel, but on what grounds that belief rested is unknown; while the remainder of the first, and the whole of the second book, they ascribed to Nathan and Gad, founding this opinion on 1 Chr. xxix. 29. Modern scholars, however, are divided about the matter;—some supposing that the statements in ch. ii. 26; iii. 1, indicate the hand of the judge himself, or a contemporary; while others think, from 1 Sam. v. 5; vi. 18; xii. 5; xxvii. 6; xxx. 25; also ix. 9 (*Thenius*); 2 Sam. iv. 3; vi. 8; xviii. 18;

xxi. 2, that its composition must be referred to a later age. It is highly probable, however, that these supposed marks of an after period were interpolations of Ezra (see *Eichhorn*, 'Einleitung,' p. 476). In fact, there is strong internal evidence that these two books were in existence and well known in the ancient church, before either Kings or Chronicles were published; for in both of the latter a variety of circumstances are contained, which were evidently derived from the book of Samuel. The old Jewish opinion which ascribes the greater part of the first book to the prophet is likely to stand; and the continuation of it in the second book abounds with so many vivid sketches and minute details, as plainly indicate the hand of a contemporary author, who drew his materials from personal knowledge, as well as from written documents of various kinds—family records, royal annals, anthologies, &c.

Contents.—The subjects embraced by these two books are very numerous and diversified. Beginning with the birth of Samuel, his early consecration to the sacred office, and his subsequent call to the functions of a prophet—the close of the administration of the good old, but too facile, Eli, and the fulfilment of the threatened judgments on his house, together with the national disaster in the captivity of the ark—its migrations in the Philistine country, the appalling phenomena that occurred to its captors, and its miraculous restoration to the land of Israel—the activity and faithfulness of Samuel as a magistrate, the high respect entertained for his venerable character, and the growing dissatisfaction with the public conduct of his sons—the increasing clamour for a change of government, with the Divine permission for the introduction of a monarchy—the appointment of Saul, his military energy, wayward temper, fits of lunacy, his jealousy and persecution of David after the slaughter of Goliath, his defeat at Gilboa and unhappy end, and the touching elegy on the event—the inauguration of David as king, first at Hebron and then in Jerusalem—his glorious reign, great qualities, fatal crimes, domestic and political troubles, the promised perpetuity of his dynasty, and his last fatal error in numbering the people, with its awful punishment;—these are the varied contents of the books of Samuel, and impart to them an interest which render this portion of sacred history more interesting, and consequently more frequently read, than perhaps any other part of the Old Testament.

Canonical Authority.—The admission of these books into the Jewish canon, as well as the accomplishment of the predictions it contains, warrant the belief that it was composed by a prophet, in an age which began to be the proper era of prophets; and the frequent references to it in various parts of Scripture—in the Psalms and in the New Testament—both by the Saviour (Matt. xii. 4; Mark ii. 26; Luke vi. 4) and by the apostles (Acts xiii. 22; Heb. i. 5), are sufficient to stamp them as inspired productions. The First Book of Samuel abounds in anticipatory statements, which, together with circumstances connected with the arrangement of the text (as in David's appearances before Saul, and the lists of his mighty men) (1 Sam. xxiii.; 1 Chr. xi.), and the use of particular terms, have created difficulties. For an explanation of the way in which these difficulties may be satisfactorily removed, we must refer the reader to the several passages in the Commentary.—The Second Book may be considered as ending with the noble ode, or song of thanksgiving, which occupies the whole of ch. xxiii., and the two concluding chapters appear as appendices. *Stähelin*, with some other modern critics, maintains that the two initial chapters of 1 Kings formed originally a part of this book; and, indeed, some of the Christian fathers considered it as extending to the account of David's death (1 Ki. ii. 11). But there is a completeness about it which is inconsistent with such a

theory; while the commencement of 1 Kings indicates a distinct and independent history by a different author. ('Die Bücher Samuels Erklärt,' von *Otto Thenius*, in the 'Kurzgefasstes Handbuch;' *Hüvernich*, 'Einleitung in das Alte Testament,' part ii., p. 145, also pp. 376-386; *Bunsen*, 'Bibelwerk,' 2d abth., p. 496; *Le Clerc*, *Maurer*, and other Commentaries, English and German; *Stuart*, 'On the Canon;' *Chandler's* 'Critical History of the Life of David,' 2 vols.; and *Delaney's* 'History of David.')

1 AND 2 KINGS.

[Hebrew, כ, ח, מלכים; Septuagint, ΒΑΣΙΛΕΙΩΝ. ΤΡΙΤΗ; and the heading of each page is Βασ, γ'.] The title seems to have varied; for *Origen* represents them as designated like the ancient books of the Pentateuch, from the initial words, וַיִּמְלֹךְ דָּוִד, 'Now king David.' The Vulgate entitles this first book 'Liber Regum Tertius; Secundum Hebræos, Liber Malachim.' Still greater diversity appears in other versions, as in the Syriac, which designates it 'The Book of the Kings who flourished amongst the Hebrews, containing also the History of the Prophets who flourished in their Times;' and in the Arabic version, which calls it 'The Book of Solomon.' The title in our Bibles has, from before and since the present translation was made, stood thus—"The First Book of the Kings, otherwise called the Third Book of the Kings." But in common use the second part of the title is dropped, and the former alone retained. In the most ancient and approved editions of the Hebrew Bible the two books constitute one book. This was particularly the case in the time of the Masoretes; but the more modern copies have the same division as ours.

Authorship.—The name of the author is unknown; but the prevailing opinion is, that they were drawn up and put in their present shape by an editor long after the date of the events, from the ancient documents that are so frequently referred to in the course of the history as of public and established authority. Those documents were written by various contemporary prophets, who prepared records of their own times, bearing especially on the state and interests of religion; and the names of Nathan, Gad, Iddo, Ahijah, Jehu, and others, are especially mentioned as the authors of such memoirs (2 Chr. ix. 29; xx. 34; xxvi. 22; xxxii. 22). But, besides these, there were public registers, kept by the royal historiographers, who, under the name of "Recorder" or "Registrar," occupied an important position amongst the great officers of the Hebrew court. These registers, which are alluded to as "the books of the chronicles of the kings of Israel or Judah," comprised the principal events of daily occurrence, and, of course, being continued with unbroken regularity, by writers whose official duty it was to record all transactions that took place, whether affecting the royal family or the national interests, they contained a full detail of all matters of interest and importance, private and public, which occurred during every reign. From these sources of information, the compiler of this book drew his information; but when or by whom the materials were moulded into their present form, is a question about which different opinions have been entertained. Many Jewish writers ascribe the honour of making the compilation to Jeremiah, but the prevailing opinion assigns it to Ezra. It is not easy, in a case where the competing claims are so equal, to decide in whose favour the balance preponderates. But it may be affirmed that as Ezra is allowed by common consent to have been the compiler

of the Chronicles, it is not likely he composed two books relating to nearly the same period; and as the date of this composition appears from internal evidence to have been prior to the captivity (as may be inferred from 1 Ki. vi. 37, 38; viii. 8; xii. 9), as the writer represents himself to have been an eye-witness of the disastrous fall of his country, and still further, as the peculiarities of expression and style, which distinguish the prophetic book of Jeremiah, are traceable here also (cf. 1 Ki. xi. 4; viii. 25; ix. 5, with Jer. xxxiii. 17; 1 Ki. xiii. 13; xvii. 25; 2 Ki. x. 8, with Jer. xxii. 8; 2 Ki. xvii. 13, with Jer. vii. 13; 1 Ki. xxi. 12, with Jer. xix. 3; 1 Ki. xxiv. xxv. with Jer. lii.), we are led to the conclusion, as highly probable, though not absolutely certain, that the conditions of authorship are found meeting in Jeremiah. *Stihelin*, followed by *Dr. Davidson* ('Introduction to the Old Testament'), maintains the lateness of 2 Kings, resting that opinion on "the Aram-ising suffixes" in 2 Ki. iv. 2, 3, 7. *De Wette* holds the same sentiments as to the lateness of the production, but on very different grounds. For, rejecting as he does all predictions, and viewing all the prophetic anticipations in this book, such as the return from exile (1 Ki. viii. 47), the destruction of the temple (1 Ki. ix. 7, 8), the dispersion of the people (1 Ki. xiv. 15), and the captivity in Babylon (2 Ki. xx. 17), as written *post eventum*, he logically enough concludes that the book was a *post-exilian* production. But no believer in the reality of prophetic foresight can sympathize with *De Wette's* views, or attach any weight to them as sound arguments. It must be admitted, however, that the latter end of the book must have been written after, or at least towards the close of, the exile; for it is said, respecting Josiah, that 'there was no king before him like to him; neither after him arose any like him,'—whence it appears that several kings successively sat upon the throne after that monarch's death; and the history is wound up at the thirty-seventh year of the captivity of Jehoiachim, the second last king of Judah (2 Ki. xxv. 27-30). As bearing upon the preceding explanation as to the sources whence the author of Kings derived his historical materials, we subjoin the following excellent remarks of *Mr. Layard* upon the nature of the Assyrian records:—'In the first place, the care with which the events of each king's reign were chronicled is worthy of remark. They were usually written in the form of regular annals, and in some cases, as on the great monoliths at Nimroud, the royal progress during a campaign appears to have been described almost day by day. We are thus furnished with an interesting illustration of the historical books of the Jews. There is, however, this marked difference between them, that while the Assyrian records were nothing but a dry narrative, or rather register, of military campaigns, spoliations, and cruelties—events of little importance but to those immediately concerned in them—the historic books of the Old Testament, apart from the deeds of war and blood which they chronicle, contain the most interesting of private episodes, and the most sublime of moral lessons. It need scarcely be added that this distinction is precisely what we might have expected to find between them, and that the Christian will not fail to give it due weight' ('Nineveh and Babylon,' pp. 631, 632).

Truth and Authenticity.—The honesty of the author is remarkably evinced by the tenor of this book. On the one hand, he shows his impartiality in recording acts which fasten the guilt of idolatry and gross corruption on the kings and the nation of Israel,—as in the pitiable dotage and apostasy of Solomon, the senseless indiscretion of Rehoboam, the schismatic worship of Jeroboam, the Phœnician ritual introduced by Ahab, and continued with infatuated folly by his successors both in Israel and Judah; and, on the other, his scrupulous fidelity is seen in his giving the *ipsissima verba* of the documents from which his quotations are made. Further, the credibility of these books is estab-

lished by the speedy and exact accomplishment of the prophecies they contain. 'That prophecy,' says *Dr. Gray* ('Connection between Sacred and Profane Literature'), 'which foretold "that Josiah should be born unto the house of David, and should slay the high priests," was not fulfilled till above three hundred and fifty years after it was delivered. Some of their prophetic denunciations were uttered under figurative descriptions; and Micaiah, to illustrate the infatuation which God had suffered to prevail in the councils of Ahaz, that it might lead him to destruction, unfolds to the misguided monarch the danger of his projected enterprise, under a representation received in a vision, in which an imaginary council, and the supposed agency of a lying spirit, are introduced, in order to explain the Divine conduct in some analogous proceedings.' The issue fell out as Micaiah had foreshadowed,—this instance affording an additional proof of the truth and authenticity of these books. Even *Thenius*, while rejecting, like many German critics, the supernatural element in the sacred history, admits the Books of Kings to possess the fullest claim to credibility. Some parts he specifies as having a slight tincture of the legendary; 'but by far the greatest portion of the contents admits no doubts as to their historic character. Even other parts to which he takes exception are allowed to be not devoid of an historic basis; and there is no reason at all to doubt the truth of that which is noted by the redactor himself' ('Introduction to Commentary on the Books of Kings,' p. 8: see Introduction to Chronicles in this work.

Canonical Authority.—The inspired character of these books of 1 and 2 Kings was acknowledged by the Jewish Church, which ranked them in the sacred canon; and, besides, it is attested by our Lord, who frequently appeals to the facts recorded in them (cf. 1 Ki. xvii. 9; 2 Ki. v. 14, with Luke iv. 21-37; 1 Ki. x. 1, with Matt. xii. 42; 'Martyris Commentarium in duos libros Regum, Tiguri, 1566; 'Schmidü Adnott, in libros Regum, Strasburg, 1697; 'Keil, 'Commentary on Kings,' translated by *Dr. Murphy*, Belfast; 'Die Bücher der Könige erklärt,' von *Otto Thenius*, Leipzig, 1849; *Movers*, 'De Utriusque. Vet. Jer. Indole,' in which that author labours to prove that the present Book of Kings was made out of an older work by Jeremiah; *Maurice*, 'The Kings and Prophets of Israel').

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES.

[ב, א חזקיהו, words, or events of days—*i. e.*, diaries or journals; being probably compiled from those registers that were kept by the king's historiographers of passing occurrences.] In the Septuagint, the title given them is ΠΑΡΑΛΕΙΠΟΜΕΝΩΝ, 'of thing omitted'—*i. e.*, the books are supplementary, because many things unnoticed in the former books are here recorded; and not only the omissions are supplied, but some narratives extended, while others are added. In like manner, *Xenophon* called by the name of Παράλειπομενα that work which he wrote as a supplement to the history of Thucydides regarding the Peloponnesian war. *Jerome*, by calling this book 'Chronicon totius Divinæ Historiæ,' originated the name which in our version is rendered Chronicles.

Authorship.—The compilation of this book is commonly ascribed to Ezra, who drew the materials from the old historical documents, and arranged them in subserviency to the object he had in view. The Talmudists ascribe the composition of Chronicles to him; but the completion of the genealogical registers, they assert, was due to Nehemiah.

Whatever truth there may be in this assertion as to the division of labour, the chief burden of executing these books was undertaken by Ezra; for the directing mind of one author is perceptible throughout in pursuing a uniform plan, in conformity to which the facts recorded are adduced, recapitulations are made, and remarks occasionally indulged in—all betokening identity of origin. That the author was Ezra is an opinion rendered highly probable, not only from the official character he sustained, but from the clear evidence furnished by the book itself that its composition dates after the exile. This appears from various references made to events that followed the captivity, such as the decree of Cyrus (2 Chr. xxxvi. 22), which forms at once the end of Chronicles and the commencement of Ezra, the usual sign of continuation in ancient histories (cf. Gen. 1., Exod. 1.), and the enumeration of the tribes and classes of people, to which the first-returned settlers in Jerusalem belonged (1 Chr. ix. 2). This conclusion is still further established by the similarity of style and phraseology in this book to that employed in the history called by the name of Ezra. *Eichhorn* ('Einleit.' iii., sec. 493) has referred to particular instances of Chaldaisms and the orthography of proper names. Several expressions, too, which came into use only during and after the exile, afford corroborative evidence of the late date of this book. [רָעָא, a he-goat (2 Chr. xxix. 21), instead of the earlier רָעָא, occurs in Dan. viii. 5, 8, and Ezra viii. 35.] Many other peculiarities of an analogous nature (*Hävernick*, 'Introduction to the Old Testament,' p. 199) might be adduced to show that the Chronicles was a post-exilic production; and although they do not afford any direct proofs of its origination from Ezra, yet as he, from his Levitical office and influential position, appears the most likely person, on the return from Babylon, to have undertaken and executed such a composition, the general voice both of the ancient and modern church has ascribed the honour of authorship to him. Some German critics of the Neological school, however, have asserted their decided dissent from this opinion, founding on the frequent use of certain letters which indicate an Aramaean orthography, and also on the fact of Zerubbabel's genealogy (1 Chr. iii. 19) being extended to the ninth generation—i. e., 300 years after the time of Ezra. They have laboured to assign it to a much later age. In regard to the first objection, *Hävernick*, in the work already referred to (sec. 34, 'Second Age of the Hebrew Language and Literature: the Period of the Captivity'), has satisfactorily disposed of it by arguments which, however, being purely philological, it were useless to repeat. And as to the enlargement of Zerubbabel's pedigree, it is most natural to suppose that, from the great interest the Jews felt in the subject, the extension was interpolated by some editor in after times.

Plan and Design.—The leading object of the book seems to have been to show the division of families, possessions, &c., before the captivity, with a view to the exact restoration of the same order after the return from Babylon. In conformity with this design a genealogical sketch of the twelve tribes is drawn from the earliest times, so as to discriminate the lineal descendants of Jacob from the mixed multitude which returned from Babylon. And, as the rebuilding of the temple and the restoration of the worship of Jehovah were objects specially contemplated in the emancipating edict of Cyrus, the author sets himself with great care and minute particularity to describe the ecclesiastical arrangements of David, especially the distribution of the Levitical tribe into a succession of courses, and the assignation of the singers and porters to their several stations and duties in the temple. The sketch of David is comprised in 1 Chr. x.—xxix., being for the most part a recapitulation of what is contained in Samuel, only enlarged by the minute account of the temple services just referred to; and the sketch of Solomon,

which occupies 2 Chr. i.—ix., is chiefly borrowed from the Book of Kings. After these the historian confines himself almost exclusively to the history of the theocratic kingdom of Judah, with notices of the court, and the policy of its sovereigns so far as these bore upon the interests of the true religion. A full detail of such things is given in the case of all the good kings of Judah; and this, which will also account for the omission of many circumstances in the lives of David, Solomon, and others, constitutes the grand distinctive feature between the Books of Kings and Chronicles. Although many things are re-stated, and others are verbatim repetitions of what is contained in Kings, there is so much new and important information given in this book, that, as *Jerome* has well said, the Chronicles furnish the means of comprehending parts of the New Testament, which must have been unintelligible without them.

Truth and Authenticity.—As the current of historical narrative in the Books of Kings and Chronicles runs for the most part in the same direction, the harmony between them—assuming them to have been, as we have endeavoured to show, the productions of two separate and independent authors, and written at different periods—may be appealed to as a pledge of the credibility of both. But amid their general agreement there are discrepancies, some of which, however, are only apparent, originating with critics who, regardless of the violence they do to the text, endeavour by force to support some favourite theory; while in regard to others which were real and perplexing, the researches of recent times have furnished, to a considerable extent, the means of reconciliation. As a specimen of the first, we may adduce *Lepsius's* objection to the genealogy of Heman (1 Chr. iii.—vi. 33-43), which he pronounces corrupt, merely on the ground of its undue length, being traced through nineteen generations, and of the occurrence of the name Elkanah twice in the register. A still more extraordinary exception is taken to a Levite genealogy (1 Chr. vi. 24) inserted in the course of Levite genealogies, and far removed from those of Benjamin, that it is spurious, because it concludes with the name of Saul (Shaul, English version), who, according to *Lepsius*, must be the king so called ('Die Chronologie der Ägypter bearbeitet,' von *R. Lepsius*, theil i., sec. 372; see also *Bunsen*, 'Egypt's Place,' vol. i., p. 176-177)—a groundless and most absurd objection! Again, the author of Chronicles is charged with misrepresentation, because, in reference to Jeroboam's introduction of the calf-worship, he is supposed to ascribe to that monarch also the worship of the goat. The passage referred to is 2 Chr. xi. 15, "He ordained him priests for the high places, and for the devils [שֵׁרִימִים], and for the Seirim], and for the calves [בָּעֵזְרִים], and for the Agalim] which he had made." The objection is founded on a misconception of this passage, which means simply, that Jeroboam, by introducing the worship of the Agalim, which he conceived to be a harmless form of symbolic worship, had been guilty of as plain a departure from the true religion as in the adoption of any other gods, for the Agalim were = Seirim (cf. *Bochart's* 'Hierozoicon'). 'How little,' says *Hengstenberg* ('Pentateuch,' vol. i., p. 201), 'the writer intended to charge Jeroboam with the worship of the goat in an absolute sense, appears from 2 Chr. xiii., where, in Abijah's speech, containing a full enumeration of all Jeroboam's misdeeds, not a word is said of the goat-worship, though its introduction, if such had really been the case, would have been one of his gravest offences.' In regard to other objections of a historical nature, on the ground of ignorance or misrepresentation, that have been brought against the author of this book, such as 1 Ki. v. 16, compared with 2 Chr. ii. 2; 1 Ki. xv. 32, with 2 Chr. xiv. 1; 2 Sam. xxiv. 24, with 1 Chr. xxi. 25; 2 Ki. v. 26, with 2 Chr. xxii. 22, the reader is referred to the Commentary. They have provoked

more cavilling sneers than almost any other part of the sacred history. Except in the case of numerals, they admit of easy removal; and in general, it may be remarked that there is a mutual confirmation of Kings and Chronicles, and of Egyptian records and monuments of the sixth and seventh centuries before Christ—a period which even the sceptical mind of the late *Sir George Lewis* admits to be the most reliable period of Egyptian history ('*Historical Survey of the Astronomy of the Ancients*') After all, however, it must be conceded that there are inaccuracies in the Chronicles, probably arising from our ignorance of the Hebrew system of enumeration, and that the text is in a state of greater imperfection than that of the other books of the Old Testament. Whether the text is exactly as it was in the time of our Lord, it is impossible to say. But there is some reason to fear that there has been a deliberate design to corrupt, or culpable negligence in transcribing it. At all events a great change has taken place in its position; for in the time of Josephus the Chronicles was classed with the other historical books, but now it stands at the end of the Old Testament in our Hebrew Bibles. And this alteration of outward relative place is, there is good reason to apprehend, an indication of other changes affecting the internal purity and textual integrity of the book.

Canonical Authority.—The Books of Chronicles are frequently referred to by Christ and the Apostles, as forming part of the Word of God (see the genealogies in Matt. i.; Luke iii.: cf. 2 Chr. xix. 7, with 1 Pet. i. 17; 2 Chr. xxiv. 19-21, with Matt. xxiii. 32-35). ('*Die Bücher der Chronik erklärt,*' von *Ernst Bertheau*; also, the same translated in *Clark's* '*Theological Library*;' *Keil*, '*Apologetischer Versuch über die Bücher der Chronik*;' *Movers*' '*Über die Biblische Chronik*;' *Hävernicks*' '*Introduction*;' *Moses Stuart*, '*On the Canon*,' &c.)

EZRA.

[Hebrew, עִזְרָא.] It was reckoned, along with Nehemiah, one book by the ancient Jews, who called them the First and Second Books of Esdras, as the Latin and Greek churches continue to do still. In point of fact, four books are named after Ezra, including that of Nehemiah. There are two other books which are known by the name of Esdras, and though they are regarded by Protestants as apocryphal, the first, being found in all the MSS. of the Septuagint, in which it stands as ΕΣΔΡΑΣ ΠΡΩΤΟΝ, while our Ezra follows as ΕΣΔΡΑΣ ΔΕΥΤΕΡΟΝ, is received by the Greek Church as canonical, as it was also by the Latin, till it was rejected by the Council of Trent. Its antiquity is undoubted. *Josephus* makes liberal quotations from it in his '*Antiquities*;' but though it is substantially the same as our Ezra, it contains some extraordinary interpolations, in following which, the Jewish historian has been misled into egregious errors.

Authorship.—The general opinion of the Church in every succeeding age has been that Ezra was the author of this book. Several writers, indeed, of learning and authority are opposed to this traditional belief, and maintain that there must have been various authors. Their chief objection is founded on ch. v. 4, where the words "then said," &c., have occasioned a surmise that the first portion of the book was not written by Ezra, who did not go to Jerusalem till many years after the occurrence described. But a little attention will show the futility of this objection, as the words in question did not proceed from the writer, but were used by Tatnai and his associates, as is evident

from *v.* 10. Indeed, the diversity of style that is so apparent in this book is no proof of various authorship; and it is easily accounted for by the circumstance that the first six chapters consist almost wholly of a collection of public documents, royal edicts, and official letters, relative to the state and prospects of the Jews at the period to which the history relates. As a very natural and appropriate introduction, a short sketch, beginning with the publication of Cyrus's decree, is given of the return of the first caravan of exiles under Zerubbabel, (chs. i.—iii.) The fourth chapter opens with the account of a quarrel which broke out between these settlers and the Samaritans, who attempted to obstruct their operations for the rebuilding of the temple; and from *v.* 7 to ch. vi. 13, a minute detail of the controversy is given in Chaldee, probably from some written memorandum of the affair which Ezra, having, as *Eichhorn* suggests, found on his arrival in Jerusalem, inserted at full-length in his book. After a short but vivid description of the preparations for celebrating the first sacred services in the newly-finished temple, Ezra enters (ch. vii.) upon a narrative of the journey of the second colony to Jerusalem; and as he now speaks in the first person, because the narrative embraces occurrences of which he was an eye-witness, and in which he took the chief direction, there can be no doubt that of this portion of the book he was the author. The same style of composition is apparent as in the preceding part,—by the insertion verbatim of the edict of Artaxerxes (ch. vii. 11-26), by the use of certain idiomatic expressions, and by a number of minute internal marks that unmistakably indicate the unity of authorship throughout. That individual author appears, on a combined view of all the circumstances, to be no other than Ezra, who united in himself all the qualifications requisite for the production of a work so unique. By hereditary descent an Israelite, he naturally felt a warm interest in the measures that had been originated for resuscitating the fallen nationality of the Jews; from his social position he possessed influence with the Persian court to be appointed head of a mission for furthering that object; and from his zeal as an ardent patriot, to satisfy both his own countrymen and others that he had legal sanction as well as religious authority for the course he adopted, he deemed it his duty to draw up a fully authenticated and particular narrative of the whole proceedings connected with his embassy. That narrative exhibits a peculiar form, being partly (ch. iv. 8 to vi. 19, and vii. 12-27) in Chaldee and partly in Hebrew, for which the circumstances of place and time are sufficient to account. Ezra was writing for the instruction of Jews, who, from birth or residence, were, like himself, familiar with the dialect of Babylon. Being by office a priest, “a ready scribe in the law” (ch. vii. 6), he was well acquainted with the Hebrew tongue, as were his Jewish brethren also, from the Scriptures being read in that language. In these circumstances it was equally easy for him to write, as for them to read, in either language; and while prudence suggested that, for their satisfaction, the public decrees and other documents relative to the mission should be recorded in their original state, lest translation into another tongue should in the smallest degree affect or alter their meaning, the rest of the narrative was composed in the ancient language of the Jews. This circumstance narrows the enquiry respecting the authorship, by limiting it to the age of Ezra; for the employment of two languages in the composition of a book was not practicable either before or after; and while the Chaldee is just what might have been expected, differing in several respects from that of Daniel, and yet much purer than if, according to the hypothesis of some critics, it be considered as belonging to the late period of the Maccabees, it has been remarked that the Hebrew in this book is characterized by a purity and correctness far superior to what

appears in writings which date at an early period of the exile. It is a matter of general notoriety that, in consequence of the foreign masters who in long succession held possession of Palestine, the Hebrew language had become greatly deteriorated, traces of which are found in the Book of Ezekiel (*Hävernicks*, 'Introduction to Old Testament,' sec. 34). But during the long continuance of the captivity, when the Jews gradually dropped the use of their mother tongue as a medium of intercourse, and employed the vernacular dialect of Babylon, the knowledge of Hebrew was preserved only by a study of the sacred books. The stereotyped style and phraseology of the Pentateuch and the Psalms were naturally followed instead of the corruptions which had vitiated the Hebrew language as spoken in the later days of the monarchy; and hence the books written after the captivity exhibit a comparative degree of linguistic purity. This remark is applicable to the Book of Ezra, and furnishes an additional argument for ascribing the composition to him.

Canonical Authority.—This book was received into the Jewish canon, and its authority as an inspired history is undoubted. (*Hävernicks*'s 'Introduction to the Old Testament;' *Davidson's* 'Introduction to the Old Testament,' ii.; *Stuart*, 'On the Canon'.)

NEHEMIAH.

[Septuagint, NEEMIAS.] The Hebrew text begins with נְהֵמְיָהוּ וְדָבָרָא, 'words of Nehemiah,' which are commonly understood as intimating that he claimed to be the author of the following narrative. But several modern critics consider נְהֵמְיָהוּ here as used in the same sense the word bears in the title of Chronicles—viz., matters, affairs of Nehemiah, without any reference to authorship. And upon assigning to it this meaning, they are the more disposed to insist that, while in the early portion of the book, as far as ch. vii. 5, the *first* person is employed, implying that it proceeded from Nehemiah, the latter part (ch. viii. 1—x. 39) uses the *third* person, indicating the writing of it to be from a different hand; but in the last section, comprehending the register of names, from ch. xi.—xii. 40, and an account of Nehemiah's proceedings on his return from Persia a second time (ch. xiii.), recourse is once more had to the first person. When it is considered, however, that the book is characterized throughout by simple earnest piety, and at the same time by an intense feeling of patriotism, which keeps but one end constantly in view—viz., the restoration of the capital and kingdom of Judah—there is a moral conviction impressed upon the mind of every reader that Nehemiah was the author, and that if written documents were incorporated with his narrative, the insertion was done under his eye and by his own hand as the compiler of the work. This is the most satisfactory view of the case. Nehemiah appears to have been the author of the book, from his usually writing in his own name, and, indeed, except in those parts which are unmistakably later additions, or borrowed from public documents, he usually employs the first person. The major portion of the book is occupied with a history of Nehemiah's twelve years' administration in Jerusalem, after which he returned for a time to his duties in Shushan. At a later period he returned with new powers, and commenced new and vigorous measures of reform, which are detailed in the concluding chapters of the book.

Difficulties.—The register in ch. vii. is substantially a repetition of that which is contained in Ezra ii. But there are remarkable discrepancies between the two copies of it,

in the names and collective number of those who returned under Zerubbabel, as well as in the amount of contributions made by the chiefs of the fathers (see Commentary). As to the difficulty connected with the register of the high priests (ch. xii. 10, 11)—which, without Jeshua, the first link, makes five generations, extending over more than 160 years, and terminating with Jaddua the high priest, who, according to *Josephus*, went out in his pontifical robes to meet Alexander the Great—*Stuart* considers this a marginal interpolation, which crept into the text, while *Lord A. Hervey's* solution is, that one or more in the list never actually filled the office of high priest. (*Stuart*, 'On the Canon,' pp. 157-159, *Hervey's* 'Genealogies,' pp. 277-291.)

ESTHER.

[Hebrew, אֶסְתֵּר; Septuagint, ΕΣΘΗΡ.] This book derives its name from the Jewish lady who, having become the wife of the king of Persia, employed her royal influence to effect a memorable deliverance for the persecuted church of God. The Jews hold this book in such high esteem as to assign it a rank next to that of the Pentateuch; their high value for it resting on the circumstance, that while the former book describes their origin and constitution as a nation, the latter narrates a miraculous deliverance from threatened extermination, equal to a second national birth.

Authorship.—Various opinions have been entertained, and eagerly supported, as to the authorship of this book, some ascribing it to Ezra, others to Nehemiah. The Jews consider it as the composition of the high priest Jehoiakim, son of Jeshua; and the writers of the Talmud assert that it was drawn up by authority of the great synagogue. The popular opinion in the church is, that Mordecai was the author; and the weight of authority both as to value and numbers greatly preponderates in favour of his claim.

Truth and Authenticity.—*Semler* considered this book a myth. *De Wette* pronounced a critical judgment against it as at variance with historical probability, and abounding in the most extraordinary misrepresentations of Persian usages. *Eichhorn* satisfactorily answered these objections, showing that it rested on a basis of historical truth, and was quite in accordance with the customs and manners of the court and people of Persia (see also *Loftus*, 'Chaldæa'). Still, many eminent writers, both British and foreign, are perplexed by it; and the farthest that some will go in support of it is to regard it as a historical romance. Without specifying particular incidents (which are fully considered in the Commentary), it may suffice to say, that the historical character of the book is undoubted, since, besides many internal evidences, its authenticity is proved by the strong testimony of the feast of Purim, the celebration of which can be traced up to the events which are described. A further proof of its historical truthfulness is found in the Persian empire being divided into 127 provinces. In the earlier reign of Darius there were 120 governors of provinces (Dan. vi. 1), and in the time of its highest prosperity it was extended and divided into as many as 360 provinces (*Josephus*, 'Antiquities,' b. x., ch. ii., sec. 4: cf. *Xenophon*, 'Cyræpædia,' b. viii., 220, 232). But in the intermediate period, the number, which, from the time of Darius, had been increased seven provinces by Cyrus, continued so in the reigns of Cambyses, Xerxes, and their immediate successors (*Josephus*, 'Antiquities,' b. xi., ch. iii., sec. 2). The date of Xerxes' reign, the impulsive character of that monarch, his expedition against Greece

—to make preparations for which the provincial governors from every part of his dominions were summoned to Susa—his anxiety to drown the mortification of his disastrous defeat in the voluptuous pursuits of the harem, and the additional taxes he was obliged to impose on his subjects to defray the vast expenses of his Grecian invasion, which is noticed in the last chapter,—all tend to prove the historical credibility of this book, which was most probably extracted from the archives of Persia.

Canonical Authority.—*Niebuhr, Arnold,* and many others, question, or rather reject, its claim to inspiration on various grounds, but principally because the name of God does not once occur in it. But the uniform tradition both of the Jewish and the Christian churches supports this claim, which nothing in the book tends to shake; while it is a record of the superintending care of Divine Providence over His chosen people, with which it is of the utmost importance the Church should be furnished. The name of God is strangely enough omitted, but the presence of God is felt throughout the history; and the whole tone and tendency of the book is so decidedly subservient to the honour of God, and the cause of true religion, that it has been generally received by the Church in all ages into the sacred canon.



CANAAN, AS DIVIDED AMONG THE TWELVE TRIBES

English Miles

10 20 30



The Cities of Sodom are
unbounded thus Golan

THE
BOOK OF JOSHUA.

- 1 **N**OW after the death of Moses the servant of the LORD it came to pass, that the LORD spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' minister,
- 2 saying, Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them,
- 3 even to the children of Israel. Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses.
- 4 From the wilderness and this Lebanon, even unto the great river, the

B. C. 1451.

CHAP. I.
 a Deut. 1. 33.
 b Deut. 34. 5.
 c Deut. 11. 21.
 d Gen. 15. 18.
 Ex. 23. 31.
 Num. 34. 3.
 Deut. 1. 7.

CHAP. I. Verses 1-18.—THE LORD APPOINTS JOSHUA TO SUCCEED MOSES.

1. Now . . . it came to pass [וַיְהִי]—and it was. The copulative [ו] *and*, placed at the commencement of a book, is a *nexus* or link uniting that book with another, and, conjoined with the verb [וַיְהִי], implies that the mind of the writer was occupied with some leading ideas of known publicity that bore upon the statements he was about to make. The phrase in this passage points to the previous designation of Joshua to be, on the demise of Moses, the future leader of Israel; and thus betokens the work which it introduces to be not only a continuation of the history of the Hebrew people, but to be closely connected with the preceding book, though not necessarily composed by the same author. It is employed as the customary formula of beginning the later historical books, even where there is no direct reference to any prior writing (Ruth i. 1; Esth. i. 1; Ezek. i. 1). [Septuagint, *καὶ ἐγένετο.*] after the death of Moses. Joshua having been already appointed and designated leader of Israel (Num. xxvii. 18, 23; Deut. i. 38; iii. 28), in all probability assumed the reins of government *immediately* after the death of Moses, though no movement towards breaking up the encampment in Shittim was made. the servant of the Lord. This phrase was used to describe not merely a worshipper of God, a pious Israelite, but one who had received a special call, or a commission to perform some important service. In the former sense it is applied to the angels (Job iv. 18), to the children of Israel (Lev. xxv. 42, 55; Isa. xli. 8; xliii. 10), and to the prophets generally (2 Ki. ix. 7; xvii. 13; Ezra ix. 11; Jer. vii. 25; xxvi. 5; xlv. 4; Dan. ix. 6; Amos iii. 7); and in the latter, to Hezekiah (2 Chr. xxxii. 16), Eliakim (Isa. xxii. 20), Nebuchadnezzar (Jer. xxv. 9; xxvii. 6; xliii. 10), Zerubbabel (Hagg. ii. 23), Abraham (Gen. xxvi. 24), David (2 Sam. iii. 18; vii. 5, 8), Moses (Num. xii. 7, 8; Mal. iv. 4), Isaiah (ch. xx. 3), and to the Messiah (Isa. xlii. 1; xlix. 6; Zech. iii. 8). It was used so generally in reference to Moses, in the form it bears in this passage (slightly altered in later times, 1 Chr. vi. 49; 2 Chr. xxiv. 9; Neh. x. 29; Dan. ix. 11; Rev. xv. 3), that it became his official title, as one invested with a special mission to make known the will of God; and it conferred great honour and authority. the Lord spake—probably during the period of public mourning, either by a direct revelation to the mind of Joshua, or by means of Urim and Thummim (Num. xxvii. 21). This first communication gave a pledge that the Divine instructions which, according to the provisions of the Theocracy, had been imparted to Moses would be continued to the new leader, though Jehovah

might not speak to him "mouth to mouth" (Num. xii. 8). unto Joshua the son of Nun [יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן-נֹון]. [The original name was יְהוֹשֻׁעַ (Num. xiii. 8, 16); *ישו* in later Hebrew (Neh. viii. 17) (Septuagint, *Ἰησους*: cf. Acts vii. 45; Heb. iv. 8), which, having been, according to Eastern usage, changed, like those of Abram and Sarai (Gen. xvii. 5-15), into Jehoshua or Joshua—*i. e.*, 'God's salvation,' or 'whose help is Jehovah' (*Genesius*)—was significant of the services he was to render, and typified those of a greater Saviour.] Moses' minister [מֹשֶׁה עֹמְדָה], attendant, from עָמַד, to wait upon, to serve, used specially in reference to sacred rites (Ezra viii. 17; cf. Num. iii. 6, 31; iv. 9; xviii. 2; 1 Sam. ii. 11; iii. 1), but sometimes to secular services also (1 Ki. i. 15; cf. Gen. xxxix. 4; xl. 4). Septuagint, τῷ ὑποργῶν Μωσῆ, the underworker to Moses—his official attendant, who, from being constantly employed in important services, and early initiated into the principles of the government, must have been well trained for undertaking the leadership of Israel. 2. now therefore arise, go over this Jordan. Joshua's mission was that of a military leader. This passage records his call to begin the actual work to which he had been previously designated. The address contains a literal repetition of the promise made to Moses (Deut. xi. 24, 25), and by him conveyed to Joshua a short time before the close of his career (Deut. xxxi. 6-8, 23). But in the divine commission now given to Joshua, there is a change of expression adapted to the altered circumstances; for whereas the words used to Moses were, "Every place whereon the soles of your feet shall tread shall be yours," the terms of the address to Joshua are, "Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you," referring to the approaching fulfilment of the promise. "This Jordan" indicates that the river was in full view of the Hebrew camp in Shittim. 3. Every place, of course, means, not universal dominion, but only the territory comprised within the boundaries here described (see on Deut. xix. 8, 9). as I said unto Moses (on Deut. xi. 24, cf. Exod. xiii. 30, 31). 4. From the wilderness and this Lebanon. It is observable that, instead of tracing the limits of the promised land with exact precision, certain prominent points only are noticed as determining the extent south and north, east and west. "The wilderness" is the extensive desert which lies on the south of Canaan; Lebanon is on the north. It is called "this Lebanon," as mount Lebanon—*i. e.*, anti-Lebanon, or Hermon—was a conspicuous object in the horizon of Joshua. "The great river, the river Euphrates," was on the east; and "the great sea toward the going

- river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea
 5 toward the going down of the sun, shall be your coast. There shall not
 any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was
 with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.
 6 Be strong and of a good courage: for unto this people shalt thou divide
 for an inheritance the land which I swore unto their fathers to give them.
 7 Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do
 according to all the law which Moses my servant commanded thee:
 turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest
 8 prosper whithersoever thou goest. This book of the law shall not
 depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and
 night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written
 therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou
 9 shalt have good success. Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and
 of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the
 LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.
 10 Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying, Pass through
 11 the host, and command the people, saying, Prepare you victuals; for
 within three days ye shall pass over this Jordan, to go in to possess the
 land, which the LORD your God giveth you to possess it.
 12 And to the Reubenites, and to the Gadites, and to half the tribe of
 13 Manasseh, spake Joshua, saying, Remember the word which Moses the

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- ^a Deut. 7. 24.
^f Ex. 3. 12.
^g Deut. 31. 6.
^h Or, thou shalt cause this people to inherit the land.
ⁱ Num. 27. 23. ch. 11. 15.
² Or, do wisely.
^l Deut. 29. 9.
ⁱ Deut. 17. 18, 19.
^j Ps. 1. 2.
^k 1 Chr. 32. 13. Pro. 3. 1.
³ Or, do wisely.
^l Ps. 27. 1.
^m Jer. 1. 8.
^m ch. 2. 2.
ⁿ Deut. 9. 1.
ⁿ Deut. 11. 31.
ⁿ Num. 32. 20, 28.
ⁿ ch. 22. 2-4.

down of the sun" was the Mediterranean. The ocean is designated "the great sea," Ps. civ. 25. But this term is occasionally applied, as here, to the sea which washed the western coast of Canaan (cf. ch. xv. 12; Num. xxxiv. 6; Ezek. xlvii. 20), to distinguish it from the sea of Tiberias and the Dead Sea. It is called by other names, Exod. xxiii. 21; Deut. xi. 24. all the land of the Hittites. These occupied the southern extremities, and were the dominant tribe, of Canaan. Their superior power and the extent of their dominions are attested by the mention of them under the name of Khita on the Assyrian inscriptions, and still more frequently on the Egyptian inscriptions of the eighteenth and nineteenth dynasties. What life and encouragement must have been imparted to Joshua by the assurance that his people, who had been overwhelmed with fear of that gigantic race, were to possess "all the land of the Hittites!" But this name is evidently used here as representing the Canaanitish tribes generally, as it is also in 1 Ki. x. 29; 2 Ki. vii. 6; Ezek. xvi. 3. The clause is not found in the Septuagint. 5. There shall not any man be able to stand before thee. Canaan had been promised to Israel by a divine grant; and the renewed confirmation of that grant to Joshua, when about to lead the people into it, intimated not only a certain, but an easy, conquest. It is remarkable, however, that his courage and hope of victory were made to depend (like those of the future king: see on Deut. xvii. 19) on his firm and inflexible adherence to the law of God; not only to that regarding the extirpation of the Canaanites, but to the whole precepts of the divine code.

10. Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people. Thus divinely commissioned and encouraged, the new leader inaugurated his work by issuing orders to the *Shoterim* (see on Exod. v. 10; Deut. xx. 5), whose duty it was to keep a regular genealogical register of the people in their divisions and sub-divisions, to allot to every one his share of public work, by levying men for military service, and noting those who claimed exemption. 11. Prepare you victuals. This was the proclamation those officers were charged

to make, that the people should lay in a store of what was required for their sustenance [צָרָה or צָרָה, provision], not manna, which is called poetically by this name, Ps. lxxvii. 25, and which, though it still fell, would not keep, but corn, sheep, and articles of food, procurable as natural produce in the conquered countries (ch. ix. 11; Gen. xlii. 25; xlv. 21; Exod. xii. 39; Judg. vii. 8; xx. 10; 1 Sam. xxii. 10). for within three days ye shall pass over this Jordan—i. e., the third day, according to Hebrew idiom (Gen. xl. 13, 19, 20). The import of these words apparently is, that the people would cross the river within the specified time. But the precautionary measure of despatching spies to reconnoitre Jericho shows such a conclusion to be wrong; for it is expressly said (ch. ii. 23, 24) that the scouts lay in hiding three days amongst the mountain fastnesses, returning to the camp on the morning of the fourth day; and that it was not till after their return that Joshua removed from Shittim (ch. iii. 1). Various methods have been proposed for harmonizing the several incidents that transpired previous to the passage of the Jordan. Some writers maintain that the reconnoitring party had been sent a considerable time before, though the fact was not recorded till now; while many others, following *Josephus* ('Antiquities,' b. v. ch. i.), are of opinion that the mission of the spies was contemporaneous with the orders issued to the people to prepare for decamping. The explanation which appears the simplest and freest from difficulties (see on ch. iii. 2) is, that the statement in v. 11 refers to the time allotted for the people getting ready, ere the encampment in Abel-shittim was broken up, and they removed to the desert bank of the river, where no victuals could be got (Hess, *Geschichte Josua, Erstes Buch, 'Zweytes Capitel,* p. 31).

12. And to the Reubenites, and to the Gadites, and to half the tribe of Manasseh, spake Joshua. At this time also Joshua himself convened the two and a half tribes which had settled east of Jordan, to remind them of their engagement (Num. xxxii. 1-42) to assist their brethren

servant of the LORD commanded you, saying, The LORD your God hath given you rest, and hath given you this land. Your wives, your little ones, and your cattle, shall remain in the land which Moses gave you on this side Jordan; but ye shall pass before your brethren ⁴ armed, all the mighty men of valour, and help them; until the LORD have given your brethren rest, as *he hath given* you, and they also have possessed the land which the LORD your God giveth them: ^o then ye shall return unto the land of your possession, and enjoy it, which Moses the LORD's servant gave you on this side Jordan toward the sun-rising.

16 And they answered Joshua, saying, All that thou commandest us we will do, and whithersoever thou sendest us we will go. According as we hearkened unto Moses in all things, so will we hearken unto thee: only the LORD thy God ^p be with thee, as he was with Moses. Whosoever *he be* that doth rebel against thy commandment, and will not hearken unto thy words in all that thou commandest him, he shall be put to death: only be strong and of a good courage.

2 AND Joshua the son of Nun ¹ sent ^a out of Shittim two men to spy secretly, saying, Go view the land, even Jericho. And they went, and ^b came into an harlot's house, named ^c Rahab, and ² lodged there.

B. C. 1451.
⁴ marshalled by five, as Ex. 13. 18.
^o ch. 22. 4.
¹ Cor. 12. 2.
¹ Cor. 13. 5.
^p 1 Sam. 20. 13.
¹ Ki. 1. 37.
 CHAP. 2.
¹ Or, had sent.
^o Num. 25. 1.
^o Heb. 11. 31.
^o Jas. 2. 25.
^o Mat. 1. 5.
 But it is doubtful whether this is the same person.
² lay.

in the conquest of Western Canaan. 13. Remember the word which Moses the servant of the Lord commanded you, saying. The words spoken by Joshua are not a literal quotation, but the substance only of what was addressed by Moses (Deut. iii. 18-20) to the two tribes and a half, reminding them of their obligation to aid their brethren in the war of invasion, on this side Jordan—i. e., on the east side. [יָמֵי הַיַּרְדֵּן is rendered sometimes on this, sometimes on the other side Jordan, its proper meaning in any passage being determined by the position of the writer or speaker. It is used in Deuteronomy, and also in Joshua (ch. v. 1; xii. 7; xxii. 7), to describe the western region, obviously on account of the only home as yet possessed by the Hebrews being on the east. But most frequently it denotes the east country, because Canaan proper was always regarded as the principal or central portion of the promised land (see *Hengstenberg's* 'Contrib.,' iii., p. 313; also 'Balaam,' p. 27, English translation); and in this book, where it is used as a geographical term, an additional word is sometimes subjoined to give it greater precision and distinctness, as in v. 15, "toward the sun-rising;" or, in the passages referred to above, where it denotes the west, יָמֵי הַיַּרְדֵּן, westward, is added.] ye shall pass before your brethren armed (see on ch. iv. 12) [יָמֵי הַיַּרְדֵּן]—(see on Exod. xiii. 18 for the various interpretations given of this word). [The Septuagint renders it, εὐχνοσσι, well fight: cf. Num. xxxii. 20; Deut. iii. 18.] all the mighty men of valour. The word *all* is frequently used in a loose or general sense; and here it must be viewed as indefinite; for, considering the numbers of fighting men in the eastern tribes (Num. xxxvi. 7), and the comparatively small levy of soldiers who actually went over to Canaan (see on ch. iv. 13), we must conclude that the "all" comprised the flower or choice of their warriors.

16. All that thou commandest us we will do. Their readiness to redeem their pledge, and the terms in which they answered the appeal of Joshua, displayed to great advantage their patriotic and pious feelings at so interesting a crisis.

CHAP. II. 1-7.—RAHAB RECEIVES AND CONCEALS THE TWO SPIES.

1. Joshua the son of Nun sent out of Shittim two men to spy secretly. Faith is manifested

by an active persevering use of means (Jas. ii. 22); and accordingly Joshua, while confiding in the accomplishment of the Divine promise (ch. i. 3), adopted every precaution which a skilful general could think of to render his first attempt in the invasion of Canaan successful. Two spies were despatched to reconnoitre the country, particularly in the neighbourhood of Jericho; for, in the prospect of investing that place, it was desirable to obtain full information as to its site, its approaches, the weak and assailable parts of its walls, the character and resources of its inhabitants. This mission, which in many respects was a perilous one, for they had to swim across the swollen river, required the strictest privacy, and it seems to have been studiously concealed from the knowledge of the Israelites themselves, lest any unfavourable or exaggerated report, publicly circulated, might have dispirited the people, as that of the spies did in the days of Moses. Jericho [יְרִיחוֹ, also יְרִיחוֹ (Num. xxii. 1) and יְרִיחוֹ (1 Ki. xvi. 34); Septuagint, Ἰερικὸς; classical writers, Ἰερικουσίς]. Some derive this name from a word signifying 'new moon,' in reference to the crescent-like plain in which it stood, formed by an amphitheatre of hills; others, from a word signifying 'its scent,' on account of the fragrance of the balsam and palm trees in which it was embosomed. Its site was long supposed to be represented by the small mud-walled hamlet Er-Rihia (*Reland's* 'Palestina,' pp. 383, 829; *Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' ii., pp. 279, 285); but recent researches have fixed on a spot about half an hour's journey westward, where large ruins exist, and about six or eight miles distant from the Jordan. It stood at the western extremity of a great palm forest, nearly three miles broad and eight miles long, but of which not a vestige now remains (*Stanley's* 'Sinai and Palestine,' p. 301). It was for that age a strongly-fortified town, the key of the eastern pass through the deep ravine, now called Wady-Kelt, into the interior of Palestine. they went, and came into an harlot's house [וְהָיָה, a prostitute: part. from הָיָה, to commit fornication, to play the whore]. Many expositors, desirous of removing the stigma of this name from an ancestress of the Saviour (Matt. i. 5), have called her a hostess or tavern-keeper [deriving the word from הָיָה, to nourish].

- 2 And ^ait was told the king of Jericho, saying, Behold, there came men in hither to-night of the children of Israel to search out the country.
- 3 And the king of Jericho sent unto Rahab, saying, Bring forth the men that are come to thee, which are entered into thine house: for they be come to search out all the country.
- 4 And ^ethe woman took the two men, and hid them, and said thus,
- 5 There came men unto me, but I wist not whence they *were*: and it came to pass, *about the time* of shutting of the gate, when it was dark, that the men went out: whither the men went I wot not: pursue after them
- 6 quickly; for ye shall overtake them. But ^fshe had brought them up to the roof of the house, and hid them with the stalks of flax, which she
- 7 had laid in order upon the roof. And the men pursued after them the way to Jordan unto the fords: and as soon as they which pursued after them were gone out, they shut the gate.
- 8 And, before they were laid down, she came up unto them upon the
- 9 roof; and she said unto the men, I know that the LORD hath given you the land, and that your ^gterror is fallen upon us, and that all the
- 10 inhabitants of the land ^hfaint because of you. For we have heard how

B. C. 1151.
^a Ps 127. 1.
 Pro. 21. 30.
 Isa. 43. 13.
^b Ex. 1. 19.
 2 Sam. 16.
 13. 10.
 2 Sam. 17.
 19.
 2 Ki. 6. 19.
 Heb. 11. 31.
^c Ex. 1. 17.
 2 Sam. 17.
 19.
^d Gen. 35. 5.
 Ex. 15. 15.
 Ex. 21. 27.
 Dent. 2. 25.
 Dent. 11. 15.
 Deut. 24. 10.
 Judg. 7. 11.
^e m: t
^f m: t
 Ex. 15. 15.

This view is strenuously supported by *Dr. Adam Clarke*; and he further defends it by the authority of the Chaldee Paraphrast [who renders the *itetha pundeketha*, a woman, an innkeeper, the Chaldee *pundak* being an evident corruption of the Greek *πανδοκειου*, an inn, as *Buxtorf* has remarked.] But scriptural usage (Lev. xxi. 7-14; Deut. xxiii. 18; Judg. xi. 1; 1 Ki. iii. 16), the authority of the Septuagint [*παρρη*], followed by the apostles (Heb. xi. 31; Jas. ii. 25), and the immemorial style of Eastern khans, which are never kept by women, establish the propriety of the term employed in our version. Her house was probably recommended to the spies by the convenience of its situation, without any knowledge of the character of the inmates. But a Divine influence directed them in the choice of that lodging-place.

2. it was told the king—by the sentinels who at such a time of threatened invasion would be posted on the eastern frontier, and whose duty required them to make a strict report to headquarters of the arrival of all strangers. The king was of course only a petty, though independent, ruler, each of the cities of Canaan at this period being governed by its own *melek*.

4. the woman took the two men and hid them—*lit.*, him; *i. e.*, each of them in separate places, of course previous to the appearance of the royal messengers, and in anticipation of a speedy search after her guests. True to the laws of hospitality, for which Orientals generally, and the women particularly, have ever been famous, she, at the imminent risk of her own life, protected her guests from their pursuers. According to Eastern manners, which pay an almost superstitious respect to a woman's apartment, the royal messengers did not demand admittance to search, but asked her to bring the foreigners. 5. the time of shutting of the gate. The gates of all Oriental cities are closed at sunset, after which there is no possibility either of admission or egress; and in the East there is scarcely any twilight; 'sunset,' therefore, is a period 'when it is dark.' the men went out. This was a palpable deception. But, as lying is a common vice among heathen people, Rahab was probably unconscious of its moral guilt, especially as she resorted to it as a means for screening her guests; and she might deem herself bound to do it by the laws of Eastern hospitality, which make it a point of honour to preserve the greatest enemy,

if he has once eaten one's salt. Judged by the Divine law, her answer was a sinful expedient; but her infirmity being united with faith, she was graciously pardoned, and her service accepted (Jas. ii. 25). 6. she had brought them up to the roof of the house, and hid them with the stalks of flax. Flax, with other vegetable productions, is at a certain season spread out on the flat roofs of Eastern houses to be dried in the sun; and after lying awhile it is piled up in numerous little stacks, which, from the luxuriant growth of the flax, rise to a height of three or four feet. Behind some of these stacks Rahab concealed the spies. 'The stalks of flax had no doubt just been cut down, and she had spread them upon the roof of her house to steep and to season, for it was harvest (see on ch. iii. 15). It would seem that the flax and the barley were crops which ripened about the same time in Egypt; and as the climate of Canaan did not differ materially from that of Egypt, this no doubt was the case in Canaan too; so that the flax stalks must have been newly reaped. Here I see truth; yet how very minute is this incident! how very casually does it present itself to our notice! how very unimportant a matter it seems in the first instance under what the spies were hidden! Enough that, whatever it was, it answered the purpose and saved their lives. Could the historian have contemplated for one moment the effect which a trifle about a flax-stalk might have in corroboration of his account of the passage of the Jordan?' (*Blunt's* 'Undesigned Coincidences,' p. 106). 7. the men pursued after them the way to Jordan unto the fords. That river is crossed at several well-known fords. The first and second immediately below the sea of Galilee (*Irby and Mangles*, pp. 296, 301; *Seetzen*, p. 351; *Buckingham*, p. 448; *Burckhardt*, p. 344; *Van de Velde*, ii. 477; *Stanley*, 'Sinai and Palestine,' pp. 322, 335), the third and fourth immediately above and below the pilgrims' bathing-place, opposite Jericho (see all of them alluded to in Judg. iii. 28; 1 Sam. xiii. 7; 2 Sam. ii. 29; x. 17; xvii. 22; xix. 15). as soon as they which pursued after them were gone out, they shut the gate. This precaution was to ensure the capture of the spies, should they have been lurking in the city.

8-21.—THE COVENANT BETWEEN HER AND THEM.

8. before they were laid down—*lit.*, they had not yet lain down (see on Gen. ii. 5). she came up unto them upon the roof; and . . . said. Rahab's

- the LORD dried ^b up the water of the Red sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt; and ⁱ what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that *were* on the other side Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed.
- 11 And as soon as we had ^j heard *these things*, ^k our hearts did melt, neither ^l did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you: for ^m the LORD your God, he *is* God in heaven above, and in earth beneath.
- 12 Now therefore, I pray you, ⁿ swear unto me by the LORD, since I have showed you kindness, that ye will also show kindness unto ^o my father's
- 13 house, and give me a true token: and *that* ye will save alive my father, and my mother, and my brethren, and my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death.
- 14 And the men answered her, Our life ^p for yours, if ye utter not this our business. And it shall be, when the LORD hath given us the land, that ^q we will deal kindly and truly with thee.
- 15 Then she ^r let them down by a cord through the window; for her house
- 16 *was* upon the town wall, and she dwelt upon the wall. And she said unto them, Get you to the mountain, lest the pursuers meet you; and hide yourselves there three days, until the pursuers be returned: and afterward may you go your way.
- 17 And the men said unto her, We *will be* blameless ^s of this thine oath
- 18 which thou hast made us swear: behold, *when* we come into the land, thou shalt bind this line of scarlet thread in the window which thou didst let us down by: ^t and thou shalt ^u bring thy father, and thy mother,
- 19 and thy brethren, and all thy father's household, home unto thee. And it shall be, *that* whosoever shall go ^v out of the doors of thy house into the street, his blood *shall be* upon his head, and we *will be* guiltless; and whosoever shall be with thee in the house, ^w his blood *shall be* on our
- 20 head, if *any* hand be upon him. And if thou utter this our business, then we will be quit of thine oath which thou hast made us to swear.
- 21 And she said, According unto your words, so *be* it. And she sent them away, and they departed: and she bound the scarlet line in the window.
- 22 And they went, and came unto the mountain, and abode there three days, until the pursuers were returned: and the pursuers sought *them* throughout all the way, but found *them* not.

- B. C. 1451.
- ^a Ex. 14. 21.
ch. 4. 23.
- ^b Num. 21. 24.
31, 35.
- ^c Ex. 15. 14.
15.
- ^d ch. 5. 1.
ch. 7. 5.
Isa. 13. 7.
- ^e rose up.
- ^f Deut. 4. 39.
1 Ki. 8. 60.
Ps. 83. 18.
Ps. 102. 15.
Jer. 16. 19-21.
Dan. 4. 34.
35.
Zech. 8. 20-23.
- ^g 1 Sam. 20.
14, 15, 17.
- ^h Eph. 6. 1, 2.
1 Tim. 5. 8.
- ⁱ instead of you to die.
- ^j Judg. 1. 24.
Matt. 5. 7.
- ^k Ac's 9. 25.
Heb. 11. 31.
- ^l Ex. 20. 7.
- ^m Gen. 7. 1.
Gen. 12. 2.
Gen. 19. 13-17.
ch. 6. 23.
Esth 8. 6.
Luke 19. 9.
Acts 10. 27.
33.
Acts 11. 14.
- ⁿ gather.
- ^o Num 35, 23, 27.
- ^p Matt. 27. 23.

dialogue is full of interest, as showing the universal panic and consternation of the Canaanites on the one hand (ch. xxiv. 11; Deut. ii. 25), and her strong convictions on the other, founded on a knowledge of the Divine promise, and the stupendous miracles that had opened the way of the Israelites to the confines of the promised land. She was convinced of the supremacy of Jehovah; and her earnest stipulations for the preservation of her relatives, amid the perils of the approaching invasion, attest the sincerity and strength of her faith.

14. the men answered her, Our life for yours. This was a solemn pledge—a virtual oath, though the name of God is not mentioned; and the words “if ye utter not this our business” were added, not as a condition of their fidelity, but as necessary for her safety, which might be endangered if the private agreement was divulged.

15. her house was upon the town wall. In many Oriental cities houses are built on the walls with overhanging windows; in others the town wall forms the back wall of the house, so that the window opens into the country. Rahab's was probably of this latter description, and the cord or rope sufficiently strong to bear the weight of a man. 16. she said—rather, ‘she had said;’ for

what follows must have been part of the previous conversation. Get you to the mountain. A range of white limestone hills extends on the north, called Quarantania (now Jebel-Karantul), rising to a height of from 1,200 to 1,500 feet, and the sides of which are perforated with caves. Some one peak adjoining was familiarly known to the inhabitants as “the mountain.” The prudence and propriety of the advice to flee in that direction, rather than to the ford, were made apparent by the sequel.

19. his blood shall be upon his head [חַיָּוִת]. The word, being in the singular, implies that the relative of Rahab who breaks the stipulated terms by venturing abroad at the time of the impending siege, shall be himself, and no one else, the cause of his own death. [חַיָּוִתִּים, in the plural, bloods, is used by David to the Amalekite in reference to his blood-guiltiness in slaying Saul (2 Sam. i. 16).] 21. she bound the scarlet line in the window—probably soon after the departure of the spies. It was not formed, as Harmer supposes, into network, as a lattice, but simply to hang down the wall. Its red colour made it conspicuous; and it was thus a sign and pledge of safety to Rahab's house, as the bloody mark on the lintels of the houses of the Israelites in Egypt to that people.

23 So the two men returned, and descended from the mountain, and passed over, and came to Joshua the son of Nun, and told him all things
24 that befell them: and they said unto Joshua, Truly ^uthe LORD hath delivered into our hands all the land; for even all the inhabitants of the country do ^vfaint because of us.

3 AND Joshua rose early in the morning; and they removed from ^aShittim, and came to Jordan, he and all the children of Israel, and lodged there before they passed over.

2 And it came to pass ^bafter three days, that the officers went through the host; and they commanded the people, saying, ^cWhen ye see the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, ^dand the priests the Levites bearing it, then ye shall remove from your place, and go after it. Yet ^ethere shall be a space between you and it, about two thousand cubits by measure: come not near unto it, that ye may know the way by which ye must go: for ye have not passed ^fthis way ¹heretofore.

5 And Joshua said unto the people, Sanctify ^fyourself: for to-morrow the LORD will do wonders among you.

6 And Joshua spake unto the priests, saying, ^gTake up the ark of the covenant, and pass over before the people. And they took up the ark of the covenant, and went before the people.

7 And the LORD said unto Joshua, ^hThis day will I begin to ²magnify thee in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, ³so I will be with thee. And thou shalt command the priests that bear the ark of the covenant, saying, When ye are come to the brink of the water of Jordan, ye shall stand still in Jordan.

9 And Joshua said unto the children of Israel, Come hither, and hear
10 the words of the LORD your God. And Joshua said, Hereby ye shall

B. C. 1451.

^u Ex. 23. 31.

ch. 6. 2.

ch. 21. 44.

⁷ melt.

Ex. 15. 15.

Ex. 23. 27.

Deut. 2. 25.

CHAP. 3.

^a Num. 25. 1.

Num. 33. 49.

ch. 2. 1.

^b ch. 1. 10, 11.^c Num. 10. 33.^d Deut. 31. 9.^e Ex. 19. 12.

Deut. 28. 58.

1 Chr. 16. 30.

Ps. 2. 11.

Ps. 96. 9.

Feb. 12. 23.

¹ since yesterday and the third day.^f Ex. 19. 10.

Lev. 20. 7.

Num. 11. 13.

ch. 7. 13.

1 Sam. 16. 5.

Joel 2. 16.

^h Num. 4. 15.

ch. 4. 14.

1 Chr. 29. 25.

2 Chr. 1. 1.

CHAP. III. 1-6.—JOSHUA COMES TO JORDAN.

1. Joshua rose early in the morning—*i. e.*, on the day following that on which the spies had returned with their encouraging report, the camp was broken up in "Shittim" (the acacia groves), and removed from the terraced heights of the valley to the eastern bank of the Jordan. The duration of their stay is indicated (*v.* 2), being, according to Hebrew reckoning, only one entire day, including the evening of arrival and the morning of the passage; and such a time would be absolutely necessary for so motley an assemblage of men, women, and children, with all their gear and cattle, to make ready for going into an enemy's country. lodged there before they passed over—*lit.*, 'they had not yet passed over' (see on ch. ii. 8; Gen. ii. 5).

2. the officers went through the host; 3. And they commanded the people. The instructions given at this time and in this place were different from those described, ch. i. 11, having a direct reference to the act and order of the approaching passage. When ye see the ark, &c. The usual position of the ark, when at rest, was in the centre of the camp; and during a march, in the middle of the procession. On this occasion it was to occupy the van, and be borne not by the Kohathite Levites, but the priests, as on all solemn and extraordinary occasions (*cf.* Num. iv. 15; ch. vi. 6; 1 Ki. viii. 3-6). then ye shall . . . go after it, 4. Yet there shall be a space between it and you. These instructions refer exclusively to the advance into the river. The distance which the people were to keep in the rear of the ark was nearly a mile: had they crowded too near the ark, the view would have been intercepted, and this intervening space, therefore, was ordered, that the chest containing the sacred symbols might be distinctly visible to all parts of the camp, and

be recognized as their guide in the untrodden way.

5. Joshua said unto the people—rather 'had said;' for, as he speaks of "to-morrow," the address must have been made previous to the day of crossing, and the sanctification was in all probability the same as Moses had commanded before the giving of the law, consisting of an outward cleansing (*Exod.* xix. 10-15), preparatory to that serious and devout state of mind with which so great a manifestation should be witnessed.

6. Joshua spake unto the priests. This order to the priests would be given privately; and involving, as it did, an important change in the established order of march, it must be considered as announced in the name and by the authority of God. Moreover, as soon as the priests stepped into the waters of the Jordan, they were to stand still. The ark was to accomplish what had been done by the rod of Moses.

7, 8.—THE LORD ENCOURAGETH JOSHUA.

7. The Lord said unto Joshua, This day will I begin to magnify thee. Joshua had already received distinguished honours (*Exod.* xxiv. 13; *Deut.* xxxi. 7). But a higher token of the Divine favour was now to be publicly bestowed on him, and evidence given, in the same unmistakable manner, that his mission and authority were from God, as were those of Moses (*Exod.* xiv. 31).

9-13.—JOSHUA ENCOURAGETH THE PEOPLE.

9. Come hither and hear the words of the Lord. It seems that the Israelites had no intimation how they were to cross the river till shortly before the event. The premonitory address of Joshua, taken in connection with the miraculous result exactly as he had described it, would tend to increase and confirm their faith in the God of their fathers, as not a dull, senseless, inanimate thing, like the idols of the nations, but a Being of

know that the 'living God *is* among you, and *that* he will without fail 'drive out from before you the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Hivites, and the Perizzites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Jebusites. Behold, the ark of the covenant of ^kthe Lord of all the earth passeth over before you into Jordan. Now therefore 'take you 11 twelve men out of the tribes of Israel, out of every tribe a man. And it shall come to pass, as soon as the soles of the feet of the priests that bear the ark of the LORD, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of Jordan, *that* the waters of Jordan shall be cut off *from* the waters that come down from above; and they ^mshall stand upon an heap. 14 And it came to pass, when the people removed from their tents, to pass over Jordan, and the priests bearing the ⁿark of the covenant before the people; and as they that bare the ark were come unto Jordan, and the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brim of the water, (for ^oJordan overfloweth all his banks ^pall the time of harvest,) 16 that the waters which came down from above stood *and* rose up upon an heap very far from the city Adam, that *is* beside ^qZaretan: and those that came down toward ^rthe sea of the plain, *even* ^sthe salt sea, failed, *and* were cut off: and the people passed over right against Jericho. 17 And the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, 'and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground, until all the people were passed clean over Jordan.

B. C. 1451.
 1 Deut. 5. 26.
 1 Sam. 17. 26.
 2 Ki. 19. 4.
 Ex. 33. 2.
 Deut. 7. 1.
 Ps. 44. 2.
 Job 41. 11.
 Ps. 24. 1.
 Mic. 4. 13.
 Zech. 4. 14.
 Zech. 6. 5.
 1 ch. 4. 2.
 Ps. 78. 13.
 Ps. 114. 3.
 Acts 7. 45.
 1 Chr. 12. 15.
 Occasioned by the melting of the snow on Lebanon.
 2 ch. 4. 18.
 ch. 5. 10, 12.
 1 Ki. 4. 12.
 Deut. 3. 17.
 Gen. 14. 3.
 Ex. 14. 29.

life, power, and activity, to defend them and work for them.

14-17.—THE WATERS OF JORDAN ARE DIVIDED. 14. And it came to pass, &c. To understand the scene described, we must imagine the band of priests, with the ark on their shoulders, standing on the depressed edge of the river, while the mass of the people were at a mile's distance. Suddenly the whole bed of the river was dried up—a spectacle the more extraordinary that it took place in the time of harvest, corresponding to our April or May, when 'the Jordan overfloweth all its banks.' The original word [כִּי־יִבֹרֵךְ] may be more properly rendered 'fills all its banks'; its channel, snow-fed from Anti-Lebanon, or Hermon, is at its greatest height—brim full: a translation which gives the only true description of the state of Jordan in harvest, as observed by modern travellers (cf. 1 Chr. xii. 15; *Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' ii, p. 262; *Wilson's* 'Lands of the Bible,' ii, p. 18). The river from Jericho is, in ordinary appearance, about fifty or sixty yards in breadth. But as seen in harvest, it is twice as broad; and in ancient times, when the hills on the right and left were much more drenched with rain and snow than since the forests have disappeared, the river must, from a greater accession of water, have been broader still than at harvest-time in the present day. Unlike other streams which are generally bordered with meadows or cultivated fields, almost to the water's edge, Jordan has at least two banks; after descending the first of which, there appears a spacious and level plain, extending to the breadth of a furlong. It is a dry expanse of sand and gravel, over which one may walk without having the least suspicion, except from the distant ripple of the waves, that any current is near; for the inner bank, which forms the boundary of the river in its natural state, is so completely overspread with thickets of willows, reeds, tamarisks, and other wild shrubs, as keep the river entirely out of view. At the annual season of harvest the volume of water in the Jordan becomes so greatly increased that the

whole even of the outermost channel is covered. 16. the waters which came down [יְרֵדוּן]—descended rapidly. from above—*i. e.*, from the sea of Galilee. stood and rose up upon an heap [יָבֹרֵךְ], one mound; Septuagint, πηγμα ἕν] (Ps. xxxiii. 7; lxxviii. 13; see on Exod. xv. 8)—a firm, compact barrier. very far [Septuagint, μακρὰν σφοδρὰ σφοδρῶς]—*i. e.*, high up the stream. from the city Adam, that is beside Zaretan [אֶדְמָה], in Adam the city]—Zarthan or Zartamah, near mount Sartabel, in the northern part of the Ghor (1 Ki. iv. 12; vii. 46) [the Septuagint has, instead of these names, εἰς μέρους Καριαΐαριμ] (Gen. xiv. 5)—*i. e.*, a distance of thirty miles from the Israelitish encampment; and 'those that came down towards the sea of the desert' [יַם הַדְּבַר], the sea of the Arabah; Septuagint, ἡ θαλάσση Ἀραβα: cf. Deut. iv. 49]—the Dead Sea—failed, and were cut off (Ps. cxiv. 2, 3). The river was thus dried up as far as the eye could reach. Jordan takes its name, 'the Descender,' from the force of its current, which, after passing the sea of Galilee, becomes greatly increased as it plunges through twenty-seven 'horrible rapids and cascades,' besides a great many lesser, through a fall of 1,000 feet, averaging from four to five miles an hour (*Lynch*, 'Report of American Expedition,' pp. 149, 205; *Stanley*, 'Sinai and Palestine,' p. 276; *Lieutenant Symond's* 'Survey'). When swollen 'in time of harvest' it flows with a vastly accelerated current. right against Jericho [יְרֵדוּן]—in front, in full view of. The exact spot is unknown; but it cannot be that fixed by Greek tradition—the pilgrims' bathing-place—both because it is too much to the north, and the eastern banks are there sheer precipices of ten or fifteen feet high (*Van de Velde*, ii, p. 272). *Stanley* says, 'It was probably at the point, near the present southern fords, crossed at the time of the Christian era by a bridge (*Josephus*, 'Antiquities,' b. v., ch. 1, sec. 3). 17. the priests . . . and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground. The river about Jericho has a firm pebbly bottom, on which the host might pass

- 4 AND it came to pass, when all the people were clean passed ^o over
 2 Jordan, that the LORD spake unto Joshua, saying, 'Take ^b you twelve men
 3 out of the people, out of every tribe a man, and command ye them,
 saying, 'Take you hence out of the midst of Jordan, out of the place
 where the priests' feet stood firm, twelve stones; and ye shall carry them
 over with you, and leave them in the lodging place where ye shall lodge
 4 this night. Then Joshua called the twelve men, whom he had prepared
 5 of the children of Israel, out of every tribe a man: and Joshua said unto
 them, Pass over before the ark of the LORD your God into the midst of
 Jordan, and take you up every man of you a stone upon his shoulder,
 6 according unto the number of the tribes of the children of Israel: that
 this may be a sign among you, *that* when ^c your children ask *their fathers*
 7 ¹ in time to come, saying, What *mean* ye by these stones? then ye shall
 answer them, That ^d the waters of Jordan were cut off before the ark of
 the covenant of the LORD; when it passed over Jordan, the waters of
 Jordan were cut off: and these stones shall be for a ^e memorial unto the
 children of Israel for ever.
- 8 And the children of Israel did so as Joshua commanded, and took up
 twelve stones out of the midst of Jordan, as the LORD spake unto Joshua,
 according to the number of the tribes of the children of Israel, and
 carried them over with them unto the place where they lodged, and laid
 9 them down there. And Joshua ^f set up twelve stones in the midst of
 Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests which bare the ark of
 the covenant stood: and they are there ² unto this day.
- 10 For the priests which bare the ark stood in the midst of Jordan, until
 every thing was finished that the LORD commanded Joshua to speak

B C 14:1
 CHAP. 4.
 " Deut. 27. 2.
 ch 3. 17.
 " Num. 1. 4-
 15.
 Num 13. 2.
 Num. 34. 13.
 Deut. 1. 23.
 ch 3. 12.
 1 Ki. 18. 31.
 Matt. 10. 1-
 5.
 " Ex. 12. 26,
 27.
 Ex. 13. 14.
 Deut 6. 20,
 21.
 Deut 11 19.
 Ps 44. 1.
 Ps. 48. 13,
 14.
 Ps 78. 3-6,
 I-a. 38. 15.
 Acts 2. 39.
¹ to-morrow.
 " ch 3. 13.
 " Ex. 12. 14.
 Num. 16. 40.
 1 Cr. 11. 24.
 f Gen. 28. 13.
 ch. 24 27.
 1 Sam. 7. 12.
² B. C. 14:7.

without inconvenience when the water was cleared off.

CHAP. IV. 1-8.—TWELVE STONES TAKEN FOR A MEMORIAL OUT OF JORDAN.

1. The Lord spake unto Joshua saying, 2. Take you twelve men—each representing a tribe. They had been previously chosen for this service (ch. iii. 12), and the repetition of the command is made here solely to introduce the account of its execution. Though Joshua had been divinely instructed to erect a commemorative pile, the representatives were not apprised of the work they were to do till the time of the passage. 4. Joshua called the twelve men. They had probably, from a feeling of reverence, kept back, and were standing on the eastern bank. They were now ordered to advance, and picking up each a stone, probably as large as he could carry, from around the spot in the channel "where the priests stood," pass over before the ark, and deposit the stones in the place of next encampment (cv. 19, 20)—viz., Gilgal. 6. That this may be a sign among you. The erection of cairns, or huge piles of stones, as monuments of remarkable incidents, has been common amongst all people, especially in the early and rude periods of their history; and it is practised by the Arabs still ('Researches and Missionary Labours,' by *Joseph Wolff*, p. 492). They are the established means of perpetuating the memory of important transactions, especially amongst the nomadic people of the East; and although there be no inscription engraven on them, the history and object of such simple monuments are traditionally preserved from age to age. Similar was the purpose contemplated by the conveyance of the twelve stones to Gilgal: it was that these might be a standing record to posterity of the miraculous passage of the Jordan.

8. the children of Israel did so—that is, it was done by their twelve representatives.

9.—TWELVE STONES SET UP IN THE MIDST OF JORDAN.

9. Joshua set up twelve stones . . . in the place where the feet of the priests . . . stood. In addition to the memorial just described, there was another memento of the miraculous event, a duplicate of the former, set up in the river itself, on the very spot where the ark had rested. This heap of stones might have been a large and compactly-built one, and visible in the ordinary state of the river. As nothing is said whence these stones were got, some have imagined that they might have been gathered in the adjoining fields, and deposited by the people as they passed the appointed spot. [*Kennicott* proposes here to follow the Syriac version in reading קָרְנֵי , from the midst, instead of קָרְנֵי , intimating that there was only one set of stones—viz., that taken from the mid channel of the river. This suggested emendation, however, is not supported by MSS. authority; and the Septuagint says expressly, $\alpha\lambda\lambda\omicron\upsilon\sigma\ \delta\alpha\delta\epsilon\kappa\alpha\ \lambda\iota\theta\omicron\upsilon\sigma$, other twelve stones.] they are there unto this day—at least twenty years after the event, if we reckon by the date of this history (ch. xxiv. 26); and much later, if the words in the latter clause were inserted by Samuel or Ezra.

10-13.—THE PEOPLE PASS OVER.

10. the priests which bare the ark stood in the midst of Jordan. This position was well calculated to animate the people, who, with their wives and children placed in the centre, 'as if being afraid for them lest they should be borne away by the stream' (*Josephus*, 'Antiquities,' b. v., ch. 1, sec. 3), probably crossed below the ark, as well as to facilitate Joshua's execution of the minutest instructions respecting the passage (Num. xxvii. 21-23). The unflinching confidence of the priests contrasts strikingly with the conduct of the people, who "hasted and passed over." Their faith, like that of many of God's people, was,

unto the people, according to all that Moses commanded Joshua: and
 11 the people hasted and passed over. And it came to pass, when all the
 people were clean passed over, that the ark of the LORD passed over, and
 the priests, in the presence of the people.
 12 And ^g the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, and half the
 tribe of Manassch, passed over armed before the children of Israel, as
 13 Moses spake unto them: about forty thousand ³ prepared for war passed
 over before the LORD unto battle, to the plains of Jericho.
 14 On that day the LORD ^h magnified Joshua in the sight of all Israel;
 and they feared him, as they feared Moses, all the days of his life.
 15, And the LORD spake unto Joshua, saying, Command the priests
 16 that bear ⁱ the ark of the testimony, that they come up out of Jordan.
 17 Joshua therefore commanded the priests, saying, Come ^j ye up out of
 18 Jordan. And it came to pass, when the priests that bare the ark of the
 covenant of the LORD were come up out of the midst of Jordan, and the
 soles of the priests' feet were ^k lifted up unto the dry land, that the
 waters of Jordan returned unto their place, and ^l flowed over all his
 banks, as *they did* before.

B. C. 1451.
^g Num. 32, 20, 32.
³ Or, ready armed.
^h ch. 1, 16, 13, ch. 3, 7.
¹ Sam. 2, 30, 1 Chr. 29, 12, 25.
² Chr. 1, 1, 2 Chr. 32, *3.
ⁱ Ex. 25, 16, Rev. 11, 19.
^j Gen. 8, 16, 18, Dan. 3, 26, Acts 16, 23.
^k plucked up.
^l went, ch. 3, 16, Isa. 8, 8.

through the weakness of nature, blended with fears. But perhaps their 'haste' may be viewed in a more favourable light, as indicating the alacrity of their obedience; or it might have been enjoined, in order that the whole multitude might pass in one day. **11. the ark . . . passed over.** The ark is mentioned as the efficient cause: it had been the first to move—it was the last to leave; and its movements arrested the deep attention of the people, who probably stood on the opposite bank, rapt in admiration and awe of this closing scene. **and the priests, in the presence of the people.** [The Septuagint has: *οἱ λίθοι ἔμπροσθεν αὐτῶν*, and the stones before them.] It was a great miracle, greater even than the passage of the Red Sea, in this respect, that it was performed on a large river, remarkable for the extraordinary rapidity of its current, and at the season of its fullest volume. No doubt Israel could have effected their entrance into Canaan without a miracle, as they could have passed from Egypt into Canaan without the necessity of going through the midst of the Red Sea. But the necessity for these miracles was a moral, not a physical one; and in that view, both of them were subservient to the purpose of teaching various fundamental truths of religion. They were calculated to convince the Israelites of God's presence and nearness to them; and the people of the surrounding countries, that while the gods of the heathen were nonentities, Jehovah was the living God, the Almighty and Sovereign Controller of all nature. And those lessons were effectually taught; for while the awful displays of Divine omnipotence paralyzed the nations with terror and despair, the revelation of God's power and grace in favour of the Israelites produced a most animating effect on the faith and courage of that people, and at the same time deepened their sense of dependence upon Him for their easy acquisition of the promised land. They were made to feel, both by the miraculous ebb of the Jordan, and by other miracles afterwards performed, that they were saved, not by their own sword and bow, but by the right hand of the Lord; and that their possession of Canaan was not the fruit of their conquest, but the gift of God.

order of march was departed from; but these are honourably mentioned, to show that, in pursuance of their engagement (ch. i. 16-18), they had sent a complement of fighting men to accompany their brethren in the war of invasion. **13. to the plains of Jericho.** That part of the Arabah or Ghor on the west is about seven miles broad from the Jordan to the mountain entrance at Wady-Kelt. Though now desert, this valley was in ancient times richly covered with wood: an immense palm forest, seven miles long, surrounded Jericho.

14-24.—GOD MAGNIFIES JOSHUA.
14. On that day the Lord magnified Joshua. It appeared clear, from the chief part he acted, that he was the divinely-appointed leader; for even the priests did not enter the river or quit their position except at his command; and thenceforward his authority in his new office appeared as legitimate, and was as firmly established, as that of his predecessor. By the performance of a miracle so closely resembling the passage of the Red Sea, a striking attestation was given to the Divine promise—"As I was with Moses, so I will be with thee."

18. the priests that bare the ark . . . were come up out of the midst of Jordan, and the soles of the priests' feet were lifted up [פָּרְסוּ]—were *plucked* out of the miry, wet, sandy channel (*Josephus*, 'Antiquities,' b. v., ch. i., sec. 3), and placed on the dry land. Their crossing, which was the final act, completed the evidence of the miracle; for then, and not till then, the suspended laws of nature were restored, the waters returned to their place, and the river flowed with as full a current as before. It was a stupendous miracle; and although writers like *Stanley* suggest that the drying up of the river might have resulted from the natural agencies of earthquake and volcanic convulsion ('Lectures on the Jewish Church,' first series, p. 233; 'Sinai and Palestine,' p. 279), yet there is no possibility, by rationalistic insinuations, of evading the fact that the baring of the channel took place exactly as Joshua had foretold (ch. iii. 13), and ceased only on the removal of the ark from the river-bed. The miracle will appear the more stupendous when it is considered 'how many there were in this grand host that made the passage.' Just before crossing the Jordan, the number of fighting men was 601,730 (Num. xxvi. 51). Supposing each to be married, the number would be increased to 1,203,460; and allowing an average of but one

12. The children of Reuben . . . passed over armed before the children of Israel. There is no precedency to the other tribes indicated here, for there is no reason to suppose that the usual

19 And the people came up out of Jordan on the tenth *day* of the first
 20 month, and encamped ^k in Gilgal, in the east border of Jericho. And
 those twelve stones, which they took out of Jordan, did Joshua pitch in
 21 Gilgal. And he spake unto the children of Israel, saying, When your
 children shall ask their fathers ^l in time to come, saying, What *mean*
 22 these stones? then ye shall let your children know, saying, Israel came
 23 over this Jordan on dry land. For the LORD your God dried up the
 waters of Jordan from before you, until ye were passed over, as the LORD
 your God did to the Red sea, ^m which he dried up from before us, until
 24 we were gone over: that ⁿ all the people of the earth might know the
 hand of the LORD, that it *is* ^o mighty; that ye might ^p fear the LORD
 your God ^q for ever.
 5 AND it came to pass, when all the kings of the Amorites, which *were*

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^k ch. 6. 9.

ch. 15. 7.

^l to-mor-

row.

^m Ex. 14. 21.ⁿ 1 Kl. 8. 42.

2 Kl. 19. 19.

Ps. 103. 8.

^o Ex. 16. 15.

1 Chr 29. 12.

Ps. 89. 13.

^p Ex. 14. 31.

Deut. 6. 2.

Jer. 76. 6-8.

Jer. 10. 7.

^q all days.

child to each family, the number would become 1,805,190. Now, adding the Levites, of which there were 23,000 males alone (Num. xxvi. 62), the aged among the females, 'the mothers in Israel,'—for, according to Num. xxvi. 63-65, with the exception of four, all the men were young and in the prime of life, and, we will suppose, in fine health,—and making no further addition for captives, except that of the 33,000 taken from the Midianites not long before, and we shall have a host so nearly amounting to 2,000,000 that we may safely base our conclusions on that number. If any should still object, we would remind them that in this estimate nothing is said of the countless numbers of animals following the Israelites, and of which they had just before taken more than 800,000 sheep, beeves, and asses from the Midianites alone. With these statistics we can arrive at a conclusion which adds great interest to this sublime and exciting scene in the history of the Israelites. From the account given in Joshua (chs. iii. iv.), the host arose in the morning, completed the passage across the Jordan, until they "were clean passed over," and went into the plain of Jericho, at least some distance from the banks, to the site of Gilgal. This, we may suppose, occupied at the longest not more than half a day, or eight hours. Now, with these data before us, it appears that, so far from looking for a *point* or particular *place* of passage of the Israelites, we are to infer that the line of passage was not less than a mile, perhaps more, in length; and all suppositions heretofore made as to 'points' and 'fords' do not take into consideration the crowd and the haste; for they 'hasted to go over.' If we suppose that lines of 2,000 in number passed over at intervals of half a minute, then it would have required more than eight hours for the people to pass; and these lines (allowing but one and a half foot right and left of each person) would have extended considerably over *one mile*. A calculation making allowances for the irregularity of some, for the tents, baggage, and animals, would increase the time from a half minute to one minute for each line of 2,000; and as the time occupied is fixed, the line must be doubled to reach the same result, as an increase in space will compensate for loss of time; therefore the 4,000 would also double the length of 2,000, and become a line of passage considerably over *two miles* in extent. But in order to a full and practical understanding of this passage, it must be borne in mind that it was "right against Jericho;" and though the plain of Jericho may be meant, we shall see that there is a limit. Allowing but one yard square for each of the host to stand in, the whole number would require a place 1,414 yards, or nearly three-quarters of a mile, square; and, with their necessary baggage,

&c., fully one square mile. Therefore they must not only cross the river, but *average* a further travel of a half mile beyond (*Osborn's* 'Palestine, Past and Present,' pp. 419-421).

19. the people came up out of Jordan on the tenth day of the first month—i. e., the month Nisan, four days before the passover, and the very day when the paschal lamb required to be set apart, the providence of God having arranged that the entrance into the promised land should be at the feast, and encamped in Gilgal. The name is here given by anticipation (see on ch. v. 9). It was a tract of land, according to *Josephus* ('Antiquities,' b. v. ch. iv. sec. 2), fifty stadia (six and a half miles) from Jordan, and ten stadia (one and a quarter miles) from Jericho, at the eastern outskirts of the palm forest, and in the vicinity of the village Riha. But, according to *Robinson*, no trace either of its name or site remains. 20. those twelve stones . . . did Joshua pitch in Gilgal. Probably to render them more conspicuous, they might be raised on a foundation of earth and turf; and as the Hebrew word Gilgal signifies a circle, it may be applied either to a circular stone or a circular row of stones: so that Gilgal was a place for the assembling of the people, first, for religious purposes, and afterwards for general objects, especially for holding courts of justice (cf. ch. ix. 6; x. 6, 7; xiv. 6; xv. 7; 1 Sam. x. 8; xi. 14, 15; xiii. 4-9; xv. 21). Stonehenge, Crookem Tor on Dartmoor, and the Druidical circles were similar in construction, and devoted to analogous purposes. To find these stones is one of the objects contemplated by the Palestine Archæological Association, the council of which, in the prospectus issued October, 1854, use the following words regarding them:—"Doubtless these stones which Joshua pitched were large and remarkable, and were probably arranged numerically, and with some significant order, that their purpose might be ever afterwards recognized. Nor is it improbable that some name or device might have been put on them, to identify them individually with the tribes of Israel. The remote period of these stones would lead us to expect that they would, many years ago, have sunk into the earth, and would be hidden under an accumulation of mosses and herbage, but still not lost beyond the reach of diligent and skilful research." The pile was designed to serve a double purpose—that of impressing the heathen with a sense of the omnipotence of God, while at the same time it would teach an important lesson in religion to the young and rising Israelites in after-ages; and it became the first sanctuary in Canaan (v. 15), the earliest station of the tabernacle (ch. xviii. 1).

CHAP. V. 1.—THE CANAANITES AFRAID.

1. the kings of the Amorites . . . and . . .

on the side of Jordan westward, and all the kings of the Canaanites, ^a which were by the sea, heard ^b that the LORD had dried up the waters of Jordan from before the children of Israel, until we were passed over, that their heart melted, ^c neither was there spirit in them any more, because of the children of Israel.

- 2 At that time the LORD said unto Joshua, Make thee ¹ sharp knives,
 3 and circumcise again the children of Israel the second time. And Joshua made him sharp knives, and circumcised the children of Israel at
 4 ² the hill of the foreskins. And this *is* the cause why Joshua did circumcise: ^d All the people that came out of Egypt, *that were* males, *even* all the men of war, died in the wilderness by the way, after they came
 5 out of Egypt. Now all the people that came out were circumcised; but all the people *that were* born in the wilderness by the way as they came
 6 forth out of Egypt, *them* they had not circumcised. For the children of Israel walked ^e forty years in the wilderness, till all the people *that were* men of war, which came out of Egypt, were consumed, because they obeyed not the voice of the LORD: unto whom the LORD sware that ^f he would not show them the land which the LORD sware unto their fathers
 7 that he would give us, a land that floweth with milk and honey. And

B. C. 1451.

CHAP. 5.

^a Num. 13. 29.
Judg. 3. 3.^b Ex. 15. 11.
Ps. 48. 6.^c Eze. 21. 7.
^e 1 Sam. 25. 37.¹ Ki. 10. 5.
Isa. 13. 6-8.^d Eze. 21. 7.
Dan. 5. 6.¹ Or, knives of flints.
Ex. 4. 25.² Or, Gibeah-haaraloth.^d Num. 14. 29.
Num. 26. 64.

Dent. 2. 16.

^e Dent. 1. 3.
Ps. 15. 10.^f Heb. 3. 11.

Canaanites . . . by the sea. Under the former designation were included the people who inhabited the mountainous region in the centre and the south, a gigantic race (Deut. iv. 47; xxxi. 4; ch. ix. 10; Amos ii. 9), including the Hittites and Hivites; and under the latter, those who were on the sea-coast of Palestine as far south as Dor, and inland over the plain of Esdraelon, and inhabiting some places also in the Jordan valley, as Beth-shean, Zoar, and Sodom. The Amorites were the highlanders, or mountaineers; and the Canaanites were the lowlanders [Septuagint, *οἱ βασιλεῖς τῆς φοινίκης*, the kings of Phœnicia (cf. Exod. xv. 35, Septuagint)], the name "Canaanites" being sometimes used synonymously with 'Phœnicians' (*Kenrick's* 'Phœnicia,' pp. 42, 52). on the side of Jordan westward [מִן הַיַּם הַיַּרְדֵּן]—seaward; *i. e.*, westward. The author uses the word, from his point of view, to denote the western side, adding 'west' to prevent mistakes. their heart melted. They had probably reckoned on the swollen river interposing for a time a sure barrier of defence; but seeing it had been completely dried up, they were utterly paralyzed by so incontestable a proof that God was on the side of the invaders. In fact, the conquest had already begun in the total prostration of spirit among the native chiefs. "Their heart melted," but unhappily not into faith and penitent submission.

2.12. CIRCUMCISION IS RENEWED.

2. At that time—on the encampment being made after the passage. the Lord said unto Joshua, Make thee sharp knives [מַחֲרָאִים מַחֲרָאִים]; sharp knives (cf. Ps. lxxxix. 44, "edge of the sword"); but the Septuagint has *μαχαίρας* *πετρῖνας ἐκ πέτρης ἀκροτόμου*, stone knives, of sharp-pointed stone; taking *μαχ* in the sense of a rock, sharp and precipitous. So also Vulgate, Syriac, and Arabic render the word]—stone knives; *i. e.*, prepare, make them ready. Flints have been used in the early times of all people; and although the use of iron was known to the Hebrews in the days of Joshua, probably the want of a sufficient number of metallic implements dictated the employment of flints on this occasion (cf. Exod. iv. 25). *Harmer* ('Observations,' iv., p. 167) suggests another, though a fanciful, reason. 'Those who have given an account of the Egyptian way of embalming, tell us that it was

an Ethiopian stone, called *basaltes*, that was used for opening the body to be embalmed, by which embalming it acquired a sort of immortality. In this view, might not Joshua be enjoined to use a like kind of knives for the circumcising of the Israelites, which circumcision the Jews of after-times, at least, looked upon as a token and pledge of their resurrection from the dead, never to return to corruption? The precept to use stone knives might be intended to give some expectation of this nature.' Stone knives are still in Ethiopia (Abyssinia) used for religious purposes. **circumcise again the children of Israel the second time.**

—*lit.*, return and circumcise. The command did not require him to repeat the operation on those who had undergone it, but to resume the observance of the rite, which had been long discontinued. The language, however, evidently points to a general circumcising on some previous occasion, which, though unrecorded, must have been made before the celebration of the passover at Sinai (cf. Exod. xii. 48; Num. ix. 5), as a mixed multitude accompanied the camp. "The second time" of general circumcising was at the entrance into Canaan. 3. at the hill. Probably one of the argillaceous hills that form the highest terrace of the Jordan, or a rising ground at the palm forest. 4. this is the cause why Joshua did circumcise. The omission to circumcise the children born in the wilderness *might* have been owing to the incessant movements of the people; but it is most generally thought that the nation, being regarded as for a time disowned by God, was forbidden to take the sign of the covenant, to neglect which in other circumstances would have been visited with the severest penalties. The true cause was a temporary suspension of the covenant with the unbelieving race, who, being rejected of the Lord, and excommunicated, were thrust back into the standing-ground of the unclean (*Josephus*, 'Antiquities,' b. v., ch. i., sec. 4), and doomed to perish in the wilderness, and whose children had to bear the iniquity of their fathers (Num. xiv. 33), though, as the latter were to be brought into the promised land, the covenant would be renewed with them. 'When Joshua led them across the Jordan—that is, when God was about to establish the covenant—it was discovered that the former had all died, while the latter only remained alive. The covenant, therefore, was really established with those

- ⁹ their children, whom he raised up in their stead, them Joshua circumcised: for they were uncircumcised, because they had not circumcised 8 them by the way. And it came to pass, ³ when they had done circumcising all the people, that they abode in their places in the camp ⁴ till 9 they were whole. And the LORD said unto Joshua, This day have I rolled away ⁵ the reproach of Egypt from off you. Wherefore the name of the place is called ⁶ Gilgal unto this day.
- 10 And the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal, and kept the passover ⁷ on the fourteenth day of the month at even in the plains of Jericho.
- 11 And they did eat of the old corn of the land on the morrow after the passover, unleavened cakes, and parched corn in the self-same day.
- 12 And the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year.
- 13 And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up

B. C. 1451.

⁹ Num. 14. 51.
³ when the people had made an end to be circumcised.

⁴ Gen. 34. 25.
⁵ 1 Sam. 11. 6.
 Lev. 18. 3.
 ch. 24. 14.
 Ps. 119. 9.
 Eze. 21. 7.
 Eze. 23. 3, 8.

⁶ That is, Rolling.

⁷ Ex. 12. 6.
 Num. 9. 5.

who were uncircumcised, but had obeyed the voice of the Lord: it had been refused to those who, although circumcised, yet were a stiff-necked generation. At the same time, on these persons who thus received an earnest of the covenant, because they hearkened to Jehovah, the sign was affixed, to denote that they were introduced to the covenant ('Israel after the Flesh,' pp. 16, 25; *Havernick's* 'Introduction,' p. 157). 8. when they had done circumcising all the people. No mention is made of the two tribes and a half east of the Jordan; but it may be that the rite was performed amongst them at the same time. As the number of those born in the wilderness and uncircumcised must have been immense, a difficulty is apt to be felt how the rite could have been performed on such a multitude in so short a time. But it has been calculated that the proportion between those already circumcised (under twenty, when the doom was pronounced), and those to be circumcised, was one to four, and consequently, from so great a number of persons being free to operate, the whole ceremony could easily have been performed in a day. *Keil* calculates that, among the million of males who entered Canaan, 333,000 must have been under 20 years of age, and were consequently circumcised ('Commentary on Joshua,' p. 139). Circumcision being the sign and seal of the covenant, its performance was virtually an infeoffment in the promised land; and its being delayed till their actual entrance into the country was a wise and gracious act on the part of God, who postponed this trying duty till the hearts of the people, animated by the recent astonishing miracle, were prepared to obey the Divine will, which was the condition on which alone the terms of the national covenant would be fulfilled. they abode in their places in the camp till they were whole. That would be several days (see on Gen. xxxiv. 25-29). It is calculated that, of those who did not need to be circumcised, more than 50,000 were left to defend the camp, if an attack had been then made upon it. 9. rolled away the reproach of Egypt—the taunts industriously cast by that people upon Israel as nationally rejected by God by the cessation of circumcision (cf. Exod. xxxii. 12; Ps. xxxix. 8; Ezek. xvi. 57; xxxiv. 15) (*Rosenmüller*, in loco). But other texts seem to warrant the phrase being taken in a passive sense: that which exposes Egypt to reproach; viz., uncircumcision (cf. 1 Sam. xvii. 26); but see on Gen. xvii. 11, where it is shown that the rite of circumcision was to some extent practised in Egypt. *Gesenius* renders the words, 'the stain resting on Israel ever since their departure

out of Egypt.' But this rendering is not consistent with the view we have taken of the last clause of v. 2. *Rosenmüller's* interpretation, referring to the stigma arising from the lack of circumcision, is the best; and the renewal of that rite was a practical announcement of the restoration of the covenant (*Keil*). Gilgal גִּלְגָּל, a circle, a rolling away (*Golgotha* comes from the same root; the rolling away of the reproach of God's people), or generally with the article, הַגִּלְגָּל. Septuagint, Γάλγυλα. The word *Gilgal* was not at first applied to a city, though it was in later times (1 Sam. vii. 16). It was the first place pronounced "holy" in the Holy Land (v. 15) (*Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' ii., p. 287).

10. kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the month at even—the time fixed by the law (see Exod. xii. 18; Lev. xxiii. 5; Num. xxviii. 16). Thus the people having been circumcised, the national existence was commenced by a solemn act of religious dedication. There is no record of more than one passover having been observed during the whole sojourn in the wilderness (Num. ix. 1).

11. they did eat of the old corn [כֶּמֶן, corn; not "old corn," as in the English version]. This was conformably to the law (Lev. xxiii. 5-14). parched corn—new grain (see on Lev. xxiii. 10), probably lying in the fields. Roasted—a simple and primitive preparation, much liked in the East. The grains of wheat, in the harvest season, while they are not yet thoroughly dry and hard, are roasted in a pan, or on an iron plate, and constitute a very palatable article of food: this is eaten along with bread, or instead of it (cf. Ruth ii. 14) (*Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' ii., p. 394). This abundance of food led to the discontinuance of the manna; and the fact of its then ceasing, viewed in connection with its seasonable appearance in the barren wilderness, is a striking proof of its miraculous origin. It has been previously shown (Exod. xv. 27; xxxii. 6; Dent. xi. 6, 28; ch. i. 11) that the manna was not the sole food of the Israelites from the time of its first fall till this period. The supply of manna was given to relieve their necessities, when no other food was procurable, and it was given only to the extent and during the period their need required.

13-15. AN ANGEL APPEARS TO JOSHUA.

13. when Joshua was by Jericho—in the immediate vicinity of that city, probably engaged in surveying the fortifications, and in meditating the best plan of a siege. The effect of this impressive scene, here described, is greatly marred by the

his eyes and looked, and behold, there stood ^ka man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said
 14 unto him, *Art* thou for us, or for our adversaries? And he said, Nay; but *as* ⁵captain of the host of the LORD am I now come. And Joshua
 15 ^lfell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my Lord unto his servant? And the captain of the LORD's host said unto Joshua, ^mLoose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon
 6 thou standest *is* holy. And Joshua did so. NOW Jericho ¹was straitly shut up because of the children of Israel: none went out, and none came
 2 in. And the LORD said unto Joshua, See, "I have given into thine hand
 3 Jericho, and the king thereof, *and* the mighty men of valour. And ye shall compass the city, all *ye* men of war, *and* go round about the city
 4 once. Thus shalt thou do six days. And seven priests shall bear before the ark seven ^btrumpets of rams' horns: and the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times, and ^cthe priests shall blow with the
 5 trumpets. And it shall come to pass, that when they make a long *blast* with the ram's horn, *and* when ye hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout; and the wall of the city shall fall down ²flat, and the people shall ascend up every man straight before him.

B. C. 1451.
^k Gen. 18. 2.
 Ex. 23. 23.
 Zech. 1. 8.
 Acts 1. 10.
^l Or, prince.
 Dan. 10. 13, 21.
 Dan. 12. 1.
 Rev. 12. 7.
 Rev. 19. 11, 14.
^m Gen. 17. 3.
 Lev. 9. 24.
 Heb 1.2-11.
ⁿ Ex. 3. 5.
 Acts 7. 33.
 CHAP. 6.
 1 did shut up, and was shut up.
^a ch. 2. 9.
^b Judg. 7. 16.
^c Num. 10. 8.
 2 under it.

intervention of a new chapter, which breaks the continuity of the narrative. there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn. It is evident from the strain of the context that this was not a mere vision, but an actual appearance, the suddenness of which surprised, but did not daunt, the intrepid leader. 14. And he said, Nay [כִּי]—No, used absolutely in answer to a question, 'I am not; i. e., a man either of your party or of the enemy's. captain (Exod. xv. 8) of the host of the Lord—either the Israelitish people (Exod. vii. 4; xii. 41; Isa. lv. 4), or the angels (Ps. cxlviii. 2), or both included; and the Captain of it was the Angel of the Covenant, whose visible manifestations were varied according to the occasion, and who on this occasion appeared to conduct God's people into the land of promise. Some consider this to be the created angel (Exod. xxxiii. 2, 3) who was substituted for the Angel of the Presence (Exod. xxxiii. 20-23) in superintending the Sinaitic economy, after the grievous offence caused by the people in the affair of the golden calf. But the address and the adoration of Joshua, the holiness communicated to the spot by the presence of this Personage, and the application to him of the name Jehovah (ch. vi. 2), identify Him with the Angel of the Lord, the Second Person of the Trinity. His attitude of equipment betokened his approval of, and interest in, the war of invasion. Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship. The adoption by Joshua of this absolute form of prostration demonstrates the sentiments of profound reverence with which the language and majestic bearing of the stranger inspired him. The real character of this personage was disclosed by His accepting the homage of worship (cf. Acts x. 25, 26; Rev. xix. 10; xxii. 8, 9), and still further in the command, "Loose thy shoe from off thy foot." 15. for the place whereon thou standest is holy [קֹדֶשׁ הָאָרֶץ]—it is holiness (Exod. iii. 5).

CHAP. VI. 1-7.—JERICHO SHUT UP.
 1. Now Jericho was straitly shut up [חִטְּוּ יְרִיחוֹ]. And Jericho had shut its gates, and was fast shut up; where Kal seems to refer to the closing of the gates, and Pual as intens. to their being fastened with bolts and bars. [The Septuagint, *Kai* Ἰεριχώ συγκειλεισμένη καὶ ἀσχυρώμενη, and Jericho was shut together (i. e., closely

shut up) and fortified. Hence the Vulgate, Jericho autem clausa erat atque munita.] This verse is a parenthesis, introduced to prepare the way for the directions given by the Captain of the Lord's host. 2. See, I have given into thine hand. The language intimates that a purpose already formed was about to be carried into immediate execution; and that, although the king and inhabitants of Jericho were fierce and experienced warriors, who would make a stout and determined resistance, the Lord promised a certain and easy victory over them. Jericho, and the king thereof, and the mighty men of valour [יְרִיחוֹ וְהַמֶּלֶךְ וְהַגִּבּוֹרִים]—valiant warriors, as the phrase is used to signify, Judg. vi. 12; xi. 1; 1 Sam. ix. 1; 2 Ki. xv. 20; 1 Chr. vii. 5, 11, 40. But *and* is not in the Hebrew text; whence it may be inferred that the last words do not point to the defenders of the beleaguered city; but are directly connected with, and applied to, "Jericho, and the king thereof." [Accordingly, the Septuagint translates the original, Ἰδὸν ἐγὼ παραδίδωμι ὑποχείριον σοι τὴν Ἰεριχώ καὶ τὸν βασιλέα αὐτῆς τὸν ἐν αὐτῇ, ὀντατοῦς ὄντας ἐν ἰσχύϊ—I deliver into thine hand Jericho, and the king who is in it, being strong in military force.] 3. ye shall compass the city. Directions are here given as to the mode of procedure. 4. trumpets of rams' horns [שִׁפְרוֹת]—trumpets of alarms (see also v. 6) [synonymous with יִבְלָה רִיבָלָה] (v. 5: cf. Exod. xix. 13 with v. 16). 5. when they make a long blast with the ram's horn [בְּמִשְׁחָה בְּקֶרֶן יִבְלָה]—when the signal trumpet is sounded. ['The Chaldee translator and the Rabbins, by an absurd conjecture, interpret יִבְלָה, a ram, and רִיבָלָה, ram's horn; nor are several modern conjectures much better' (Gesenius). שִׁפְרָה was the crooked trumpet, *buccina*, horn, clarion (for it had a shrill tone), with which the commencement of the jubilee was announced (Lev. xxv. 8), and thus differed from הַצִּפְרָה, the straight trumpet used for assembling the congregation, for breaking up the camp, and exclusively in war (Num. x. 2; xxxi. 6), by both the Israelites and Egyptians (*Josephus*, 'Antiquities,' b. iii., ch. xii., sec. 6; *Wilkinson's* 'Ancient Egyptians,' ii., p. 263; *Hengstenberg*, 'Egypt and Books

- 6 And Joshua the son of Nun called the priests, and said unto them, Take up the ark of the covenant, and let seven priests bear seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the LORD. And he said unto the people, Pass on, and compass the city, and let him that is armed pass on before the ark of the LORD.
- 8 And it came to pass, when Joshua had spoken unto the people, that the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of rams' horns passed on before the LORD, and blew with the trumpets: and the ark of the covenant of the LORD followed them. And the armed men went before the priests that blew with the trumpets, and the rereward came after the ark, the priests going on, and blowing with the trumpets. And Joshua had commanded the people, saying, Ye shall not shout, nor make any noise with your voice, neither shall any word proceed out of your mouth, until the day I bid you shout; then shall ye shout. So the ark of the LORD compassed the city, going about it once: and they came into the camp, and lodged in the camp.
- 12 And Joshua rose early in the morning, and the priests took up the ark of the LORD. And seven priests bearing seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the LORD went on continually, and blew with the trumpets: and the armed men went before them; but the rereward came after the ark of the LORD, the priests going on, and blowing with the trumpets. And the second day they compassed the city once, and returned into the camp: so they did six days.
- 15 And it came to pass on the seventh day, that they rose early, about the dawning of the day, and compassed the city after the same manner seven times: only on that day they compassed the city seven times.
- 16 And it came to pass at the seventh time, when the priests blew with the trumpets, Joshua said unto the people, Shout; for the LORD hath given you the city. And the city shall be accursed, even it, and all

B. C. 1151.

^d That is, before the ark.

Num 32.20, ch 4. 13.

^e Num. 10. 25.

Isa 42. 12

Isa 53. 3.

^g gathering host.

⁴ make your voice to be heard.

Isa. 42. 2.

Matt. 12. 19.

^f Deut. 31. 25.

John 2. 5, 8.

John 6. 10, 11.

John 9. 6, 7.

Heb. 11. 7.

8. 21.

^o 1 Chr. 15. 23.

Matt. 24. 13.

Gal. 6. 9.

^h Judg. 7. 20.

2 Chr. 13. 14.

2 Chr 20. 24, 23.

⁵ Or, devoted.

Lev. 27. 23.

Num 21. 23.

1 Chr. 2. 7.

Isa. 34. 6.

Jer. 42. 10.

Mic. 4. 13.

of Moses,' p. 131, 132). As the Israelites were not to fight on this occasion, שָׁרָר was the proper word; but the instrument is here called indifferently trumpet and horn.] The design of this whole proceeding was obviously to impress the Canaanites with a sense of the Divine omnipotence, to teach the Israelites a memorable lesson of faith and confidence in God's promises, and to inspire sentiments of respect and reverence for the ark, as the symbol of His presence. The length of time during which those circuits were made tended the more intensely to arrest the attention, and to deepen the impressions, both of the Israelites and the enemy. The number seven was among the Israelites the symbolic seal of the covenant between God and their nation (*Keil, Hengstenberg*).

6. Joshua . . . called the priests. The pious leader, whatever military preparations he had made, surrendered all his own views at once, and unreservedly, to the declared will of God. 7. And he said unto the people. This is according to the Keri or margin. But the text has [שָׁרָר], and they said—i. e., the Shoterim (see on ch. i. 10).

8-19.—THE CITY COMPASSED SIX DAYS. 8. bearing the seven trumpets . . . passed on before the Lord—before the ark, called "the ark of the covenant," for it contained the tables on which the covenant was inscribed. 9. the armed men went before the priests that blew with the trumpets, and the rereward came after the ark. This disposition was conformed to the marching arrangement of the Egyptians, amongst whom, when a body of troops marched to the beat of drum, the drummer was often stationed in the centre or the rear, and sometimes immediately

behind the standard-bearers (*Wilkinson's 'Ancient Egyptians,'* ii., p. 268). "The armed men" referred to in the text were the contingents furnished by the eastern tribes (cf. ch. iv. 13), while "the rereward" consisted of warriors from the other tribes. The procession was made in deep and solemn silence, conformably to the instructions given to the people by their leader at the outset, that they were to refrain from all acclamation and noise of any kind, until he should give them a signal. 'It must have been a strange sight; no mount was raised, no sword drawn, no engine planted, no pioneers undermining—here were armed men, but no stroke given; they must walk, and not fight. Doubtless the people of Jericho made themselves merry with the spectacle' (*Bishop Hall*).

12. Joshua rose early in the morning. The second day's procession seems to have taken place in the morning. In all other respects, down even to the small details, the arrangements of the first day continued to be the rule followed on the other six.

15. on the seventh day . . . they rose early about the dawning of the day [שָׁרָר בְּבֹקֶר הַיּוֹם] at the rising of the morning dawn (cf. Gen. xix. 15; xxxii. 25, 27)]—on account of the seven circuits they had to make that day. It is evident, however, that the militia only of the Israelites had been called to the march; for it is inconceivable that 2,000,000 people could have gone so frequently round the city in a day. 16. it came to pass at the seventh time. This delay, as was evidently the intention of the repeated circuits, brought out their faith and obedience in so remarkable a manner that it is celebrated by the apostle (Heb. xi. 30). 17. the city shall be accursed—(see on

- that *are* therein, to the LORD: only Rahab the harlot shall live, she and all that *are* with her in the house, ⁱ because she hid the messengers that 18 we sent. And ye, ^j in any wise keep *yourselves* from the accursed thing, lest ye make *yourselves* accursed, when ye take of the accursed thing, 19 and make the camp of Israel a curse, ^k and trouble it. But all the silver, and gold, and vessels of brass and iron, *are* ⁶ consecrated unto the LORD: they shall come into the treasury of the LORD.
- 20 So the people shouted when *the priests* blew with the trumpets: and it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that ^l the wall fell down ⁷ flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, 21 and they took the city. And they ^m utterly destroyed all that *was* in the city, both man and woman, young and old, and ox, and sheep, and ass, with the edge of the sword.
- 22 But Joshua had said unto the two men that had spied out the country, Go into the harlot's house, and bring out thence the woman, and all that 23 she hath, ⁿ as ye swear unto her. And the young men that were spies went in, and brought out Rahab, ^o and her father, and her mother, and her brethren, and all that she had; and they brought out all her ⁸ kindred, and left them without the camp of Israel.
- 24 And they burned the city with fire, and all that *was* therein: only the silver, and the gold, and the vessels of brass and of iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the LORD.

B. C. 1451.

ch. 2. 4.
 Matt. 20. 41.
 Matt. 25. 10.
 Heb. 6. 10.
 Heb. 11. 31.
 Jas. 2. 25.
 Deut. 7. 26.
 Deut. 13. 17.
 ch. 7. 1, 11, 12.
 Isa. 52. 11.
 Rom. 12. 9.
 2 Cor. 6. 17.
 Eph. 5. 11.
 1 Thes. 5. 22.
^k ch. 7. 2.
 1 Ki. 18. 17, 18.
 15.
 Jon. 1. 12.
⁶ holiness.
ⁱ Heb. 11. 30.
⁷ under it.
^m Deut. 7. 2.
 Deut. 20. 16.
 1 Sam. 15. 3.
ⁿ ch. 2. 14.
 Heb. 11. 31.
^o ch. 2. 13.
⁸ family es.

Lev. xxvii. 28, 29.) The *cherem* or anathema was a devotion to the Lord of idolatrous persons or objects, as His inalienable right, which involved their utter destruction or their consecration to religious uses (Deut. vii. 2; xx. 17; 1 Sam. xv. 3). When such a ban was pronounced against a hostile city, the men and animals were killed; no booty was allowed to be taken; the idols and all the precious ornaments on them were to be burned (Deut. vii. 25; cf. 1 Chr. xiv. 12); everything was either to be destroyed or consecrated to the sanctuary. Joshua pronounced this ban on Jericho, a great and wealthy city, evidently by Divine direction; and the severity of the doom, accordant with the requirements of a law which was holy, just, and good, was justified, not only by the fact of its inhabitants being part of a race who had filled up their iniquities, but by their resisting the light of the recent astonishing miracles at the Jordan. Besides, as Jericho seems to have been defended by reinforcements from all the country (ch. xxiv. 11), its destruction would paralyze all the rest of the devoted people, and thus tend to facilitate the conquest of the land, showing, as so astounding a military miracle did, that it was done, not by man, but by the power and through the anger of God. 18. in any wise keep yourselves from the accursed thing. Generally they were left at liberty to take the spoil of other cities that were captured (ch. viii. 27; Deut. ii. 35; iii. 7). But this city, as the first-fruits of Canaan, was made an exception: nothing was to be spared but Rahab and those in her house. A violation of these stringent orders would not only render the guilty persons obnoxious to the curse, but entail distress and adversity upon all Israel, by provoking the Divine displeasure. These were the instructions given, or repeated (Deut. vii. 12; xiii. 17) during a brief halt, previously to the last act of the siege.

20, 21.—THE WALLS FALL DOWN.

20. So the people shouted when the priests blew. Towards the close of the seventh circuit, the signal was given by Joshua, and on the Israel-

ites raising their loud war-cry, the walls fell down, doubtless burying multitudes of the inhabitants in the ruins, while the besiegers, rushing in, consigned everything, animate and inanimate, to indiscriminate destruction (Deut. xx. 16, 17). This sudden demolition cannot be ascribed to any natural causes. It was clearly a miracle; and following immediately after the miraculous passage of the Jordan, the sudden opening up of so strongly a fortified border city, the key to the interior of Canaan, without exertion or loss on their part, was an encouraging pledge to the Israelites that God would, according to His promise, as easily deliver the whole land into their power. Jewish writers mention it as an immemorial tradition that the city fell on the Sabbath. It should be remembered that the Canaanites were incorrigible idolaters, addicted to the most horrible vices, and that the righteous judgment of God might sweep them away by the sword, as well as by famine or pestilence. There was mercy mingled with judgment in employing the sword as the instrument of punishing the guilty Canaanites; for while it was directed against one place, time was afforded for others to repent.

22-25.—RAHAB IS SAVED.

22. Joshua had said . . . Go into the harlot's house. It is evident that the town walls were not demolished universally, at least all at once, for Rahab's house was allowed to stand until her relatives were rescued according to promise. 23. her brethren—*i. e.*, her relatives or kinsfolk of both sexes (cf. ch. xi. 13) residing under her roof. all her kindred [קָלִי מִבֵּית אִתָּי]—all her father's house, (see on Exod. vi. 14; Num. i. 2, 20, &c.) left them without the camp of Israel—a temporary exclusion, in order that they might be cleansed from the defilement of their native idolatries, and gradually trained for admission into the society of God's people.

24. burnt the city . . . and all . . . therein—except the silver, gold, and other metals, which, as they would not burn, were added to the treasury of the sanctuary.

- 25 And Joshua saved Rahab the harlot alive, and her father's household, and all that she had; and ²she dwelleth in Israel *even* ³unto this day; because she hid the messengers which Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.
- 26 And Joshua adjured *them* at that time, saying, ⁴Cursed be the man before the LORD that riseth up and buildeth this city Jericho: he shall lay the foundation thereof in his first-born, and in his youngest son shall he set up the gates of it.
- 27 So ⁵the LORD was with Joshua; and his ⁶fame was *noised* throughout all the country.
- 7 BUT the children of Israel committed a trespass in the accursed thing: ⁷for ¹Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of ²Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took of the accursed thing: and the anger of the LORD was kindled against the children of Israel.

E. C. 1451.

^P Matt. 1. 5.⁹ E. C. 1427.¹ Ki. 16. 34.

Mal. 1. 4.

⁷ ch. 1. 5.

ch. 3. 7.

Judg. 1. 19.

2 Sam. 7. 9.

⁸ ch. 9. 1, 3.

1 Sam. 2. 30.

CHAP. 7.

^a ch. 21. 10.¹ Chr. 2. 7.

Achar.

² Or, Zimri.

25 Rahab [Septuagint, Παράβ] . . . dwelleth in Israel unto this day—a proof not only that the pledge given for her preservation had been fully redeemed, but also that this book was written not long after the events related.

26. JOSHUA ADJURED THEM AT THAT TIME—*i. e.*, imposed upon his countrymen a solemn oath, binding on themselves as well as their posterity, that they would never rebuild that city. Its destruction was designed by God to be a permanent memorial of His abhorrence of idolatry and its attendant vices. Cursed be the man . . . that riseth up—*i. e.*, makes the daring attempt to build, or rather, to fortify it (cf. 2 Chr. xi. 6), as is evident from the setting up of the gates of it. However strange such a course may appear—and in this instance it had a prophetic reference—it was not peculiar to Joshua, but an ancient custom, of which the writings of the classics furnish many examples. Thus, according to *Strabo* (b. xiii., ch. 1., sec. 42), those who might have been desirous of rebuilding Ilium were deterred from building the city on its old site, either from some painful associations with the spot, or because Agamemnon had denounced a curse against him that should rebuild it; and *Cresus*, after the destruction of *Sidea*, within the walls of which the tyrant *Glaucias* sought refuge, uttered a curse upon him who should restore the walls of that place. It remains to be noticed that the person who pronounced such a general curse was himself equally bound by it as those to whom it was applied; and Joshua, who proclaimed one against the man who should rear a fortified city at Jericho, was equally bound with the people. He virtually took the oath upon himself (cf. 1 Sam. xiv. 24). he shall lay the foundation thereof in his first-born, &c.—shall become childless; the first beginning being marked by the death of his eldest son, and his only surviving child dying at the time of its completion; or, as some interpret the words, 'he shall begin to build the city at the birth of his eldest son; but there should occur so many and great obstacles to the progress of the undertaking, that it would not be completed till the birth of his youngest: an event which took place toward the close of his protracted life.' This curse was accomplished 550 years after its denunciation (see on 1 Ki. xvi. 34). The view given above of the curse being directed against the restoration of a fortress which had been miraculously destroyed by God, removes a difficulty from the sacred history, arising from the fact, that a city was soon after built and inhabited, but without walls, on the site of Jericho (Judg. iii. 13; 2 Sam. x. 5). *De Sauley* relates that, 'on his second visit (1864) to Palestine, he found above *'An es-Sultan*, or spring of *Elisha*, a range of ma-

melons, covering the foundations of the ancient Jericho, destroyed in Joshua's time. On the highest of these mamelons—probably the citadel of the town—are scattered the remains of walls six feet in thickness, and all the ground is strewn with interesting fragments of ancient pottery.' The credulity of *De Sauley* has thrown deserved suspicion on many of his alleged discoveries. But there is a strong presumption in favour of his conclusions in this instance; for *Josephus* asserts that ancient Jericho was situated near the fountain of *Elisha* ('*Jewish Wars*, b. iv., ch. viii., sec. 3). And *Mr. Stewart* ('*Tent and Khan*, p. 371) says, 'To my mind the accuracy of his statement is abundantly corroborated by its vicinity to the mountains; for the spies whom Rahab had advised to flee thither for safety could easily have reached them from the fountain in a quarter of an hour. These ruins, however, probably belong to two different towns. The mounds mark the Jericho of the Canaanites, of Rahab and the spies, which fell before the blast of the horns; and the ruins farther south, the Jericho visited by our Lord, the dwelling-place of *Zaccheus* and *Barthelemy*, which was built by *Hiel* the *Bethelite*, despite the calamities that Joshua had predicted would fall on the family of the man who did so.' (See also *Robinson's* '*Biblical Researches*, ii., pp. 298, 299; *Porter's* '*Handbook of Syria and Palestine*, p. 192).

CHAP. VII. 1.—ACHAN'S TRESPASS.

1. But the children of Israel committed a trespass in the accursed thing [תַּפְסַל מְקוּלָה]—But the children of Israel took by stealth in (against) the *cherem* (ban). They hastened to leave Jericho and the Ghor, or valley of the Jordan; for 'the effects would have been fatal if the Hebrews had remained long under the influence of that relaxing, enfeebling climate, where their frames, now braced and vigorous, might so soon be enervated and unstrung. The inhabitants of the valley had been found wholly unfit to contend with the strenuous, active men who had been trained in such severe physical discipline on the high ground of *Paran*, and in the long march thence amidst the privations of the wilderness. Moreover, habits of profligacy were congenial with the climate and neighbourhood, as was manifested in the demoralized condition of the natives. The Hebrew leader, therefore, lost no time in conducting his people up one of the passes which led through the mountains into the heart of the country, to begin the strenuous contest they had to wage with the highland chieftains whom they were commanded to dispossess. Those who actually ventured up the craggy, broken paths, often skirting the edge of terrific precipices, and with "waves of naked,

- 2 And Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is beside Beth-aven, on the east side of Beth-el, and spake unto them, saying, Go up and
 3 view the country. And the men went up and viewed Ai. And they returned to Joshua, and said unto him, Let not all the people go up; but let ³about two or three thousand men go up and smite Ai; and make not all the people to labour thither; for they are but few.
 4 So there went up thither of the people about three thousand men:
 5 ^band they fled before the men of Ai. And the men of Ai smote of them about thirty and six men: for they chased them *from* before the gate *even* unto Shebarim, and smote them ⁴in the going down: wherefore ^cthe hearts of the people melted, and became as water.
 6 And Joshua ^drent his clothes, and fell to the earth upon his face before the ark of the LORD until the eventide, he and the elders of Israel,
 7 and ^eput dust upon their heads. And Joshua said, Alas, O Lord God, wherefore ^fhast thou at all brought this people over Jordan, to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us? would to God we had
 8 been content and dwelt on the other side Jordan! O Lord, what shall

B. C. 1461.

³ about two thousand men, or about three thousand men.

^b Lev. 26. 17. Deut. 28. 25.

⁴ Or, in Morad.

^c ch. 2, 9, 11.

Lev. 26. 36.

Ps. 22. 14.

^d Gen 37. 29.

^e 1 Sam. 4. 12.

2 Sam. 1. 2.

2 Sam. 13.

19.

^f Ex. 5. 22.

2 Ki. 3. 10.

desolate, pyramidal, and conical mountains" on all sides of them, were—as indeed they must have been—high-minded as well as adventurous men. The nature of the country strikingly develops the character of those by whom this part of their enterprise was carried forward, especially when we bear in mind how they were encumbered, conveying as they could, on camels and mules, besides their personal effects, the materials and utensils of the sacred tabernacle, and the coffin that contained the embalmed body of their great countryman, which they had kept safe through all the vicissitudes of the pilgrimage, and were now carrying to its grave in that burial-place on the ancestral estate which he had chosen in Shechem.' (For an excellent description of the three roads leading up into the heart of the country, see *Robinson's 'Biblical Researches,'* vol. ii., p. 312; *Van de Velde,* vol. ii., p. 278; *Drew's 'Scripture Lands,'* p. 100). There was one transgressor against the *chem,* or ban, on Jericho, and his transgression brought the guilt and disgrace of sin upon the whole nation. Achan, called afterwards Achar (trouble) (1 Chr. ii. 7), son of Zabdi, or Zimri (1 Chr. ii. 6); Zerah, or Zarah; Judah and Tamar (Gen. xxxviii. 30). His genealogy is given probably to show that from a parentage so infamous, the descendants would not be carefully trained in the fear of God.

2-26.—THE ISRAELITES SMITTEN AT AI.

2. Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai. After the sacking of Jericho, the next step was to penetrate into the hills above. Accordingly, spies went up the mountain pass to view the country. The precise site of Ai, or Hai, is indicated with sufficient clearness, Gen. xii. 8; xiii. 3. [², generally with the article prefixed, was a royal city in Canaan, a little east of Bethel; Septuagint, *Gai* (see varieties of the name, 1 Chr. vii. 28; Neh. xi. 31; Isa. x. 28).] The import of the name is a *heap* or *tumulus* of ruins. It has been recently discovered in an isolated Tell, called by the natives Tell-el-hajar, 'the Mount of Stones,' at two miles, or thirty-five minutes' distance east-south-east from Bethel (*Van de Velde*); but (see *Robinson's 'Biblical Researches,'* vol. ii., pp. 119, 312, 313; 'Handbook of Syria and Palestine,' p. 216) *Keil* identifies the site of Ai with Turmus Aya, a good deal farther north. *Stanley* says ('Sinai and Palestine,' pp. 193, 202, note) that 'the precise position of Ai is unknown; but the description of Joshua points out its probable site in the wild

entanglement of hill and valley at the head of the Wady Suweinit.' beside Beth-aven [עַם-בֵּית אַי, near or hard by (cf. Judg. xviii. 3); Septuagint, *κατα βασιλῆα*.] Beth-aven, with reference to the tauriform image which was the symbol of idol-worship in the land of the Rephaim (1 Sam. xiii. 5), means 'house of vanity,' a name afterwards given derivatively (Hos. iv. 15; y. 8; x. 5), on account of its idolatries, to Bethel, 'house of God'; but here referred to another place about six miles east of Bethel, and three north of Ai. 3. Let not all the people go up . . . for they are but few. As the population of Ai amounted to 1,200 (ch. viii. 25), it was a considerable town; though in the hasty and distant reconnoitre made by the spies, it probably appeared small in comparison of Jericho; and this may have been the reason of their proposing so small a detachment to capture it.

4. they fled before the men of Ai. An unexpected resistance and the loss of thirty-six of their number diffused a panic, which ended in an ignominious rout. 5. chased them . . . even unto Shebarim—*i. e.*, unto the 'breakings' or 'fissures' at the opening of the passes. But *Gesenius* renders Shebarim 'even unto the ruins—breaches of walls' (cf. Isa. xxx. 13, 14). The Septuagint omits the words entirely. and smote them in the going down—*i. e.*, the declivity or slope of the deep, rugged adjoining wady. [Septuagint, *ἀπὸ τοῦ καταφεροῦς*, from the (top of) the declivity.] wherefore the hearts of the people melted. It is evident that the troops engaged were a tumultuary, undisciplined band, no better skilled in military affairs than the Bedouin Arabs, who become disheartened and flee on the loss of ten or fifteen men. But the consternation of the Israelites arose from another cause—the evident displeasure of God, who withheld that aid on which they had confidently reckoned.

6. Joshua rent his clothes, and fell . . . before the ark . . . he and the elders [יְהוֹשֻׁעַ וְזִקְנֵי]—before or toward the ark. From the circumstance of God's being represented as dwelling between the cherubim over the ark of the covenant, and manifesting His glory on extraordinary occasions in an outward visible form (cf. Lev. ix. 24; xvi. 2; 1 Sam. iv. 4; 1 Chr. xiii. 6; Ps. lxxx. 2), the ark was sometimes designated "the footstool" of God (1 Chr. xxviii. 2; Ps. xcix. 5; cxxxii. 7; Lam. ii. 1); whence prayers in distress, as well as thanks for deliverance, were offered before the ark of the covenant (cf. 2 Sam. xv. 32; 1 Ki. iii. 15: see for

- 9 I say, when Israel turneth their ⁵backs before their enemies! For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land shall hear of *it*, and shall environ us round, and ⁹cut off our name from the earth: and ^hwhat wilt thou do unto thy great name?
- 10 And the LORD said unto Joshua, Get thee up; wherefore ⁶liest thou thus upon thy face? Israel hath sinned, and they have also transgressed my covenant which I commanded them: ⁱfor they have even taken of the accursed thing, and have also stolen, and ^jdissembled also, and they
- 12 have put *it* even among their own stuff. Therefore ^kthe children of Israel could not stand before their enemies, *but* turned *their* backs before their enemies, because they ^lwere accursed: neither will I be with you
- 13 any more, except ye destroy the accursed from among you. Up, ^msanctify the people, and say, Sanctify ⁿyourself against to-morrow: for thus saith the LORD God of Israel, *There is* an accursed thing in the midst of thee, O Israel: thou canst not stand before thine enemies, until
- 14 ye take away the accursed thing from among you. In the morning therefore ye shall be brought according to your tribes: and it shall be, *that* the tribe which ^othe LORD taketh shall come according to the families *thereof*; and the family which the LORD shall take shall come by households; and the household which the LORD shall take shall come man by man. And ^pit shall be, *that* he that is taken with the accursed thing shall be burnt with fire, he and all that he hath: because he hath transgressed the covenant of the LORD, and because he ^qhath wrought ^rfolly in Israel.
- 16 So Joshua rose up early in the morning, and brought Israel by their 17 tribes; and the tribe of Judah was taken: and he brought the family of Judah; and he took the family of the Zarahites: and he brought the
- 18 family of the Zarahites man by man; and Zabdi was taken: and he brought his household man by man; and ^sAchan, the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, was taken.
- 19 And Joshua said unto Achan, My son, give, ^tI pray thee, glory to the LORD God of Israel, ^uand make confession unto him; and tell me now
- 20 what thou hast done; hide *it* not from me. And Achan answered Joshua, and said, Indeed I have sinned against the LORD God of Israel,

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necks.

⁹ Ps. 83. 4.^h Ex. 32. 12.

Num. 14. 13.

Deut. 32. 21,

27.

Ps. 10^r. 6. 8.

Eze. 20. 9.

⁶ fallest.ⁱ ch. 6. 17.^j Acts 5. 1.^k Num. 14. 45.

Judg. 2. 14.

^l Deut. 7. 26.

ch. 6. 18.

^m Ex. 19. 10.ⁿ ch. 3. 5.^o 1 Sam. 10.

10-21.

1 Sam. 14.

41, 42.

Pro. 16. 33.

Jon 1. 7.

Acts 1. 24-

26.

^p 1 Sam. 14.

38, 39.

^q Gen. 34. 7.

Judg. 20. 6.

^r Or wicked-

ness.

^s Gen. 4. 7.

Num. 32. 23.

Pro. 13. 21.

Jer. 2. 26.

Acts 5. 1-10.

^t 1 Sam. 6. 5.

Jer. 13. 16.

John 9. 21.

^u Num. 5. 6.

7.

2 Chr. 30. 22.

Ps. 51. 3.

Dan. 9. 4.

this *Hengstenberg*, 'Christology,' vol. ii., p. 387). It is evident, from these tokens of humiliation and sorrow, that a solemn fast was observed on this occasion. The language of Joshua's prayer is thought by many to savour of human infirmity, and to be wanting in that reverence and submission he owed to God. But, although apparently breathing a spirit of bold remonstrance and complaint, it was in reality the effusion of a deeply-humbled and afflicted mind, expressing his belief that God could not, after having so miraculously brought His people over Jordan into the promised land, intend to destroy them, to expose them to the insults of their triumphant enemies, and bring reproach upon His own name for inconstancy or unkindness to His people, or inability to resist their enemies. Unable to understand the cause of the present calamity, he owned the hand of God.

10. the Lord said . . . Get thee up. The answer of the divine oracle was to this effect:—The crisis is owing not to unfaithfulness in Me, but sin in the people. The conditions of the covenant have been violated by the reservation of spoil from the doomed city; wickedness, emphatically called folly, has been committed in Israel (Ps. xiv. 1); and dissimulation, with other aggravations of the crime, continues to be practised. The people are liable to destruction equally with the accursed nations of Canaan (Deut. vii.

26). Means must, without delay, be taken to discover and punish the perpetrator of this trespass, that Israel may be released from the ban, and things be restored to their former state of prosperity.

16. So Joshua rose up early . . . and brought Israel by their tribes—i. e., before the tabernacle. The lot being appealed to (Prov. xvi. 33)—a mode of appealing to the Divine decision, to which the Israelites resorted in cases of grave public interest, and for which they made preparation by solemn rites of religion—Joshua proceeded in the enquiry from heads of tribes to heads of families, and from heads of households in succession to one family, and to particular persons in that family. It must be borne in mind that a family, according to the usage of the Hebrews, was very different from a family according to our ideas. It was not a single household, but may have included many households; or, *vice versa*, one household may have been subdivided into many families (see on Exod. vi. 25). The criminal was found to be Achan, who, on Joshua's admonition, confessed the fact of having secreted for his own use, in the floor of his tent, spoil both in garments and money. How dreadful must have been his feelings when he saw the slow but certain process of discovery! (Num. xxxii. 23.)

19. Joshua said . . . My son, give . . . glory to . . . God—a form of adjuration to tell the

- 21 and thus and thus have I done: when I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a ⁸wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I ⁹coveted them, and took them; and, behold, they *are* hid in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it.
- 22 So Joshua sent messengers, and they ran unto the tent; and, behold,
- 23 *it was* hid in his tent, and the silver under it. And they took them out of the midst of the tent, and brought them unto Joshua, and unto all the children of Israel, and ⁹laid them out before the LORD.
- 24 And Joshua, and all Israel with him, took Achan the son of Zerah, and the silver, and the garment, and the wedge of gold, and his sons, and his daughters, and his oxen, and his asses, and his sheep, and his tent, and all that he had; and they brought them unto ⁹the valley of
- 25 Achor. And Joshua said, ¹⁰Why hast thou troubled us? the LORD shall trouble thee this day. ¹¹And all Israel stoned him with stones, and burned them with fire, after they had stoned them with stones. And they ¹²raised over him a great heap of stones unto this day. So ¹³the LORD turned from the fierceness of his anger. Wherefore the name of that place was called, ¹⁴"The valley of ¹⁵Achor, unto this day.
- 8 AND the LORD said unto Joshua, ¹⁶"Fear not, neither be thou dismayed: take all the people of war with thee, and arise, go up to Ai: see,

B. C. 1451.
⁸ tongue.
⁹ 1 ro. 15. 27.
 Eph. 5. 6.
 1 Tim 6.10.
⁹ poured.
¹⁰ ch 15. 7.
¹¹ ch. 6. 14.
 1 Chr. 2. 7.
 Gal. 5. 12.
¹² Deut. 17. 5.
¹³ ch. 8. 29.
 2 Sam. 18.
 17.
 Lam. 3. 53.
¹⁴ Deut 13.17.
 2 Sam. 21.
 14.
¹⁵ Isa. 65. 10.
 Hos. 2. 15.
¹⁶ That is,
 Trouble.
 CHAP. 8.
¹⁷ Deut. 1. 21.
 Deut. 7. 18.
 Deut. 31. 8.
 ch. 1. 9.

truth. 21. a goodly Babylonish garment [אֵרֶמֶת אֲשֶׁר עָשְׂתָּהּ]—a mantle of Shinar. The plain of Shinar was in early times celebrated for its gorgeous robes, which were of brilliant and various colours, generally arranged in figured patterns, probably resembling those of modern Turkey carpets; and the colours were either interwoven in the loom or embroidered with the needle (see Rawlinson's 'Ancient Monarchies,' vol. i., p. 125). The robe which Achan had secreted was probably ornamented with idolatrous figures, which made it an "accursed thing." two hundred shekels of silver—equivalent to £22, 10s. sterling, according to the old Mosaic shekel; or the half of that sum, reckoning by the common shekel (see curious decree of the time of Diocletian, in which the value of several articles of textile manufacture from Babylon is specified, 'Nineveh and Babylon,' p. 537, note). a wedge of gold—*lit.*, an ingot or bar in the shape of a *tongue*: perhaps the golden statuette of an idol (cf. Deut. vii. 25, 26; Isa. xxx. 22).

22. Joshua sent messengers, and they ran unto the tent—from impatient eagerness not only to test the truth of the story, but to clear Israel from the imputation of guilt. Having discovered the stolen articles, they laid them out before the Lord, "as a token of their belonging to Him" on account of the ban.

24. Joshua, and all Israel with him, took Achan—himself, with his children and all his property, cattle as well as moveables, were brought into one of the long broad ravines that open into the Ghor; and after being stoned to death (Num. xv. 30-35), his corpse, with all belonging to him, was consumed to ashes by fire. "All Israel" were present, not only as spectators, but active agents, as many as possible, in inflicting the punishment—thus testifying their abhorrence of the sacrilege, and their intense solicitude to regain the divine favour. As the divine law expressly forbade the children to be put to death for the fathers' sins (Deut. xxiv. 16), the conveyance of Achan's "sons and . . . daughters" to the place of execution might be only as spectators, that they might take warning by the parental fate; or, if they shared his punishment (ch. xxii. 20), they

had probably been accomplices in his crime: and, indeed, he could scarcely have dug a hole within his tent without his family being privy to it. 26. they raised over him a great heap of stones.—It is customary to raise *cairns* over the graves of criminals or infamous persons in the East still. Every honest Arab, on passing the grave of a robber, indicates his detestation of the crime and its perpetrator by adding a stone to the *cairn* (cf. ch. viii. 29; 2 Sam. xviii. 17). called, The valley of Achor (trouble), unto this day. So painful an episode would give notoriety to the spot; and it is more than once noticed by the sacred writers of a later age (Isa. lxxv. 10; Hos. ii. 15). It is the same as in a later age was known as "the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan" (see on 1 Ki. xvii. 1-7), now Wady *el-Kelt*.

CHAP. VIII. 1-28.—GOD ENCOURAGETH JOSHUA.

1. the Lord said unto Joshua, Fear not. By the execution of justice on Achan, the Divine wrath was averted, the Israelites were reassured, defeat was succeeded by victory, and thus the case of Ai affords a striking example of God's disciplinary government, in which chastisements for sin are often made to pave the way for a bestowment of those temporal benefits which, on account of sin, have been withdrawn, or withheld for a time. Joshua, who had been greatly dispirited, was encouraged by a special communication promising him (see ch. i. 6; Deut. xxxi. 6-8) success in the next attempt, which, however, was to be conducted on different principles. take all the people of war with thee, and arise, go up to Ai. The number of fighting men amounted to 600,000; and the whole force was ordered on this occasion, partly because the spies, in their self-confidence, had said that a few were sufficient to attack the place (ch. vii. 3), partly to dispel any misgivings which the memory of the late disaster might have created, and partly that the circumstance of the first spoil obtained in Canaan being shared amongst all might operate both as a reward for obedience in refraining from the booty of Jericho, and as an incentive to future exertions (Deut. vi. 10). The rest of the people, including the women and children, remained in the camp at Gilgal. Being in the plains of Jericho, it was an

- ^b I have given into thy hand the king of Ai, and his people, and his city, and his land: and thou shalt do to Ai and her king as thou didst unto Jericho and her king: only ^a the spoil thereof, and the cattle thereof, shall ye take for a prey unto yourselves: lay thee an ambush for the city behind it.
- 3 So Joshua arose, and all the people of war, to go up against Ai: and Joshua chose out thirty thousand mighty men of valour, and sent them away by night. And he commanded them, saying, Behold, ^c ye shall lie ¹ in wait against the city, *even* behind the city: go not very far from the city, but be ye all ready: and I, and all the people that *are* with me, will approach unto the city: and it shall come to pass, when they come out against us, as at the first, that ^f we will flee before them, (for they will come out after us,) till we have ² drawn them from the city; for they will say, They flee before us, as at the first: therefore we will flee before them. Then ye shall rise up from the ambush, and seize upon the city: for the LORD your God will deliver it into your hand.
- 8 And it shall be, when ye have taken the city, *that* ye shall set the city on fire: according to the commandment of the LORD shall ye do. ^g See, I have commanded you. Joshua therefore sent them forth: and they went to lie in ambush, and abode between Beth-el and Ai, on the west side of Ai: but Joshua lodged that night among the people.
- 10 And Joshua ^h rose up early in the morning, and numbered the people, and went up, he and the elders of Israel, before the people to Ai. And all the people, *even the people* of war that *were* with him, went up, and drew nigh, and came before the city, and pitched on the north side of Ai: now *there was* a valley between them and Ai. And he took about five thousand men, and set them to lie in ambush ⁱ between Beth-el and Ai, on the west side ³ of the city. And when they had set the people, *even* all the host that *was* on the north of the city, and ⁴ their liers in wait on the west of the city, Joshua went that night into the midst of the valley.
- 14 And it came to pass, when the king of Ai saw *it*, that they hastened, and rose up early, and the men of the city went out against Israel to battle, he and all his people, at a time appointed, before the plain: but

B. C. 1451.
 ch. 2. 11.
 ch. 6. 2.
 Ps. 44. 3.
 Dan. 2. 21.
 Dan. 4. 25.
 35.
 ch. 6. 21.
 ch. 10. 1, 23.
 Deut. 3. 2.
 Deut. 20. 14.
 Job 27. 16, 17.
 Ps. 39. 6.
 Pro. 13. 22.
 Pro. 28. 20.
 Jer. 17. 11.
 Luke 12. 20, 21.
 Judg. 20. 29.
 1 Or, in ambush.
 2 Chr. 13. 13.
 Eccl. 7. 19.
 Judg. 20. 32.
 2 pulled.
 ch. 1. 16.
 2 Sam. 13. 28.
 Gen. 22. 3.
 ch. 3. 1.
 ch. 6. 12.
 ch. 7. 16.
 Ps. 101. 8.
 Ps. 119. 10.
 Eccl. 9. 10.
 Jer. 21. 12.
 Gen. 12. 8.
 Gen. 28. 13.
 Judg. 1. 22.
 3 Or, of Ai.
 4 their lying in wait.

ascent to Ai, which was on a hill. I have given into thy hand . . . 2. lay thee an ambush for the city. God assured him of its capture, but allowed him to follow his own tactics in obtaining the possession.

3. So Joshua . . . chose out thirty thousand men of valour—Joshua despatched 30,000 men, under covert of night, to station themselves at the place appointed for the ambuscade. Out of this number a detachment of 5,000 were sent forward to conceal themselves in the immediate precincts of the town, in order to seize the first opportunity of throwing themselves into it. 4. behind the city—is rendered, *v. 9*, “on the west of Ai.” 9. between Beth-el and Ai. Beth-el, though lying quite near, in the direction of west by north, cannot be seen from Tell-el-hajar, two rocky heights rising between both places, in the Wady El-Murogede, just as the laying of an ambush to the west of Ai would require (*Van de Velde, Robinson*).

10. Joshua . . . numbered the people—*i. e.*, the detachment of liers-in-wait; he did this, to be furnished with clear evidence afterwards, that the work had been done without any loss of men, whereby the people's confidence in God would be strengthened, and encouragement given them to prosecute the war of invasion with vigour. he and the elders of Israel—the chief magistrates and rulers, whose presence and official authority were necessary to ensure that the cattle and spoil

of the city might be equally divided betwixt the combatants and the rest of the people (Num. xxxi. 27)—a military rule in Israel that would have been very liable to be infringed if an excited soldiery, eager for booty, had been left to their own will. 11. all the people. [The Septuagint translation gives a different and somewhat ambiguous idea of the mode of attack—*καὶ πᾶς ὁ λαὸς ὁ πολεμιστῆς μετ' αὐτῶν ἀνέβησαν, καὶ πορευόμενοι ἤλθον ἐξανατίας τῆς πόλεως ἀπὸ Σαλασσης*—And all the men of war that were with him went up, and in their march came before the city on the east, and the ambush before the city from the sea (on the west).] there was a valley (lit. the valley) between them and Ai. 13. Joshua went that night into the midst of the valley. The deep and steep-sided glen to the north of Tell-el-hajar, into which one looks down from the Tell, fully agrees with this account (*Van de Velde*). Joshua himself took up his position on the north side of ‘the ravine’—the deep chasm of the Wady El-Murogede: “that night” means, while it was dark, probably after midnight, or very early in the morning (John xx. 1). The king of Ai, in the early dawn, rouses his slumbering subjects, and makes a hasty sally with all his people who were capable of bearing arms, once more to surprise and annihilate them.

14. at a time appointed [למקום]—to the place of rendezvous (*Gesenius*); so that we may take the

he wist^j not that *there were* liers in ambush against him behind the city.
 15 And Joshua and all Israel^k made as if they were beaten before them,
 16 and fled^l by the way of the wilderness. And all the people that *were* in Ai were called together to pursue after them: and they pursued after
 17 Joshua, and were drawn^m away from the city. And there was not a man left in Ai or Beth-el that went not out after Israel: and they left the city open, and pursued after Israel.
 18 And the LORD said unto Joshua, Stretch out the spear that *is* in thine hand toward Ai; forⁿ I will give it into thine hand. And Joshua stretched out the spear that *he had* in his hand toward the city. And the ambush arose quickly out of their place, and they ran as soon as he had stretched out his hand: and they entered into the city, and took it,
 20 and hastened and set the city on fire. And when the men of Ai looked behind them, they saw, and, behold, the smoke of the city ascended up to heaven, and they had no^o power to flee this way or that way: and the people that fled to the wilderness turned back upon the pursuers.
 21 And when Joshua and all Israel saw that the ambush had taken the city, and that the smoke of the city ascended, then they turned again, and slew the men of Ai. And the other issued out of the city against them; so they were in the midst of Israel, some on this side, and some on that side: and they smote them, so that they let^p none of them remain or
 23 escape. And the king of Ai they took alive, and brought him to Joshua.
 24 And it came to pass, when Israel had made an end of slaying all the inhabitants of Ai in the field, in the wilderness wherein they chased them, and when they were all fallen on the edge of the sword, until they were consumed, that all the Israelites returned unto Ai, and smote it
 25 with the edge of the sword. And so it was, *that* all that fell that day, both of men and women, *were* twelve thousand, *even* all the men of Ai.
 26 For Joshua drew not his hand back, wherewith he stretched out the
 27 spear, until he had utterly destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai. Only^q the cattle, and the spoil of that city, Israel took for a prey unto themselves, according unto the word of the LORD which he commanded
 28 Joshua. And Joshua burnt Ai, and made it^r an heap for ever, *even* a

B. C. 1451.
^j Judg. 20. 34.
 Eccl. 9. 12.
 Dan. 4. 31.
 Matt. 24. 39.
 50.
 1 Thes. 5. 1-3.
 2 Pet. 2. 3.
^k Judg. 20. 39.
^l ch. 15. 61.
 ch. 16. 1.
 ch. 18. 12.
^m Ex. 14. 3, 4.
 Judg. 20. 31.
 Ps. 9. 16.
ⁿ Deut. 7. 23, 24.
 Deut. 9. 3.
 Deut. 31. 5-8.
 ch. 1. 5.
 Jer. 49. 3.
^o hand.
 Job 11. 20.
 Ps. 76. 5.
 Amos 2. 14.
^p Lev. 27. 29.
 Deut. 7. 2.
 Job 20. 5.
 Luke 17. 26-30.
 1 Thes. 5. 3.
^q Num. 31. 22, 26.
 Matt. 20. 15.
^r Deut. 13. 16.
 2 Ki. 19. 25.
 Isa. 17. 1.
 Isa. 25. 2.
 Jer. 9. 11.
 Jer. 49. 2.
 Jer. 50. 26.

meaning to be, either to a spot agreed upon between the king and people of Ai, and those of Beth-el, who were confederates in this enterprise, or perhaps they had fixed on the same time of day as they had fought successfully against Israel on the former occasion, deeming it a lucky hour (Judg. xx. 38). but he wist not that there were liers in ambush. It is evident that this king and his subjects were little experienced in war, otherwise they would have sent out scouts to reconnoitre the neighbourhood. At all events, they would not have left their town wholly unprotected and open. Perhaps an ambuscade may have been a war-stratagem hitherto unknown in that country, and amongst that people. 15. Joshua and all Israel made as if they were beaten before them. The pretended flight in the direction of the wilderness—i. e., south-east, into the Ghor, the desert valley of the Jordan—decoyed all the inhabitants of Ai out of the city, while the people of Beth-el hastened to participate in the expected victory. It is supposed by some, from "the city," and not "cities," being spoken of, that the effective force of Beth-el had been concentrated in Ai, as the two places were closely contiguous, and Ai the larger of the two (see on ch. xii. 16). It may be remarked, however, that the words or "Beth-el" are not in the Septuagint, and are rejected by some eminent scholars, as an interpolation not found in the most ancient MSS.

lifted spear had probably a flag or streamer on it, like the Assyrian spear (Abarbanel), to render it the more conspicuous from the height where he stood. At the sight of this understood signal, the ambush nearest the city, informed by their scouts, made a sudden rush, and took possession of the city, telegraphing to their brethren by raising a smoke from the walls. Upon seeing this, the main body, who had been feigning a flight, turned round at the head of the pass upon their pursuers, while the 25,000, issuing from their ambuscade, fell upon their rear. The Aites, surprised, looked back, and found their situation now desperate. 23. the king of Ai they took alive—to be reserved for a more ignominious death, as a greater criminal in God's sight than his subjects. In the mingled attack from before and behind, the whole men of Ai were massacred. 24. all the Israelites returned unto Ai, and smote it with the edge of the sword—the women, children, and old persons left behind, amounting, in all, to 12,000 people. 26. Joshua drew not his hand back. Perhaps, from the long continuance of the posture, it might have been a means appointed by God to animate the people, and kept up in the same devout spirit as Moses had shown in lifting up his hands, until the work of slaughter had been completed—the ban executed (see on Exod. xvii. 11, 12). 28. Joshua burnt Ai, and made it an heap for ever [הַלְ, heap of ruins]. "For ever" often signifies a long time (Gen. vi. 3).

18. Joshua stretched out the spear. The up-
 21

- 29 desolation unto ^rthis day. And ^sthe king of Ai he hanged on a tree until eventide: ^tand as soon as the sun was down, Joshua commanded that they should take his carcase down from the tree, and cast it at the entering of the gate of the city, and ^uraise thereon a great heap of stones, *that remaineth* unto this day.
- 30 Then Joshua ^vbuilt an altar unto the LORD God of Israel ^win mount
- 31 Ebal, as Moses the servant of the LORD commanded the children of Israel, as it is written in the ^xbook of the law of Moses, an altar of whole stones, over which no man hath lift up *any* iron: and ^ythey offered thereon burnt offerings unto the LORD, and sacrificed peace offerings.
- 32 And ^zhe wrote there upon the stones a copy of the law of Moses, which
- 33 he wrote in the presence of the children of Israel. And all Israel, and

B. C. 1451.
^r B. C. 1427.
^s ch. 10. 26.
^t Deut. 21. 23.
^u ch. 10. 27.
^v 2 Sam. 18. 17.
^w Gen. 8. 20.
^x Gen. 12. 7, 8.
^y Ex. 20. 21.
^z Deut. 27. 4.
¹ Ex. 20. 25.
² Deut. 27. 5.
³ Ex. 20. 24.
⁴ Deut. 27. 2.

One of the remarkable things with regard to the Tell we have identified with Ai is its name—the Tell, or the heap of stones—a name which to this day remains (*J an de Velde*). a desolation unto this day—probably a gloss by *Esra*, or some later editor.

29.—THE KING HANGED.

29. the king of Ai he hanged on a tree—*i. e.*, gibbeted. In ancient, and particularly Oriental wars, the chiefs, when taken prisoners, were usually executed—first slain by the sword, and then exposed on a gibbet for a time. The Israelites were obliged by the divine law (Deut. xxi. 22, &c.) to put them to death. The execution of the king of Ai would tend to facilitate the conquest of the land, by striking terror into the other chiefs, and making it appear a judicial process, in which they were inflicting the vengeance of God upon his enemies. take his carcase down . . . and raise thereon a great heap of stones [², a cairn].

It was taken down at sunset, according to the Divine command (Deut. xxi. 23), and cast into a pit dug "at the entering of the gate," because that was the most public place. An immense cairn was raised over his grave—an ancient usage still existing in the East, whereby is marked the sepulchre of persons whose memory is infamous (see on ch. vii. 26).

30, 31.—JOSHUA BUILDS AN ALTAR.

30. Then Joshua built an altar . . . in mount Ebal—(see on Deut. xxvii.) This spot was little short of twenty miles from Ai. The march through a hostile country, and the unmolested performance of the religious ceremonial observed at this mountain, would be greatly facilitated, through the blessing of God, by the disastrous fall of Ai. The solemn duty was to be attended to at the first convenient opportunity after the entrance into Canaan (Deut. xxvii. 2); and with this view Joshua seems to have conducted the people through the mountainous region that intervened, though no details of the journey have been recorded. Ebal was on the north, opposite to Gerizim, which was on the south side of the town of Shechem (*Nablous*). *Eusebius* [*περι των τοπωνυμων*], and *Jerome* in his Latin translation ('De locis Hebraicis,' voce *Gerizim*), describe the Ebal and Gerizim in the neighbourhood of Shechem as different from the Ebal and Gerizim on which the blessings and curses were rehearsed. But there is no good reason for departing from the common view as to the topography of those hills (see *Stanley*, 'Sinai and Palestine,' pp. 234, 235). *Kennicott* ('Dissertation,' ii., ch. 1) labours to prove that Ebal has been substituted in this passage for the original Gerizim, which still stands in the Samaritan Pentateuch, by the Jews, who were desirous to make Gerizim the fertile mount—the mount of blessing. According to *Buckingham*, these hills are equal

in height, and rise about 700 or 800 feet above the valley of Shechem; but *Dr. Olin* declares Gerizim to be the higher of the two. built an altar . . .

31. of whole stones—according to the instructions given to Moses (Exod. xx. 25; Deut. xxvii. 5). over which no man hath lift up any iron—*i. e.*, iron tool. The reason of this was, that every altar of the true God ought properly to have been built of earth (Exod. xx. 24); and if it was constructed of stone, rough unhewn stones were to be employed, that it might retain both the appearance and nature of earth, since every bloody sacrifice was connected with sin and death, by which man, the creature of earth, is brought to earth again (*Keil*). Another and perhaps more urgent reason was, that the artificially-built altars of the heathen were frequently inscribed with the name or symbol of the god to whom they were dedicated, and their sides ornamented with bas-reliefs of gods, or sculptured figures of idolatrous rites and festive scenes. they offered thereon burnt offerings . . . and sacrificed peace offerings. This had been done when the covenant was established (Exod. xxiv. 5); and by the observance of these federal rites (Deut. xxvii. 6) the covenant was solemnly renewed—the people were reconciled to God by the burnt offering, whilst, by this feast accompanying the peace or thank offering, a happy communion with God was enjoyed by all the families in Israel. 32. he wrote there upon the stones a copy of the law [*קריאה*], a copy, a duplicate (see on Deut. xxvii. 2-8)—*i. e.*, the blessings and curses of the law. It is impossible that it could be a transcript of the whole law, as *Baumgarten* thinks, and very improbable of all Deuteronomy. *Kurtz* ('History of the Old Covenant,' i., p. 57, English translation) and *Keil* suppose that it comprised only 'the legal portions of that book'; *Michaelis*, 'the essential parts of all the books in the Pentateuch'; *Knobel*, 'not the Mosaic law in general, but only the commandments'; *Rosenmüller*, *Mawer*, and many others, consider the copy as confined to the blessings and warnings enumerated in Deut. xxvii.; while *Kennicott*, *Gerlach*, and others, limit it to the 'ten words' of the Decalogue. The hope has been expressed by eminent writers that those plastered stones may one day be discovered (*Michaelis*, 'Laws of Moses,' art. lxix.); and the Palestine Exploration Society has included a search for them in the list of subjects for the enquiry of their scientific agents. Some (*Mawer*, &c., after *Josephus*, 'Antiquities,' b. iv., ch. viii., sec. 44; also b. v., ch. i., sec. 19) think that the stones which contained this inscription were the stones of the altar; but this verse seems rather to indicate that a number of stone pillars were erected alongside of the altar, and on which, after they were plastered, this duplicate of the law was inscribed. 33. all Israel

their elders, and officers, and their judges, stood on this side the ark and on that side before the priests the Levites, " which bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, as well ^b the stranger, as he that was born among them; half of them over against mount Gerizim, and half of them over against mount Ebal; as ^c Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded

34 before, that they should bless the people of Israel. And afterward ^d he read all the words of the law, ^e the blessings and cursings, according to

35 all that is written in the book of the law. There was not a word of all that Moses commanded, which Joshua read not before all the congregation of Israel, ^f with the women, and the little ones, and the strangers ^g that ^h were conversant among them.

9 AND it came to pass, when all the kings which *were* on this side Jordan, in the hills, and in the valleys, and in all the coasts of ^a the great sea over against Lebanon, ^b the Hittite, and the Amorite, the Canaanite, ^c the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite, heard *thereof*, that they

B. C. 1451.

^a Deut. 31. 9, 21.^b Deut. 31. 22.^c Deut. 11. 29.^d Deut. 27. 12.^e Deut. 31. 11.^f Neh. 8. 3.^g Deut. 28. 2,

15, 45.

^h Deut. 30. 19.ⁱ Deut. 31. 12.^j Ex. 12. 38.^k Zech. 8. 23.^l walked.

CHAP. 9.

^a Num. 34. 6.^b Ex. 3. 17.^c Ex. 23. 23.

. . . stood on this side the ark and on that side. One-half of Israel was ranged on Gerizim, and the other half on Ebal—along the sides and base of each. before the priests the Levites—in full view of them. The valley enclosed by these two mountains is about three miles long, and from 250 to 300 paces wide, (see on Deut. xxvii.) The articulations of the human voice are, from the purity of the atmosphere, heard distinctly on the opposite heights, as has been testified by numerous travellers (see on Judg. ix. 7). The slopes of the two mountains recede gradually, and afford room for hundreds of thousands to stand or sit conveniently to hear the words of the law. The experiment was actually made in 1860 by *Mr. Mills*. 'We had pitched our tent in the valley, near the foot of Gerizim, on the line between the two mountains, where I have supposed the ark stood. I clambered up Gerizim, and Mr. Williams up Ebal—preferring that he should have all the cursings, and I all the blessings—Mr. Edwards remaining with the men at the tent. Having reached the lower spur, I found myself just as if I stood upon a lofty pulpit, and my friend found himself on a similar one on Ebal. Having rested ourselves a little, I opened my Bible and read the blessings in Hebrew; and every word was heard distinctly by those at the tent, as well as by Mr. Edwards on Ebal. My friend then read the cursings in Welsh; and we all heard every word and syllable' ('Journal of Sacred Literature,' October, 1863, p. 178; see also 'Land of Promise,' p. 371). 34. *afterward he read . . . the law—caused the priests or Levites to read it* (Deut. xxvii. 14). Persons are often said in Scripture to do that which they only command to be done. 35. *There was not a word . . . which Joshua read not.* It appears that a much larger portion of the law was read on this occasion than the brief summary inscribed on the stones; and this must have been the essence of the law as contained in Deuteronomy (Deut. iv. 44; vi. 9; xxvii. 8). It was not written on the stones, but on the plaster. The immediate design of this rehearsal was attained by the performance of the act itself: it only related to posterity in so far as the record of the event would be handed down in the Book of Joshua, or the documents which form the groundwork of it (*Hengstenberg*, 'Pentateuch,' i. p. 431, English translation; also *Keil*, in loco). Thus faithfully did Joshua execute the instructions given by Moses. How awfully solemn must have been the assemblage of the dense multitude and the sublime ceremony of the occasion! The eye and the ear of the people being both addressed, it was calculated to leave an indelible impression; and with spirits elevated

by their brilliant victories in the land of promise, memory would often revert to the striking scene on mounts Ebal and Gerizim, and in the vale of Shechem. The Septuagint inserts this paragraph betwixt vv. 2 and 3 of ch. ix.; whence several continental critics have maintained that it had no certain place in the sacred history, and, not conducing to the progress of the narrative, must be regarded as an interpolation. But the word [ix] *then*, by which it is introduced, is shown by *Keil* to be used in the relation of incidents that took place contemporaneously with the course of the narrative; and he adduces other arguments which convincingly establish the integrity of the text. Colenso alleges that this ceremony must have been 'a mere dumb show.' But this is an entirely mistaken conception of the scene. For, without insisting on the fact already adverted to, that in the clear elastic air of Palestine voices are heard at a great distance, even allowing that some in the mighty congregation might not have distinctly heard the words, the people were all well aware of the service in which they were engaged. They knew the blessings and cursings (Deut. xxvii.), and therefore could at the proper time say an intelligent 'Amen.' Besides, while Joshua in the valley read the declarations, the Levites might be distributed at convenient stations amongst the multitude, to repeat the words to the groups around them. And further still, supposing the tribes to have been assembled near the eastern end of the valley, where it is only about sixty rods wide ('The Land and the Book,' p. 470), the cavilling objection of Colenso falls to the ground.

CHAP. IX. 1-29.—THE KINGS COMBINE AGAINST ISRAEL.

1. *all the kings which were on this side—i. e., the western side of Jordan. in the hills, and in the valleys; and in all the coasts of the great sea.* This threefold distinction marks out very clearly a large portion of Canaan. The first designates the hill country, which belonged afterwards to the tribes of Judah and Ephraim; the second, all the low country from Carmel to Gaza; and the third, the shores of the Mediterranean from the isthmus of Tyre to the plain of Joppa. This designation, "the great sea," is in several other passages applied to that part of the Mediterranean which washed the coast of Canaan (Num. xxxiv. 6; Josh. i. 4; xv. 12; Ezek. xlvii. 20). As for the tribes mentioned, see on ch. iii. 10. *heard thereof—that is, of the sacking of Jericho and Ai, as well as the rapid advance of the Israelites into the interior of the country.* 2. *they gathered*

^cgathered themselves together, to fight with Joshua and with Israel, with one ¹accord.

3 And when the inhabitants of ^dGibeon heard ^ewhat Joshua had done 4 unto Jericho and to Ai, they did work wilyly, and went and made as if they had been ambassadors, and took old sacks upon their asses, and ^fwine bottles, old, and rent, and bound up; and old shoes and clouted upon their feet, and old garments upon them; and all the bread of their 6 provision was dry *and* mouldy. And they went to Joshua ^gunto the camp at Gilgal, and said unto him, and to the men of Israel, We be come from a far country: now therefore make ye a league with us.

7 And the men of Israel said unto ^hthe Hivites, Peradventure ye dwell 8 among us; and ⁱhow shall we make a league with you? and they said unto Joshua, ^jWe *are* thy servants. And Joshua said unto them, Who 9 *are* ye? and from whence come ye? And they said unto him, ^kFrom a very far country thy servants are come because of the name of the LORD thy God: for we have ^lheard the fame of him, and all that he did in Egypt, 10 and ^mall that he did to the two kings of the Amorites, that *were* beyond Jordan, to Sihon king of Heshbon, and to Og king of Bashan, which *was* 11 at Ashtaroth. Wherefore our elders and all the inhabitants of our country spake to us, saying, Take victuals ²with you for the journey, and go to meet them, and say unto them, We *are* your servants: there- 12 fore now make ye a league with us. This our bread we took hot *for* our provision out of our houses on the day we came forth to go unto you; 13 but now, behold, it is dry, and it is mouldy: and these bottles of wine

B. C. 1451.
^c Ps. 83. 3, 5.
 Pro. 11. 21.
 Isa. 8. 9, 10, 12.
 Joel. 2. 9-13.
 Acts 4. 26-28.
¹ mouth.
^d ch. 10. 2.
² Sam. 21. 1, 2.
^e ch. 6. 27.
^f Job 32. 19.
 Matt. 9. 17.
^g ch. 5. 10.
^h ch. 11. 19.
ⁱ Ex. 23. 32.
 Deut. 7. 2.
 Judg. 2. 2.
^j Deut. 20. 11.
² Ki. 10. 5.
^k Deut. 20. 15.
^l Ex. 15. 14.
 Num. 14. 15.
 ch. 2. 10.
^m Num. 21. 24, 33.
² in your hand.

themselves together to fight . . . with one accord. Although divided by separate interests, and often at war with each other, a sense of common danger prompted them to suspend their mutual animosities, that by their united forces they might prevent the land from falling into the hands of foreign masters.

3-15.—THE GIBEONITES OBTAIN A LEAGUE BY CRAFT.

3. when the inhabitants of Gibeon heard. This town, as its name imports, was situated on a rocky eminence about six miles north-west from Jerusalem, where the modern village of El-Jib now stands. It was the capital of the Hivites, and a large, important city (ch. x. 2). It seems to have formed, in union with three other towns in the neighbourhood, a free, independent *tetrapolis* (v. 17), and to have enjoyed a republican government (v. 11). 'The situation and character of Gibeon placed it in an exceptional position. Planted at the head of the pass of Beth-horon, and immediately opposite the opening of the pass of Ai, it would have been the next prey on which the Israelite host would have sprung' (*Stanley, 'Lectures on the Jewish Church,' p. 236*). 4. They did work wilyly—They acted with dexterous policy, seeking the means of self-preservation, not by force, which, they were convinced, would be unavailing, but by artful diplomacy. took old sacks upon their asses. Travellers in the East transport their luggage on beasts of burden. The poorer sort stow all their necessities, food, clothes, utensils, together, in a woollen or haircloth sack, laid across the shoulders of the beast they ride upon. wine bottles, old, and rent, and bound up—goat-skins, which are better adapted for carrying liquor of any kind, fresh and good, than either earthenware, which is porous, or metallic vessels, which are soon heated by the sun. These skin bottles are liable to be rent when old and much used; and there are various ways of mending them, by inserting a new piece of leather, or by gathering together the edges of the rent and sewing

them in 'the form of a purse, or by putting in a round flat splinter of wood into the hole. 5. old shoes and clouted. Those who have but one ass or mule for themselves and baggage frequently dismount and walk—a circumstance which may account for the worn shoes of the pretended travellers. bread . . . dry and mouldy. This must have been that commonly used by travellers—a sort of biscuit made in the form of large rings, about an inch thick and four or five inches in diameter. Not being so well baked as our biscuits, it becomes hard and mouldy, from the moisture left in the dough. It is usually soaked in water previous to being used. 6. they went to Joshua unto the camp at Gilgal. Arrived at the Israelitish head-quarters, the strangers obtained an interview with Joshua and the elders, or princes, to whom they opened their business.

7. Peradventure ye dwell among us. The answer of the Israelites implied that they had no discretion, that their orders were imperative, and that if the strangers belonged to any of the native tribes, the idea of an alliance with them was unlawful, since God had forbidden it (Exod. xxxiii. 32; xxxiv. 12; Deut. vii. 2). 9. From a very far country . . . because of the name of the Lord thy God. They pretended to be actuated by religious motives in seeking to be allied with His people. But their studied address is worthy of notice in appealing to instances of God's miraculous doings at a distance, while they pass by those done in Canaan, as if the report of these had not yet reached their ears. It has been supposed that they had a deep impelling motive for taking a course which they alone of all the Canaanite tribes adopted, and to which they would not, but for a very powerful reason, have resorted. That reason was, that having been expelled from mount Seir, to make way for the tribe of Esau, and having obtained a settlement in the four cities of Canaan, they foresaw the certainty of their being again dispossessed by the descendants of Jacob, Esau's brother.

which we filled *were* new; and, behold, they be rent: and these our garments and our shoes are become old by reason of the very long journey.

14 And ³the men took of their victuals, and ⁿasked not *counsel* at the

15 mouth of the LORD. And Joshua ^omade peace with them, and made a league with them, to let them live: and the princes of the congregation swore unto them.

16 And it came to pass, at the end of three days after they had made a league with them, that they heard that they *were* their neighbours, and

17 *that* they dwelt among them. And the children of Israel journeyed, and came unto their cities on the third day. Now their cities *were* ^pGibeon,

18 and Chephirah, and Beeroth, and Kirjath-jearim. And the children of Israel smote them not, ^qbecause the princes of the congregation had sworn unto them by the LORD God of Israel.

19 And all the congregation murmured against the princes. But all the princes said unto all the congregation, We have sworn unto them by the LORD God of Israel: now therefore we may not touch them.

20 This we will do to them; we will even let them live, lest ^rwrath be upon

21 us, because of the oath which we swore unto them. And the princes said unto them, Let them live; but let them be ^shewers of wood and drawers of water unto all the congregation; as the princes had promised them.

22 And Joshua called for them, and he spake unto them, saying, Where-

B. C. 1451.

³ Or, they received the men by reason of their victuals.

ⁿ Num. 27, 21. Judg 1. 1. Judg 20. 18, 25.

^o 1 Sam. 22. 10.

^p 1 Sam. 23. 10, 11. 1 Sam. 30. 8. 2 Sam. 2. 1. 2 Sam. 5. 19. Isa. 30. 1, 2.

^q 2 Sam. 21. 2.

^r ch. 18. 25. Ezra 2. 25.

^s Ps. 15. 4.

^t 2 Sam. 21. 1. Eze. 17. 13, 15, 18, 19. Zech. 5. 3, 4.

Mal. 3. 5.

^u Deut. 23. 11.

14. the men took of their victuals. The mouldy appearance of their bread was, after examination, accepted as guaranteeing the truth of the story; and in this precipitate conclusion the Israelites were guilty of excessive credulity and culpable negligence, in not asking by the high priest's Urim and Thummim the mind of God before entering into the alliance. It is not clear, however, that, had they applied for Divine direction, they would have been forbidden to spare and connect themselves with any of the Canaanite tribes who renounced idolatry and embraced the worship of the true God. At least, no fault was found with them for making a covenant with the Gibeonites; while, on the other hand, the violation of it was severely punished (2 Sam. xxi. 1; ch. xi. 19, 20).

16. at the end of three days . . . they heard that they were their neighbours. This information was obtained in their further progress through the country; for, as v. 17 should be rendered, 'When the children of Israel journeyed, they came to their cities.' Gibeon was about eighteen or twenty miles from Gilgal. 17. Chephirah [כֶּפְרִיָּה]—the village, perhaps because it was the smallest in the *tetrapolis* (cf. ch. xviii. 26; Ezra. ii. 25; Neh. vii. 29). It is identified with Kefir (*Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' vol. iii., p. 146). Beeroth (2 Sam. iv. 2)—now *El-Bireh*, about twenty minutes distance from El-Jib (Gibeon). *Eusebius* says that Beeroth was situated on the road to Nicopolis ('Amwas); while *Jerome* describes it as on the way to Neapolis (Nablous). *Reland* ('Palästina,' p. 618) adopts the view of the latter. It was the most easterly of the four cities; and, though inferior to Gibeon, must have been a place of considerable magnitude and importance. It is now a small village, bearing the name of *B'reh*, or *El-Bireh*, 'the well,' situated on the slope of a rocky ridge (ch. xviii. 21, 25) (*Bonar's* 'Land of Promise'). Kirjath-jearim—'the city of forests,' now Kuryet-el-Enab (*Robinson*). 18. the children of Israel smote them not. The moral character of the Gibeonites' stratagem was bad. The princes

of the congregation did not vindicate either the expediency or the lawfulness of the connection they had formed, but they felt the solemn obligations of their oath; and, although the popular clamour was loud against them, caused by disappointment, perhaps, at losing the spoils of Gibeon, but especially by displeasure at the apparent breach of the divine commandment, they determined to adhere to their pledge, because they had "sworn unto them by the Lord God of Israel." The people demanded the dissolution of the league, but the princes would not comply. The oath was in their eyes a momentous fact; and it may be remarked, that so much was the old ecclesiastical theology impressed with the sanctity of an oath, that it declared the oath which had been made even to a robber inviolate. The Israelitish princes acted conscientiously: they felt themselves bound by their solemn promise; but, to prevent the disastrous consequences of their imprudent haste, they resolved, as a species of atonement for their error, to degrade the Gibeonites to a servile condition, as a means of preventing the Hebrew people from being ensnared into idolatry, and thus acted up, as they thought, to the true spirit and end of the law.

21. hewers of wood and drawers of water (see on Deut. xxix. 11)—the menials who performed the lowest offices and drudgery in the sanctuary; whence they were called *Nethinims* (1 Chr. ix. 2; Ezra ii. 43; viii. 20)—*i. e.*, given, appropriated, delivered over (to the sanctuary)—a name first given to the Levites, as hereditarily devoted to the service of the sanctuary; but afterwards exclusively applied to the Gibeonites, who were separated from all others, dwelling in their own quarters (Neh. vii. 46). [The Septuagint has *ἑλοκόποι καὶ ὑδροφόροι τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου τοῦ θεοῦ*, hewers of wood and drawers of water for the altar of God; leaving out the congregation, to whose private or personal convenience the Gibeonites were not to minister.] Their chastisement thus brought them into the possession of great religious privileges (Ps. lxxxiv. 10);

fore have ye beguiled us, saying, We *are* very far from you; when ye
 23 dwell among us? Now therefore ye *are* 'cursed; and there shall ⁴none
 of you be freed from being bondmen, and hewers of wood and drawers of
 24 water for the house of my God. And they answered Joshua, and said,
 Because it was certainly told thy servants, how that the LORD thy God
^ucommanded his servant Moses to give you all the land, and to destroy
 all the inhabitants of the land from before you, therefore ^vwe were sore
 25 afraid of our lives because of you, and have done this thing. And now,
 behold, we *are* ^win thine hand: as it seemeth good and right unto thee
 26 to do unto us, do. And so did he unto them, and delivered them out of
 27 the hand of the children of Israel, that they slew them not. And
 Joshua ⁵made them that day hewers of wood and drawers of water for
 the congregation, and for the altar of the LORD, even unto this day, ^zin
 the place which he should choose.

10 NOW it came to pass, when Adoni-zedek king of Jerusalem had heard
 how Joshua had taken Ai, and had utterly destroyed it; ^aas he had done
 to Jericho and her king, so he had done to ^bAi and her king; and ^chow
 the inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace with Israel, and were among
 2 them; that they ^dfeared greatly, because Gibeon *was* a great city, as one
 of the ¹royal cities, and because it *was* greater than Ai, and all the men
 3 thereof *were* mighty. Wherefore Adoni-zedek king of Jerusalem sent
 unto Hoham king of ^eHebron, and unto Piram king of Jarmuth, and
 unto Japhia king of Lachish, and unto Debir king of Eglon, saying,
 4 Come up unto me, and help me, that we may smite Gibeon: ^ffor it hath
 5 made peace with Joshua and with the children of Israel. Therefore the
 five kings of the Amorites, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron,
 the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, the king of Eglon, ^ggathered
 themselves together, and went up, they and all their hosts, and encamped
 before Gibeon, and made war against it.

B. C. 1481.

⁴ Gen. 9. 25.
⁴ not be cut
off from
you.^u Ex. 23. 32.
Num. 33. 51-
5; 55, 56.
Deut. 7. 1, 2.^v Ex. 15. 11.^w Gen. 16. 6.⁵ gave, or,
delivered
to be.¹ Chr. 9. 2

Ezra 8. 20.

^z Deut. 12. 5.¹ Ki. 8. 29.¹ Ki. 9. 7.² Chr. 7. 12

CHAP. 10.

^a ch. 6. 21.^b ch. 8. 22.^c ch. 9. 15.^d Ex. 15. 11-
16.

Deut. 11. 25.

Deut. 28. 10.

Ps. 48. 4-6.

Pro. 1. 26,
27.¹ cities of the
king-
dom.^e Gen. 23. 2.

Num. 13. 22.

^f ch. 9. 15.^g ch. 9. 2.

and their continued preservation in their peculiar office, after the extermination of the other native tribes of Canaan, affords a remarkable confirmation of the truth of the preceding history (see on 2 Sam. xxi. 1, 2).

23. Now therefore ye are cursed. The sentence pronounced on Canaan was literally fulfilled on this Canaanitish tribe (see on Gen. ix. 25). [The word is אָרֵר, to doom to destruction.]

CHAP. X. 1-5.—FIVE KINGS WAR AGAINST GIBEON.

1. Adoni-zedek—'lord of righteousness;' nearly synonymous with Melchizedek, 'king of righteousness.' These names were common titles of the Jebusite kings. Jerusalem. The original name, "Salem" (Gen. xiv. 18; Ps. lxxvi. 2), was superseded by that here given, which signifies 'a peaceful possession,' or 'a vision of peace,' in allusion, as some think, to the strikingly symbolic scene (Gen. xxii. 14) represented on the mount whereon that city was afterwards built. It is called Jebusi, ch. xviii. 28, and Jebus, ch. xv. 8; Judg. xix. 10. 'It may be reasonably inferred that Adoni-zedek exercised a kind of ecclesiastical dominion over the surrounding clans, and that Jerusalem was esteemed a sacred locality even in the estimation of the heathen. It was probably even at that early period distinctively styled "Holy City" (*Barclay's* 'City of the Great King,' p. 110). inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace with Israel, and were among them—*i. e.*, the Israelites had made an alliance with that people, and, acknowledging their supremacy, were living on terms of friendly intercourse with them. 2. they feared greatly. The dread inspired by the rapid conquests of the Israelites had been immensely increased by the

fact of a state so populous and so strong as Gibeon having found it expedient to submit to the power and the terms of the invaders, as one of the royal cities. Although itself a republic (ch. ix. 3), it was large and well fortified, like those places in which the chiefs of the country usually established their residence. 3. Wherefore Adoni-zedek . . . sent . . . saying, Come up unto me, and help me. He saw that there must be a desperate struggle, not only for independence, but for life. A combined attack, therefore, was meditated on Gibeon, with a view not only to punish its people for their desertion of the native cause, but by its overthrow to interpose a barrier to the further inroads of the Israelites. This confederacy among the mountaineers of Southern Palestine was formed and headed by the king of Jerusalem, because his territory was most exposed to danger, Gibeon being only six miles distant, and because he evidently possessed some degree of pre-eminence over his royal neighbours. 5. the five kings of the Amorites. The Septuagint has 'of the Jebusites.' The settlement of this powerful and warlike tribe lay within the confines of Moab; but having also acquired extensive possessions on the south-west of the Jordan, their name, as the ruling power, seems to have been given to the region generally (2 Sam. xxi. 2), although Hebron was inhabited by Hittites or Hivites (ch. xi. 19), and Jerusalem by Jebusites (ch. xv. 63). encamped before Gibeon, and made war against it. *Josephus* says ('Antiquities,' b. v., ch. i., sec. 17) that the confederate troops pitched their camp at a certain fountain not far from the city, and were preparing for a siege when the Gibeonites found means of apprising Joshua of their perilous situation.

- 6 And the men of Gibeon sent unto Joshua ^hto the camp to Gilgal, saying, Slack not thy hand from thy servants; come up to us quickly, and save us, and help us: for all the kings of the Amorites that dwell in
- 7 the mountains are gathered together against us. So Joshua ascended from Gilgal, he, and ⁱall the people of war with him, and all the mighty men of valour.
- 8 And the LORD said unto Joshua, ^jFear them not: for I have delivered them into thine hand; ^kthere shall not a man of them stand before thee.
- 9 Joshua therefore came unto them suddenly, and went up from Gilgal all
- 10 night. And the LORD ^ldiscomfited them before Israel, and slew them with a great slaughter at Gibeon, and chased them along the way that goeth up ^mto Beth-horon, and smote them to ⁿAzekah, and unto Mak-
- 11 kedah. And it came to pass, as they fled from before Israel, and were in the going down to Beth-horon, ^othat the LORD cast down great stones from heaven upon them unto Azekah, and they died: *they were* more which died with hailstones than *they* whom the children of Israel slew with the sword.

B. C. 1461.

^h ch. 5. 10.
ⁱ ch. 8. 1.
^j Deut. 7. 24.
 Deut. 11. 55.
 ch. 11. 6.
 ch. 23. 9.
 Judg. 4. 14.
^k ch. 1. 5.
^l Judg. 4. 15.
 1 Sam. 7. 10.
 2 Chr 14. 12.
 Ps. 13. 14.
 Isa. 23. 21.
^m ch. 16. 3. 5.
ⁿ ch. 15. 35.
^o Ps. 18. 13.
 14.
 Ps. 77. 17.
 Isa. 23. 2.
 Isa. 30. 31.
 Rev. 16. 21.

6.9.—JOSHUA RESCUES IT.

6. the men of Gibeon sent unto Joshua. Their appeal was urgent, and their claim to protection irresistible, on the ground, not only of kindness and sympathy, but of justice. In attacking the Canaanites, Joshua had received from God a general assurance of success (ch. i. 5). But the intelligence of so formidable a combination among the native princes seems to have depressed his mind (v. 8) with the anxious and dispiriting idea that it was a chastisement for the hasty and inconsiderate alliance entered into with the Gibeonites. It was evidently to be a struggle for life and death, not only to Gibeon, but to the Israelites. And in this view the Divine communication that was made to him was seasonable and animating. He seems to have asked the counsel of God, and received an answer, before setting out on the expedition.

9. Joshua therefore came unto them suddenly. This is explained in the following clause, where he is described as having accomplished, by a forced march of picked men, in one night a distance of twenty-six miles, which, according to the slow pace of Eastern armies and caravans, had formerly been a three days' journey (ch. ix. 17), and he probably came upon their camp at daybreak, when they were taken by surprise.

10, 11.—GOD FIGHTS AGAINST THEM WITH HAILSTONES.

10. the Lord discomfited them—Hebrew, terrified, confounded the Amorite allies; probably, in the first instance, by the suddenness of the Israelites' appearance, and the effect of their terrific war-shout, but afterwards by a fearful storm of lightning and thunder. So the word is usually employed (Judg. iv. 15; v. 20; 1 Sam. vii. 10; Ps. xviii. 13, 14; xlvii. 6), and slew them with a great slaughter at Gibeon. This refers to the attack of the Israelites upon the besiegers. It is evident that there had been much hard fighting around the heights of Gibeon, for the day was far spent ere the enemy took to flight. chased them along the way that goeth up to Beth-horon—i. e., the House of the Hollow, or the House of Caves, of which there are still traces existing. Others ascribe the name to the worship of Horns. There were two contiguous villages of that name—upper and nether. Upper Beth-horon was nearest Gibeon—about ten miles distant—and approached by a gradual ascent through a long and precipitous ravine. This was the first stage of the flight. The fugitives had crossed the high ridge of Upper

Beth-horon, and were in full flight down the descent to Beth-horon the Nether. 'The road between the two places is so rocky and rugged that there is a path made by means of steps cut in the rock' (*Robinson*). Down this pass, the scene of this first (as also of the last great victory that crowned the Jewish arms, at the interval of nearly 1,500 years—*Stanley*, 'Sinai and Palestine,' p. 208), Joshua continued his victorious route. Here it was that the Lord interposed, assisting his people by means of a storm—'one of the fearful tempests which from time to time sweep over the hills of Palestine' (*Stanley*), and which, having been probably gathering all day, burst with such irresistible fury that "they were more which died with hailstones than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword." The Oriental hail-storm is a terrific agent: the hailstones are masses of ice, large as walnuts, and sometimes as two fists; their prodigious size, and the violence with which they fall, make them always very injurious to property, and often fatal to life, both in men and beasts (see *Hardy's* 'Notices of the Holy Land,' p. 213). 'Infidelity has ridiculed this miracle, but without reason. That single stones, and even showers of stones, of uncommon weight have frequently fallen, is proved by the most unexceptionable evidence. In 1510, near Padua, in Italy, about 1,200 stones fell, and some of them were 120 lbs. weight. On the Upper Rhine, in 1492, one stone fell, 260 lbs.; and near Verona, in 1762, one fell 200, and another 300 lbs. weight. Why, then, should it be thought incredible that God should employ such agents on the occasion before us? Does not disbelief of such a recorded fact display culpable ignorance or heartless folly? But granting that the shower was composed of hailstones, this concession does not, even supposing that it was a natural occurrence, increase the improbability of the case. In the south of France and Switzerland hailstones of large size sometimes fall in showers, and still more frequently in the countries of the Levant. Among the Arabian hills, in the vicinity of the Dead Sea, it is recorded that thirty of the soldiers of Baldwin I. perished in a tempest, described as "horrible hail, terrible frost, and indescribable rain and snow." Nor does his strong description appear much overcharged, when it is considered that thirty soldiers fell victims to the severity of the storm. Thus completely does history refute the infidel objection of impossibility in the present instance. Yet who, except one strangely insensible to his

12 Then spake Joshua to the LORD in the day when the LORD delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel,

² Sun, ² stand thou still upon Gibeon;

And thou, Moon, in the valley of ⁴ Ajalon!

13 And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. ⁷ Is not this written in the book of ³ Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and

14 hastened not to go down about a whole day. And there was ⁸ no day like that before it or after it, that the LORD hearkened unto the voice of a 15 man: for ⁴ the LORD fought for Israel. And Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, unto the camp to Gilgal.

B. C. 1451.
² Isa. 28. 21.
 Isa. 58. 8.
 Isa. 60. 20.
 Amo; 9. 9.
 Hab. 3. 11.
² Be silent.
⁹ Judg. 12. 12.
⁷ 2 Sam. 1. 18.
³ Or, the upright?
⁴ Isa. 38. 8.
⁸ Deut. 1. 30.
 Deut. 3. 22.
 Deut. 20. 4.

condition as a feeble creature, would presumptuously circumscribe the power of the Deity over universal nature? This shower, though natural in itself, was supernaturally employed, and miraculously directed, to fall where and when it did, and to do the execution prescribed' ('Azûba,' by Rev. W. Ritchie, p. 396). The miraculous feature of *this* tempest, which fell on the Amorite army, was the entire preservation of the Israelites from its destructive ravages.

12-15.—THE SUN AND MOON STAND STILL AT THE WORD OF JOSHUA.

12. Then spake Joshua to the Lord . . . Sun, stand thou still . . . and thou, Moon—*lit.*, 'Sun upon Gibeon, be still (remain), and the moon in the vale of Ajalon.' The language which Joshua addressed to the Lord was evidently a prayer that the day might not close till he should have completely overthrown his enemies; and it was most natural in the circumstances that such should have been the fervent wish of his heart; for it would appear that at the time when the ejaculation was uttered, the day was far advanced. 13. the sun stood still [שָׁמַר הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ בְּיַמֵּי הַיָּם, in the midst, in the bisection of the heavens—i. e., noonday] (cf. Judg. xvi. 3). Now, this passage has given rise to much discussion; and while it is generally admitted that it points to a physical miracle, a difference of opinion is entertained as to the form, and consequently the extent, of its operation. Some regard the section from vv. 12-15 inclusive as a continuous portion of the history; and, considering that the inspired historian has related what occurred according to the natural appearance of things, and conformably to the state of human knowledge at the time, believe that the expressions, "the sun stood still, and the moon stayed," mean, on the principles of science, that the earth was arrested in its diurnal rotation on its axis, and thereby produced the phenomena described. Another way of explaining the words of Joshua has been suggested. 'Day and night are produced by the rotation of the earth upon her own axis, and that revolution is principally caused by the action of the sun upon our globe. Now, if that action be suspended at any given hour of a day, the rotation of the earth on its axis will cease, and that day will be prolonged beyond its usual length, during the time that suspension continues. Joshua's words are, on this hypothesis, interpreted thus: "Let the sun restrain his influence, or be inactive, upon the earth, that the earth may not revolve further and bring night, that his light may continue upon Gibeon as it now appears, and that the moon may continue to shine over the vale of Ajalon as at present she does." Joshua does not request the earth to cease her motion, which was merely the effect of the sun's acting upon her; but he ad-

resses the sun, from which, as its cause, that motion proceeded, and thus he employs language which, everything considered, Sir Isaac Newton himself would have demonstrated to be correct, elegant, and sublime. Philosophically, to stop an effect, there must be removed its producing cause. Hence, in the storm, Jesus first rebuked the wind that raised the billows, and then said to the waves, "Peace, be still;" and here the sun withholds his influence upon the earth, and the earth becomes motionless' ('Azûba,' p. 397). Doubtless it was within the compass of omnipotence to stop the movements of the great machinery of nature, or any part of it; and as the Creator cannot be bound by the laws He Himself thought fit to impose upon matter, He must be considered free to suspend them, whenever the interference may seem to His infinite wisdom necessary for the promotion of His glory or the good of His people. Such an occasion undoubtedly was the contest at Gibeon, which, by securing to the Israelites a large instalment of possession in the promised land, was really an epoch in the history of redemption; and the control exercised over the sun and moon was a visible demonstration of God's superiority over those luminaries, which were objects of worship amongst the idolatrous Canaanites. A believer in revelation, then, would not hesitate to admit a temporary alteration of the laws that govern the solar system, if such a meaning were demanded by the Scripture record. But a literal interpretation of the text is compassed with many and great difficulties. Besides, a miracle which extended through the solar system—the most stupendous miracle ever wrought in the material universe—must have attracted the attention of numerous observers beyond the confines of Palestine; but no notice of it occurs in the writings of pagan authors (for the passage in *Herodotus*, supposed to contain an allusion (b. ii., ch. cxlii.) to this miracle, refers most probably to the Egyptian system of astronomical cycles), nor in any other part of Scripture (for the description in Hab. iii. 11, where the words of the original are rendered in our version "the sun and moon stood still in their habitation," has been shown by *Mauver*, *Keil*, and *Henderson*, to mean that the sun and moon were obscured by tempest clouds—viz., the storm of hail-stones). No astronomical miracle, therefore, having been performed, in the opinion of the writers just named—to whom may be added *Grotius*, *Isaac Peyrerius*, &c.—we are led, in consequence, to consider whether the passage may not be susceptible of another interpretation, which, though modified and restricted, is perfectly consistent with the admission of miraculous agency. An attentive examination will discover in this passage very clear evidence of a difference in style from the context; and, accordingly, it is obeyed by many eminent writers (*Vatablus*, 'Critici Sacri,'

16 But these five kings fled, and "hid themselves in" a cave at Makkedah.
 17 And it was told Joshua, saying, The five kings are found hid in a cave
 18 at Makkedah. And Joshua said, "Roll great stones upon the mouth of
 19 the cave, and set men by it for to keep them: and stay ye not, but
 pursue after your enemies, and "smite the hindmost of them; suffer them
 not to enter into their cities: for the LORD your God hath delivered
 20 them into your hand. And it came to pass, when Joshua and the chil-
 dren of Israel had made an end of slaying them with a very great
 slaughter, till they were consumed, that the rest *which* remained of them
 21 entered into fenced cities. And all the people returned to the camp to
 Joshua at Makkedah in peace: "none moved his tongue against any of
 the children of Israel.
 22 Then said Joshua, Open the mouth of the cave, and bring-out those
 23 five kings unto me out of the cave. And they did so, and brought forth
 those five kings unto him out of the cave, the king of Jerusalem, the
 king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, and the king
 24 of Eglon. And it came to pass, when they brought out those kings
 unto Joshua, that Joshua called for all the men of Israel, and said

B. C. 1451.
 " Ps. 48. 4, 6.
 Ps. 139. 7,
 10.
 Isa. 2. 10, 12.
 Amos 9. 2.
 Rev 6. 11.
 " Judg. 6. 2.
 1 Sam. 13. 6.
 1 Sam. 24. 3
 S.
 Isa. 2. 19, 22.
 Isa. 24. 21,
 22.
 " Judg. 9. 44,
 49.
 4 cut off
 the tail.
 Isa. 9. 14,
 15.
 " Ex. 11. 7.
 Isa. 54. 17.
 Isa. 57. 4.

ii., p. 255; *Levi F. Gersonis*, as quoted by *Masius*, 'Critici Sacri,' ii., p. 265) that the inspired author here breaks off the thread of his history of this miraculous victory to introduce a quotation from an ancient poem, in which the mighty acts of that day were commemorated. The passage, which is parenthetical, contains a *poetical* description of the victory, which was miraculously gained by the help of God, and forms an extract from "the book of Jasher"—i. e., the upright—an anthology, or collection of national songs, in honour of renowned and eminently pious heroes. [A book called Jasher exists in Hebrew at the present day, and is supposed by Oriental Jews to be that referred to in this passage and 2 Sam. i. 18. No just idea can be formed of it from the English translation recently executed. A discerning criticism will perceive many indications of antiquity mixed up with what is modern in names, incidents, and allusions.] The language of a poem is not to be literally interpreted; and, therefore, when the sun and moon are personified, addressed as intelligent beings, and represented as standing still, the explanation is, that the light of the sun and moon was supernaturally prolonged by the same laws of refraction and reflection that ordinarily cause the sun to appear above the horizon when he is in reality below it. But allowing the passage to be an extract or quotation from a collection of poems, the inspired historian, by adopting it, has asserted and recognized the miracle related in it to be a fact. Gibeon (a hill) was now at the back of the Israelites, and the height would soon have intercepted the rays of the setting sun. The valley of Ajalon (stags) was before them, and so near that it was sometimes called "the valley of Gibeon" (Isa. xxviii. 21). The incident took place soon after the equinox (cf. ch. iii. 15 with ch. v. 10), when the days had twelve hours' light; and it occurred at noon (v. 13), for "the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day;" so that we may conclude the hours which succeeded noon were miraculously extended into a whole day, or twelve hours of light. [That this is the right interpretation of 'the standing still of the sun and the moon,' has been shown (by *J. A. Macdonall*, author of 'The Principia and the Bible') from an ingenious criticism on the three Hebrew words, הָיָה, הָיָה, הָיָה, promiscuously translated in our version the *sun*; and the two words, הָיָה, and הָיָה, indiscrimi-

nately rendered *moon*. Chamah and Levanah are constantly associated; Shemesh and Yarach are as invariably connected: the former couple denoting, with a few instances of exception, the *bodies* of the sun and moon; the latter, the *light* that emanates from them; and these are the words used in the passage before us (cf. Exod. xvi. 21; Deut. iv. 19; xxxiii. 14; 1 Sam. xi. 9; Neh. viii. 3; Ps. cxxi. 6; Isa. xlix. 10; Jon. iv. 8).] Besides, the mention of Gibeon in connection with the sun, and the valley of Ajalon to be lighted by the moon, shows that these two orbs were left in their natural state—the moon to appear at the ordinary time, while the radiance of both was unprecedentedly prolonged. This is the view taken by *Michaelis*, *Schultz*, *Hess*, *Dathe*, *Keil*, &c. It would seem, from v. 14, that the command of Joshua was in reality a prayer to God for the performance of this miracle, for the sun and the moon did not cease to give light till "the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies;" and that, although the prayers of eminently good men like Moses often prevailed with God, never was there, on any other occasion, so astonishing a display of Divine power made in behalf of His people as in answer to the prayer of Joshua. V. 15 is the end of the quotation from Jasher; and it is necessary to notice this, as the fact described in it is recorded in due course and the same words by the sacred historian, v. 43. (See, on this passage, *Colenso*, Part I., Preface, p. x.; *Archdeacon Pratt*, 'Scripture and Science not at Variance'; 'Scripture Difficulties'; 'The Hulsean Lectures' for 1853-54, by *Rev. Morgan Cowie*, Fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge.)

16-27.—THE FIVE KINGS HANGED.

16. these five kings fled, and hid themselves in a cave (Hebrew, the cave) at Makkedah. The pursuit was continued without interruption to Makkedah, at the foot of the western mountains, where Joshua seems to have halted with the main body of his troops, while a detachment was sent forward to scour the country in pursuit of the remaining stragglers, a few of whom succeeded in reaching the neighbouring cities. The last act, probably the next day, was the disposal of the prisoners, among whom the five kings (see on v. 37) were consigned to the infamous doom of being slain (Deut. xx. 16, 17), and then their corpses suspended on five trees till the even-

unto the captains of the men of war which went with him, Come near, ⁷put your feet upon the necks of these kings. And they came near, and **25** put their feet upon the necks of them. And Joshua said unto them, ²Fear not, nor be dismayed; be strong, and of good courage: for ^athus shall the LORD do to all your enemies against whom ye fight.

26 And afterward Joshua smote them, and slew them, and hanged them on five trees: and they ^bwere hanging upon the trees until the evening.

27 And it came to pass at the time of the going down of the sun, *that* Joshua commanded, and they ^ctook them down off the trees, and cast them into the cave wherein they had been hid, and laid great stones in the cave's mouth, *which remain* until this very day.

28 And that day Joshua took Makkedah, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and the king thereof he utterly destroyed, them, and all the souls that *were* therein; he let none remain: and he did to the king of Makkedah ^das he did unto the king of Jericho.

29 Then Joshua passed from Makkedah, and all Israel with him, unto

30 ^eLibnah, and fought against Libnah: and the LORD delivered it also, and the king thereof, into the hand of Israel; and he smote it with the edge of the sword, and all the souls that *were* therein: he let none remain in it; but did unto the king thereof as he did unto the king of Jericho.

31 And Joshua passed from Libnah, and all Israel with him, unto

32 ^fLachish, and encamped against it, and fought against it: and the LORD delivered Lachish into the hand of Israel, which took it on the second day, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and all the souls that *were* therein, according to all that he had done to Libnah.

33 Then Horam king of ^gGezer came up to help Lachish; and Joshua smote him and his people, until he had left him none remaining.

34 And from Lachish Joshua passed unto Eglon, and all Israel with him;

35 and they encamped against it, and fought against it: and they took it on that day, and smote it with the edge of the sword; and all the souls that *were* therein he utterly ^hdestroyed that day, according to all that he had done to Lachish.

36 And Joshua went up from Eglon, and all Israel with him, unto

37 ⁱHebron; and they fought against it: and they took it, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and the king thereof, and all the cities thereof, and all the souls that *were* therein; he left none remaining, according to all that he had done to Eglon, but destroyed it utterly, and all the souls that *were* therein.

38 And Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to ^jDebir, and fought

39 against it: and he took it, and the king thereof, and all the cities thereof; and they smote them with the edge of the sword, and utterly destroyed all the souls that *were* therein; he left none remaining: as he

B. C. 1451.

^k Deut. 33. 29.

Ps. 2. 8-12.

Ps. 91. 13.

Ps. 107. 40.

Ps. 110. 5.

Ps. 149. 8, 9.

Isa. 29. 5, 6.

Mal. 4. 3.

Rom. 16. 20.

Rev. 2. 26.

27.

^l Deut. 31. 6.

8.

ch. 1. 9.

1 Sam. 17.

37.

Ps. 63. 9.

Ps. 78. 11.

2 Cor. 1. 10.

2 Tim. 4. 17.

18.

^m Deut. 3. 21.

Deut. 7. 19.

ⁿ Num. 25. 4.

ch. 8. 29.

^o 2 Sam. 21. 6.

9.

Esth. 2. 27.

Esth. 7. 9.

Ps. 149. 7-9.

Matt. 27. 5.

^p Deut. 21. 23.

ch. 8. 21.

^q ch. 6. 21.^r ch. 15. 42.

ch. 21. 13.

2 Ki. 8. 22.

2 Ki. 19. 8.

^s 2 Ki. 14. 19.

Mic. 1. 13.

^t ch. 16. 2, 10.

Judg. 1. 29.

1 Ki. 9. 16.

17.

1 Chr. 20. 4.

^u pulled

down.

Job 11. 10.

2 Cor. 4. 9.

^v Num. 13. 22.

ch. 14. 13.

ch. 15. 13.

Judg. 1. 10.

2 Sam. 5. 1.

4.

^w ch. 15. 15.

24. put your feet upon the necks of these kings. This barbarous act of insolence was, according to the usage of ancient war, the favourite way of a conqueror displaying his complete victory over a fallen chief of the enemy (Deut. xxxviii. 29; 2 Sam. xxii. 41; Ps. cx. 5; Mal. iv. 3). Representations of the Assyrian monarch placing his foot on the neck of a prostrate captive are exhibited on a bas-relief found at Khorsabad (*Boita*, plate lxxxii.: see *Layard's* 'Nineveh and its Remains,' ii., p. 376).

27. laid great stones in the cave's mouth, which remain until this very day. This rude monument, which would stand for ages, would be a permanent record of the war of invasion. With such exultation and lively gratitude would the Israelite contemporaries of Joshua point to the gathered heap around the cave at Makkedah, and

tell their children's children of the wonders of the field of Gibeon, and how on one day the gallant Joshua, by God's favour, quelled the pride of five kings.

28-42.—SEVEN MORE KINGS CONQUERED.

28. that day Joshua took Makkedah. In this and the following verses is described the rapid succession of victory and extermination which swept the whole of Southern Palestine into the hands of Israel. "All these kings and their land did Joshua take *at one time*, because the Lord God of Israel fought for Israel. And Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to the camp at Gilgal."

37. smote . . . the king thereof—i. e., of Hebron. In v. 23 it is related that the king of Hebron had fallen in battle. The people had elected a

had done to Hebron, so he did to Debir, and to the king thereof; as he had done also to Libnah, and to her king.

40 So Joshua smote ^jall the country of the hills, and of the south, and of the vale, and of the springs, and all their kings: he left none remaining, but utterly destroyed all that breathed, as the LORD God of Israel

41 ^kcommanded. And Joshua smote them from ^lKadesh-barnea even unto

42 ^mGaza, ⁿand all the country of Goshen, even unto Gibeon. And ^oall these kings and their land did Joshua take at one time, because the LORD

43 God of Israel fought for Israel. And Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, unto the camp to Gilgal.

11 AND it came to pass, when ^pJabin king of Hazor had heard *those things*, that he sent ^qto Jobab king of Madon, and to the king of Shimron, and to the king of Achshaph, and to the kings that *were* on the north of the mountains, and of the plains south of ^rChinneroth, and in

3 the valley, and in the borders ^sof Dor on the west, *and to the Canaanite* on the east and on the west, and *to the Amorite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, and the Jebusite in the mountains, and to the Hivite*

4 under ^tHermon ^uin the land of Mizpeh. And they went out, they and all their hosts with them, much people, ^veven as the sand that *is* upon

5 the sea-shore in multitude, with horses and chariots very many. And when all these kings were ^wmet together, they came and pitched together at the waters of Merom, to fight against Israel.

B C. 1451.
j ch. 1. 21-63.
k Deut. 20. 16, 17.
l Num. 13. 17, 26.
m Num. 2. 8.
n Gen. 10. 19.
o Deut. 2. 23.
p Judg. 16. 1.
q Amos 1. 6.
r ch. 11. 16.
s Ps. 44. 2.
t Ps. 60. 8.
u Isa. 43. 4.
CHAP. 11.
a Judg. 4. 2.
b ch. 10. 3.
c Num. 4. 11.
d ch. 17. 11.
e Judg. 3. 3.
f ch. 13. 11.
g Gen. 31. 49.
h Gen. 32. 17.
i assembled by appointment.

successor, whose short-lived reign is noticed, he being killed in the general overthrow of Hebron and its dependencies.

41. all the country of Goshen—(cf. ch. xi. 16.) ‘The southern frontier of Palestine, which almost imperceptibly loses itself in the desert of Sinai, is sometimes called the land of “Goshen,” or the “frontier,” doubtless for the same reason as the more famous tract between the cultivated Egypt and the Arabian desert, in which the Israelites dwelt before the exodus’ (*Stanley*, ‘Sinai and Palestine,’ p. 159).

CHAP. XI. 1-9.—DIVERS KINGS OVERCOME AT THE WATERS OF MEROM.

1. And it came to pass, when Jabin king of Hazor had heard those things. The scene of the sacred narrative is here shifted to the north of Canaan, where a still more extensive confederacy was formed among the ruling powers, to oppose the further progress of the Israelites. Jabin (‘the intelligent’), which seems to have been a hereditary title (Judg. iv. 2), took the lead, from Hazor being the capital of the northern region (v. 10). It was situated on the borders of lake Merom. The other cities mentioned must have been in the vicinity, though their exact position is unknown. Madon [Septuagint, Μαρόν=Merom (v. 5).] Shimron—called Shimron-meron, ch. xii. 20. Achshaph—Ecdippa, near the Phœnician coast (ch. xix. 25). 2. the kings . . . on the . . . mountains—the Antilibanus district. the plains south of Chinneroth—the northern part of the Arabah, or valley of the Jordan. the valley [עמק]—the low and level country of the Philistines, including the plain of Sharon. the borders of Dor on the west—the highlands of Dor, reaching to the town of Dor (Tantoura), on the Mediterranean coast, below mount Carmel. 3. the Canaanite on the east and on the west—a particular branch of the Canaanitish population who occupied the western bank of the Jordan as far northward as the sea of Galilee, and also the coasts of the Mediterranean Sea. under Hermon—now Jebel-es-sheikh. It was the modern boundary of Canaan on the west of the Jordan. land of Mizpeh—now

Cœle-Syria. 4. they went out . . . as the sand . . . upon the sea-shore in multitude. The chiefs of these several tribes were summoned by Jabin, being all probably tributary to the kingdom of Hazor, or at least all who had not fallen before the victorious arms of Joshua; and their combined forces, according to Josephus, amounted to 300,000 infantry, 10,000 cavalry, and 20,000 war-chariots. with horses and chariots very many. The war-chariots were probably, like those of Egypt and Assyria (Neh. xi. 13), made of wood (see on Exod. xiv. 6, 7: cf. 2 Ki. xxiii. 11; Ps. xlvi. 9, with ch. xvii. 16; Judg. i. 19; iv. 3, 13), but nailed and tipped with iron, and armed with iron scythes affixed to the poles. (For a description of the war-chariots then in use, see *Wilkinson’s* ‘Ancient Egyptians,’ i., p. 335-337; also *Layard’s* ‘Nineveh,’ ii., p. 349: cf. *Homer’s* ‘Iliad,’ iv., l. 552; v., 507, 945; *Eschylus*, supplices, 50). These appear for the first time in the Canaanite war, to aid this last determined struggle against the invaders; and ‘it was the use of these which seems to have fixed the place of rendezvous by the lake Merom, or Samachon (*Josephus*, ‘Antiquities,’ b. v., ch. v., sec. 1; ‘Jewish Wars,’ b. iii., ch. x., sec. 7), the high lake, now Bahret-el-Huleh, along whose level shores they could have full play for their force.’ ‘This little triangular lake, about three miles long, on its northern border is contracted to a southern angle pointing towards the lake of Tiberias, from which it is about ten miles distant, and connected with it by the Jordan’ (*Osborn’s* ‘Palestine, Past and Present,’ p. 108). *Josephus* makes no mention of the lake in this connection (as he does, ‘Antiquities,’ b. v., ch. v., sec. 1), but says that the Canaanite forces encamped at Beeroth—i. e., wells, near Kedesh Naphtali (‘Antiquities,’ b. v., ch. i., sec. 18). In reference to this statement of the Jewish historian, *Stanley* remarks that ‘the expression “waters” (Josh. xi. 7) is never used elsewhere for a lake; and looking both to the words of *Josephus* and of the sacred narrative, he judges it ‘safer to consider it as an open question whether the fight actually took place on the shores of the lake, or by a spring or well on the upland plain which

- 6 And the LORD said unto Joshua, Be not afraid because of them; for to-morrow, about this time, will I deliver them up all slain before Israel:
- 7 thou shalt hough their horses, and burn their chariots with fire. So Joshua came, and all the people of war with him, against them by the
- 8 waters of Merom suddenly; and they fell upon them. And the LORD delivered them into the hand of Israel, who smote them, and chased them unto ²great Zidon, and unto ³Misrephoth-maim, and unto the valley of Mizpeh eastward; and they smote them, until they left them none
- 9 remaining. And Joshua did unto them as the LORD bade him: he houghed their horses, and burnt their chariots with fire.
- 10 And Joshua at that time turned back, and took Hazor, and smote the king thereof with the sword: for Hazor beforetime was the head of all
- 11 those kingdoms. And they smote all the souls that were therein with the edge of the sword, utterly destroying them: there was not ⁴any left
- 12 to breathe: and he burnt Hazor with fire. And all the cities of those kings, and all the kings of them, did Joshua take, and smote them with the edge of the sword, and he utterly destroyed them, ⁵as Moses the
- 13 servant of the LORD commanded. But as for the cities that stood still ⁶in their strength, Israel burned none of them, save Hazor only; that did
- 14 Joshua burn. And all the spoil of these cities, and the cattle, the children of Israel took for a prey unto themselves; but every man they smote with the edge of the sword, until they had destroyed them, neither
- 15 left they any to breathe. As ⁷the LORD commanded Moses his servant, so ⁸did Moses command Joshua, and ⁹so did Joshua; ¹⁰he left nothing undone of all that the LORD commanded Moses.
- 16 So Joshua took all that land, ¹¹the hills, and all the south country, ¹²and all the land of Goshen, and the valley, and the plain, and the

B. C. 1450.
¹ 2 Sam. 8. 4.
² Or, Zidon-rabbah, Gen. 10. 15. Gen. 49. 13. Zech. 9. 2.
³ burnings of waters, cr. salt-pits.
⁴ any breath. ch. 10. 40.
⁵ Num. 33. 63. Deut. 7. 2. Deut. 20. 16, 17. ch. 8. 8. ch. 9. 24.
⁶ on their heap. Jer. 30. 13. Ex. 34. 11.
⁷ Deut. 7. 2. Deut. 31. 7.
⁸ Ex. 30. 42, 43. Deut. 4. 5. ch. 1. 7.
⁹ he removed nothing. ch. 9. 1. ch. 12. 8.
¹⁰ ch. 10. 41.

overhangs it' ('Lectures on the Jewish Church,' p. 258). A host so formidable in numbers, as well as in military equipments, was sure to alarm and dispirit the Israelites; and, according to *Josephus* ('Antiquities,' b. v., ch. i., sec. 18), they were overwhelmed with so great terror as to be 'superstitiously timorous.' Joshua, therefore, was favoured with a renewal of the Divine promise of victory (v. 6); and, thus encouraged, he, in the full confidence of faith, set out to face the enemy.

6. to-morrow, about this time. As it was impossible to have marched from Gilgal to Merom in one day (*Josephus* says, 'it was a five days' march'), we must suppose Joshua already moving northward, and within a day's distance of the Canaanite camp, when the Lord gave him this assurance of success. With characteristic energy he made a sudden advance, probably during the night, and 'on the morrow fell' [פָּרַע]; Septuagint, εἰξέρεσαν ἐπ' αὐτοὺς] upon them like a thunderbolt, when scattered [Septuagint, ἐν τῇ ὀρειῇ] along the rising grounds, before they had time to rally on the plain. In the sudden panic "the Lord delivered them into the hand of Israel, who smote them, and chased them." The place of attack is said to have been (v. 7) by "the waters of Merom." *Josephus* says, 'by Kedesh.' The rout was complete: some went westward, over the mountains above the gorge of the Leontes, to Zidon the great, the metropolis of Zidonia—"great Zidon" (a city supposed to have been founded soon after the flood. It was large and prosperous in the time of Joshua, and flourished during many ages as one of the most extensive cities of ancient times)—and Misrephoth-maim (glass-smelting houses; according to some, 'lime-kilns'; to others, 'burnings by the waters'; to *Kimchi*, 'warm baths';—the first is the most probable sense), in its neighbourhood, and others eastward to the plain of Mizpeh

[Septuagint, Μασσὼχ]. 8. they left them none remaining—of those whom they overtook. All those who fell into their hands alive were slain. 9. Joshua did . . . as the Lord (v. 6) bade him. Houghing the horses is done by cutting the sinews and arteries of their hinder legs, so that they not only become hopelessly lame, but bleed to death. The reasons for this special command were, that the Lord designed to lead the Israelites to trust in Him, not in military resources (Ps. xx. 7), to show that in the land of promise there was no use of horses; and, finally, to discourage their travelling, as they were to be an agricultural, not a trading people.

10. Joshua . . . turned back and (re-crossing the Leontes) took Hazor . . . the head of all those kingdoms. The ruins of a city called Hazir, on Tell Harah, are now supposed to be the long-sought-for Hazor (*Stanley*, 'Sinai and Palestine,' p. 390; also 'Lectures on the Jewish Church,' p. 256). This, however, is not the opinion of *Dr. Robinson* ('Biblical Researches,' iii., p. 356), nor of *Professor Porter*, (see on Judg. iii.) smote the king thereof with the sword. His death by beheading, and not by the ignominious gallows, was probably owing to his dignified position as suzerain of the whole northern districts of Palestine. 11. he burnt Hazor with fire—calmly and deliberately; doubtless, according to Divine direction, as being the Canaanite metropolis of the north; for its destruction was an exception to the usual treatment of the conquered cities of Canaan. 13. as for the cities that stood still in their strength [עָלְיוֹתָם]—'on their mounds.' It was a Phœnician custom to build cities on heights, natural or artificial (*Hengstenberg*).

16. So Joshua took all that land. Here follows a general view of the conquest. The division of the country there into five parts,—viz., the hills,

17 mountain of Israel, and the valley of the same; *even* ^pfrom ⁷the mount Halak, that goeth up to Seir, even unto Baal-gad in the valley of Lebanon, under mount Hermon: and ²all their kings he took, and smote 18 them, and slew them. ⁸Joshua made war a long time with all those kings.

19 There was not a city that made peace with the children of Israel, save the Hivites, the inhabitants of Gibeon: all *other* they took in battle.

20 For ⁸it was of the LORD to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel in battle, that he might destroy them utterly, *and* that they might have no favour, but that he might destroy them, ⁴as the LORD commanded Moses.

21 And at that time came Joshua, and cut off ^uthe Anakims from the mountains, from Hebron, from Debir, from Anab, and from all the mountains of Judah, and from all the mountains of Israel: Joshua 22 destroyed them utterly with their cities. There was none of the Anakims left in the land of the children of Israel: only in Gaza, in ^vGath, ^wand in Ashdod, there remained.

23 So Joshua took the whole land, ²according to all that the LORD said unto Moses; and Joshua gave it for an inheritance unto Israel ²according to their divisions by their tribes. ²And the land rested from war.

12 NOW these *are* the kings of the land, which the children of Israel smote, and possessed their land on the other side Jordan toward the rising of the sun, ^afrom the river Arnon ^bunto mount Hermon, and all 2 the plain on the east: Sihon king of the Amorites, who dwelt in Heshbon, *and* ruled from Aroer, which *is* upon the bank of the river Arnon, and from the middle of the river, and from half Gilead, even unto the 3 river Jabbok, *which is* the border of the children of Ammon; and ^cfrom the plain to the sea of Chinneroth on the east, and unto the sea of the

B. C. 1450.
^p ch. 12. 7
⁷ Or, the smooth mountain.
^q Dent. 7. 24.
^r Till 1445.
 ver. 23.
^s ch. 9. 3. 7.
^t Dent. 2. 30.
 Judg. 14. 4.
^u 1 Sam. 2. 25.
^v 1 Ki. 12. 15.
 Rom. 9. 13.
 Jas. 1.13-17.
^w Deut. 20.16.
^x Num.13.22.
^y Deut. 1. 23.
 ch. 15. 13.
 14.
^z 1 Sam. 17. 4.
^{aa} ch. 15. 46.
^{ab} Num. 34. 2.
^{ac} Num.26.53.
^{ad} ch. 14. 15.
 ch. 21. 44.
 ch. 22. 4.
 ch. 23. 1.
 B. C. 1445.
 CHAP. 12.
^a Num.21.24.
 Deut. 2. 24.
 Judg.11.18.
 Isa. 16. 2.
^b Deut. 3. 8.
 9.
^c Deut. 3. 17.

the land of Goshen—*i. e.*, a pastoral land near Gibeon (ch. x. 41)—the valley, the plains, the mountains of Israel—*i. e.*, Carmel,—rests upon a diversity of geographical positions which is characteristic of the region. 17. from the mount Halak (Hebrew, the smooth mountain), that goeth up to Seir—an irregular line of white naked hills, about eighty feet high, and seven or eight geographical miles in length, that cross the whole Ghor, eight miles south of the Dead Sea; probably 'the ascent of Akrabhim' (*Robinson*). unto Baal-gad in the valley of Lebanon—the city or temple of the god of Fortune or Destiny, in Baalbec. [לְבָנוֹן (the valley of Lebanon, under Hermon)—*i. e.*, in the plain of Coele-Syria]. This place, where, judging from the name, the god Fortune, one of the many forms of Baal, was worshipped by the ancient Syrians, formed the limit of Joshua's conquests on the north. *Dr. Robinson* thinks that 'from Baal-gad to mount Halak, that goeth up to Seir' was the original form of "from Dan to Beer-sheba."

19. There was not a city that made peace with the children of Israel, save the Hivites, the inhabitants of Gibeon. It is implied in this statement that if any of the tribes or people of Canaan had repented, and forsaken their idolatry, they would not only have been spared, but, like Rahab, have been incorporated with the chosen nation of Israel. But notwithstanding the overwhelming evidences of Divine agency accompanying the progress of the Israelites, the Canaanites, with one solitary exception, refused to acknowledge the wonderful works of God; and, instead of making any overtures of peace, or signifying a desire for it, they formed a united phalanx of armed opposition to the entrance of the Israelites.

In consequence of this combined and unyielding hostility, the invaders destroyed them all. **all other they took in battle.** This statement does not conflict with that contained in ch. xv. 63 (see on that passage). 20. For it was of the Lord to harden their hearts, &c. The Canaanite kings, with their people, although they had been informed of the miraculous passage through the Red Sea, and afterwards through the Jordan, as well as of the sudden demolition of the walls of Jericho, were still determined to resist the progress of the God-favoured people. Greater obduracy or more inveterate enmity can hardly be conceived. Thus they were ripened for destruction. that they should come against Israel in battle, that he (*i. e.*, Israel) might destroy them. Their destruction is here distinctly ascribed to their obduracy. The reason assigned for their resistance is, that "it was of the Lord to harden their hearts. . . that they might have no favour, but that he (Israel) might destroy them"—that is, God, in righteous judgment, gave them up to hardness of heart, as a punishment of their former guilt, and as a preparation for a still greater punishment (see *Jamieson's* 'Sacred History,' ii., p. 163).

23. Joshua took the whole land. 'The battle of the lake of Merom was to the north what the battle of Beth-horon had been to the south: more briefly told, less complete in its consequences, but still the decisive conflict by which the whole northern region of Canaan fell into the hands of Israel' (*Stanley*, 'Sinai and Palestine,' p. 355).

CHAP. XII. 1-6.—THE TWO KINGS WHOSE COUNTRIES MOSES TOOK AND DISPOSED OF.

1. Now these are the kings of the land . . . on the other side Jordan. This chapter contains a recapitulation of the conquests made, first

plain, *even* the salt sea on the east, ^athe way to Beth-jeshimoth; and
 4 from ¹the south, under ²Ashdath-pisgah: and ³the coast of Og king of
 Bashan, *which was of* ⁴the remnant of the giants, that dwelt at Ashtaroth
 5 and at Edrei, and reigned in mount Hermon, ^aand in Salcah, and in all
 Bashan, ^bunto the border of the Geshurites, and the Maachathites, and
 6 half Gilead, the border of Sihon king of Heshbon. Them did Moses the
 servant of the LORD and the children of Israel smite: and Moses the
 servant of the LORD gave it for a possession unto the Reubenites, and the
 Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh.
 7 And these *are* the kings of the country which Joshua and the children
 of Israel smote on this side Jordan on the west, from Baal-gad in the
 valley of Lebanon even unto the mount Halak, that goeth up ^cto Seir;
 which Joshua gave unto the tribes of Israel for a possession according to
 8 their divisions: in ^dthe mountains, and in the valleys, and in the plains,
 and in the springs, and in the wilderness, and in the south country; the
^eHittites, the Amorites, and the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites,
 9 and the Jebusites: the ^fking of Jericho, one; ^gthe king of Ai, which is
 10 beside Beth-el, one; the ^hking of Jerusalem, one; the king of Hebron,
 11 one; the king of Jarmuth, one; the king of Lachish, one; the king of
 13 Eglon, one; the king of Gezer, one; the king of Debir, one; the king of
 14 Geder, one; the king of Hormah, one; the king of Arad, one; the king
 16 of Libnah, one; the king of Adullam, one; the king of Makkedah, one;
 17 the king of Beth-el, one; the king of Tappuah, one; ⁱthe king of
 18 Hopher, one; the king of Aphek, one; the king of ^jLasharon, one; the
 20 king of Madon, one; the king of Hazor, one; the king of ^kShimron-
 21 meron, one; the king of Achshaph, one; the king of Taanach, one; the
 22 king of Megiddo, one; the ^lking of Kedesh, one; the king of Jokneam
 23 of Carmel, one; the king of Dor in the coast of Dor, one; the king of
 24 ^mthe nations of Gilgal, one; the king of Tirzah, one: all the kings
 thirty and one.
 13 NOW Joshua ⁿwas old and stricken in years; and the LORD said unto
 him, Thou art old and stricken in years, and there remaineth yet very
 2 much land ^oto be possessed. This ^pis the land that yet remaineth: all
 3 ^qthe borders of the Philistines, and all ^rGeshuri, from ^sSihor, which is

B. C. 1462.
 d ch. 13. 20.
 1 Or, Teman.
 2 Or, the
 springs of
 Pisgah, or,
 the hill.
 e Num. 21. 35.
 f Deut. 3. 11.
 g ch. 17. 11.
 h Deut. 3. 14.
 1 Sam. 27. 8.
 2 Sam. 15. 8.
 i Gen. 14. 6.
 Gen. 32. 3.
 j ch. 10. 40.
 ch. 11. 16.
 k Gen. 15. 15-
 21.
 Ex. 3. 8.
 l ch. 6. 2.
 m ch. 8. 29.
 n ch. 10. 23.
 o 1 Ki. 4. 10.
 p Or, Sharon.
 Isa. 53. 9.
 q ch. 11. 1.
 ch. 19. 15.
 r ch. 15. 23.
 ch. 19. 37.
 ch. 21. 32.
 s Gen. 14. 12.
 Isa. 9. 1.
 CHAP. 13.
 a ch. 14. 10.
 ch. 23. 1.
 1 to possess
 it.
 Deut. 31. 3.
 b Judg. 3. 1.
 c Joel 3. 4.
 d 2 Sam. 3. 3.
 2 Sam. 13.
 37.
 e Jer. 2. 18.

in the country east of the Jordan, and secondly in what was properly the promised land, with the additional mention of some places not formerly noticed in the sacred history. The river Arnon on the south, and mount Hermon on the north, were the respective boundaries of the land acquired by the Israelites beyond Jordan (see on Num. xxi. 21; Deut. ii. 36; iii. 6-16).

7-24.—THE ONE-AND-THIRTY KINGS ON THE WEST SIDE OF JORDAN WHICH JOSHUA SMOTE.

7. Baal-gad . . . even unto . . . Halak—(see on ch. xi. 17.) A list of thirty-one chief towns is here given; and as the whole land contained a superficial extent of only fifteen miles in length by fifty in breadth, it is evident that these capital cities belonged to petty and insignificant kingdoms. With a few exceptions, they were not the scenes of any important events recorded in the sacred history, and therefore do not require a particular notice here, especially as they are mentioned particularly in ch. xv.

CHAP. XIII. 1-33.—BOUNDS OF THE LAND NOT YET CONQUERED.

1. Now Joshua was old and stricken in years. He was probably above one hundred years old; for the conquest and survey of the land occupied about seven years, the partition one; and he died at the age of one hundred and ten years (ch. xxiv. 29). The distribution, as well as the conquest of the land,

was included in the mission of Joshua; and his advanced age supplied a special reason for entering on the immediate discharge of that duty—viz., of allocating Canaan amongst the tribes of Israel, not only the parts already won, but those also which were still to be conquered. 2. This is the land that yet remaineth—i. e., to be acquired. This section forms a parenthesis, in which the historian briefly notices the districts yet unsubdued—viz., first, all the borders of the Philistines. Beginning with the south-western district and proceeding northward, the historian specifies [גְּזֵרֵי, circuits or districts; Septuagint, *οἰκία*; scil. *χωρῖα*] the whole country of the Philistines, comprising five principalities or provinces of Canaan [Septuagint, *σαρραπείαι*], a narrow tract of rich champaign country called the Shephelah, stretching about sixty miles along the Mediterranean coast. and all Geshuri [גְּשׁוּרִי, and all the Geshurite (land)]—the district south of the preceding; not the territory of the people mentioned, *vs.* 11, 13, but that of a particular tribe, whose habitat was the southern district lying between Palestine and Egypt (see on 1 Sam. xxvii. 8). Both together comprehended that portion of the country "from Sihor, which is before Egypt, even unto the borders of Ekron northward." [בְּשִׁוְרָה, the dark, the turbid, or slimy (see different ex-

before Egypt, even unto the borders of Ekron northward, *which* is counted to the Canaanite: ^f five lords of the Philistines; the Gazathites, and the Ashdothites, the Eshkalonites, the Gittites, and the Ekronites; 4 also ^g the Avites: from the south, all the land of the Canaanites, and ² Mearah that *is* beside the Sidonians, ^h unto Aphek, to the borders of 5 the ⁱ Amorites: and the land of ^j the Giblites, and all Lebanon, toward the sun-rising, ^k from Baal-gad under mount Hermon unto the entering

B. C. 1445.

f 1 Sam. 6. 4.

g Deut. 2. 23.

h Or, the cave.

i ch. 19. 30.

j Judg. 1. 34.

k 1 Ki. 5. 18.

l ch. 12. 7.

planations of this in the parallel passage, Gen. xv. 18). The word being used here in a strictly geographical sense cannot denote the Nile. In the great map of *Rüppel*, it stands for the Raphia, a small insignificant stream in the south-west extremity of Palestine, the southern bank of which is a large field of nitre, marked *Sihor*. Hence Septuagint, ἀπο τῆς ἀουήτου τῆς κατὰ πρόσωπον Αἰγύπτου, from the uninhabited land before Egypt. The majority of biblical writers are of opinion that it points to the torrent Rhinocolura, the Wady El-Arish, "which is before Egypt"—i. e., not in the east of, but in front of, at the entrance of Egypt (cf. ch. xv. 2-5; Num. xxiv. 3-5; 1 Ki. viii. 65; 1 Chr. xiii. 5; 2 Chr. vii. 8.) 3. **Ekron** [Septuagint, Ἀκκαρών]—now Akir (*Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' iii., 22-25), the northernmost of the five townships of the Philistines (see on ch. xv. 11, 45, and on ch. xix. 43) which is counted to the Canaanite. The land occupied by these was promised to the Israelites, because, previously to the Philistine invasion, it had belonged to the doomed Canaanites. **five lords of the Philistines** [ἄρ, princes]—the special designation of the five Philistine rulers; metaphorically for axles, or hinges—i. e., of a people, the **Gazathites**—or **Gazites**, the inhabitants of Gaza, which stood on the southern border of Canaan. **the Ashdothites**—of Ashdod [Septuagint, Ἀζωτος], now Esdud, eighteen geographical miles north-east of Gaza. **the Eshkalonites**—of Ashkelon, Askelon (Septuagint, Ἀσκαλων), the only maritime town of the Philistines. **the Gittites**—of Gath. The site of this ancient city has been identified by *Porter* with 'a conspicuous hill called *Tell-es-Sâfeh*, about 200 feet high, with steep sides. It is about seven miles from Beth-shemesh, eight from Shochob towards Ekron, and six north of Eleutheropolis.' All these names are in the Hebrew singular: the Gazathite, &c. also **the Avites**—or Avim (dwellers in ruins). A nomadic tribe, who may have pushed their way, as *Stanley* says ('Sinai and Palestine,' app., sec. 85), from the desert, and established their circuit of pastoral encampments on the fertile district as far as Gaza, till they were dispossessed by the invading Philistines (Deut. ii. 23; also Gen. x. 17-19). *Mr. Grove* thinks, from the enumeration of places in the context being from south to north, it must be inferred that the Avites had effected a settlement northward of the Philistine Pentapolis. But there is no foundation for that suggestion, nor for *Stanley's* conjecture that they were nomads from the desert. They must have been of the same race as the Canaanites; and, in fact, the two clauses, "also the Avites (v. 4) from the south," which in our translation appear separate and distinct, are in the Septuagint and other versions closely connected [ἐκ Θαυμαῶν], the word "south" being taken as the proper name of a territory south of that of the Philistines. The sum, then, of what is said here and elsewhere concerning the Avites is, that their northern boundary was Gaza, while their southern one was Teman, and that their territory was included in the enumeration of the districts in Palestine 'that yet re-

mained to be possessed.' [From the Septuagint calling them οἱ Ἐβῶται, the name which that version always applies to the Hivites, it has been concluded by some that the Avites and Hivites were synonymous appellations of the same people. There is a radical distinction between the two Hebrew words עַיִן and חֵי, and yet it is very singular that both the LXX. and *Jerome* should translate both by the same word.] 4. **all the land of the Canaanites, and Mearah that is beside the Sidonians.** The second division of the unconquered country comprised on the north-west the portion of Canaan which was then within the Sidonian territory, and a mountainous region of Upper Galilee, remarkable for its caves and fastnesses. "Mearah" signifies cave; and several writers have suggested its identification with a particular cave, such as that which was a stronghold of the Crusaders (*Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' iii., p. 412). But this is an unreliable guess, and, besides, is objectionable, as the original word wants the definite article, which would have been prefixed had there been a reference to some remarkable cave. Far more likely is it the designation of that peculiar district which is known as the cave-country of the Sidonians, where, amongst the mountains, between which the river Kadisha flows, there are 800 caves or grottoes (*De la Roque*, 'Palestine'). **unto Aphek**—a northern city (see on ch. xix. 30), the *Aphaca* of the classics, situated in Lebanon, on the river Adonis, and famous for a temple of Venus. The modern Afka probably marks its site, which was quite distinct from that of Aphek (1 Ki. xx. 26-30), and another place of the same name in Esdraelon (1 Sam. xxix. 1). **to the borders of the Amorites.** In tracing the outline of the unconquered country, the historian seems to pass across the country from Aphek, in a north-easterly direction, to a part of Bashan. The third district that remained unsubdued was, 5. **the land of the Giblites.** Their capital was Gebal or Byblos (Greek), on the Mediterranean, forty miles north of Sidon (1 Ki. v. 18, 32, Hebrew text). **all Lebanon, toward the sun-rising**—i. e., Antilibanus; the eastern ridge, which, running in a course nearly parallel to that of Lebanon, extends from Baniâs, and has its proper termination in Hermon. **from Baal-gad under mount Hermon.** 'It would seem that Baal-gad and Baal-hermon were different names of the same place; that this place was in a valley under Hermon; and that it here served to mark the northernmost limit of Palestine to which the conquests of Joshua extended; just as at a later period, after the city of Dan had been built, that place is always put as the northern limit. The name Baal-gad (god of fortune) implies a place of heathen worship, being referred by *Gesenius* to Jupiter, by *Movers* to Venus; and the name of Baal-hermon was taken apparently from its connection with that mountain. All these considerations go to make it probable that Baal-gad was the romantic spot, the secluded grotto, at the fountain of Jordan where the Phœnicians or Syrians had established the worship of one of their Baals' (*Robinson*). **entering into Hamath**

6 into Hamath: all the inhabitants of the hill country from Lebanon unto ¹ Misrephoth-maim, and all the Sidonians, them ^m will I drive out from before the children of Israel: only divide ⁿ thou it by lot unto the 7 Israelites for an inheritance, as I have commanded thee. Now therefore divide this land for an inheritance unto the nine tribes, and the half 8 tribe of Manasseh; with whom the Reubenites and the Gadites have received their inheritance, which ^o Moses gave them, beyond Jordan 9 eastward, even as Moses the servant of the LORD gave them; from Aroer, that is upon the bank of the river Arnon, and the city that is in the 10 midst of the river, ^p and all the plain of Medeba unto Dibon; and all the cities of Sihon king of the Amorites, which reigned in Heshbon, 11 unto the border of the children of Ammon; and ^q Gilead, and the border of the Geshurites and Maachathites, and all mount Hermon, and 12 all Bashan unto Salcah; all the kingdom of Og in Bashan, which reigned

B. C 1445.

¹ ch. 11. 8.^m Gen. 16. 18.

21.

ch. 23. 13.

Judg. 2. 21.

ⁿ ch. 14. 1, 2.^o Num. 52. 33.

Deut. 3. 12.

ch. 4. 12.

ch. 21. 4.

^p Num. 21. 30.

Isa. 15. 2.

Jer. 48. 18.

22.

^q Deut. 4. 47.

48.

ch. 12. 5.

—the valley of Baalbec. The tract of country described comprised all Lebanon, from the region of Dan and Baniás to its northern extremity (*Robinson's 'Later Biblical Researches,'* pp. 409, 568). 6. All the inhabitants of the hill country from Lebanon unto Misrephoth-maim (see on ch. xi. 8)—that is, 'all the Sidonians and Phœnicians.' them will I drive out. Biblical writers differ in opinion as to the exact limits of the Israelitish possession on the north-west—whether the land of promise was to extend to the shores of the Mediterranean, or a narrow tract was to be reserved to the Sidonians. The former view is most generally preferred, for this reason, that the phrase "all the Sidonians" seems clearly to include the inhabitants of that district amongst the people who were to be driven out (cf. ch. xix. 28, 29; Judg. i. 31). The fulfilment of this promise was conditional. In the event of the Israelites proving unfaithful or disobedient, they would not subdue the districts now specified; and, in point of fact, the Israelites never possessed them, though the inhabitants were subjected to the power of David and Solomon. only divide thou it by lot. The parenthetic section being closed, the historian here resumes the main subject of this chapter—the order of God to Joshua to make an immediate allotment of the land. The method of distribution by lot was in all respects the best that could have been adopted, as it prevented all ground of discontent, as well as charges of arbitrary or partial conduct on the part of the leaders; and its being announced in the life of Moses (Num. xxxiii. 54) as the system according to which the allocations to each tribe should be made, was intended to lead the people to the acknowledgment of God as the proprietor of the land, and having the entire right of its disposal. Moreover, a solemn appeal to the lot showed it to be the dictate, not of human, but Divine wisdom. It was used, however, only in determining the part of the country where a tribe was to be settled—the extent of the settlement was to be decided on a different principle (Num. xxvi. 54); and what proves the overruling control of God, each tribe received the possession predicted by Jacob, Gen. xlix., and by Moses, Deut. xxxiii. 8. With whom—Hebrew, 'him.' The antecedent is evidently to Manasseh—not, however, the half tribe just mentioned, but the other half; for the historian, led, as it were, by the sound of the word, breaks off to describe the possessions beyond Jordan already assigned to Reuben, Gad, and the half of Manasseh (see on Num. xxxii.; Deut. iii. 8-17). It may be proper to remark that it was wise to put these boundaries on record, as, in case of any misunderstanding or dispute arising about the exact limits of each dis-

trict or property, an appeal could always be made to this authoritative document, and a full knowledge as well as grateful sense obtained of what they had received from God (Ps. xvi. 5, 6). 9. From Aroer, that is upon the bank of the river Arnon, and the city that is in the midst of the river. This city was situated on the north side of the river—the southern extremity of the country conquered by the Israelites—where its site is still traceable both in the modern name *Ara'ir* and from the heap of ruins that mark the spot. But Aroer, like Rabbah, consisted of two portions, one on the bank and the other in the bed of the stream (cf. 2 Sam. xxiv. 5). [Septuagint, *ἐν μέσῳ τῆς φαράγγος*, in the midst of the valley or wady.] This latter portion must have been, as Porter ('Handbook, Syria and Palestine,' p. 301) conjectures, 'some fortress (*air*) in the bed of the Arnon, at or near to Aroer.' There is no trace of any, nor indeed is there room for one, at this spot; but *Burckhardt* states that about one hour eastward, at the junction of Wady Lejam with the Arnon, there is a level tract of pasture ground, in the midst of which stands a hill with some ruins upon it, and this may probably be the site of "the city that is in the midst of the river." all the plain of Medeba. This city, the ruins of which occupy a little hill, and are about one and a-half mile in circumference, is one hour fifteen minutes towards the south-east of Heshbon. unto Dibon—now Dhibân, the ruins of which are extensive, situated in the low-lying plains of Kura, about three miles north-east from the Arnon (*Mijib*). Though rebuilt by the Gadites (Num. xxxii. 34), it was afterwards assigned to the Reubenites. Isaiah and Jeremiah rank it in later times as a Moabite town (Isa. xv.; Jer. xlviii. 18-22). "All the plain of Medeba unto Dibon" (v. 9); "all the plain by Medeba" (v. 16); "all the cities of the plain" (v. 21; Deut. iii. 10)—"the country or field of Moab" (Num. xxi. 20). 10. Heshbon—the capital of Sihon's dominions (Num. xxi. 26). It was situated on the border between Reuben and Gad, and afterwards appropriated to the Levites (Num. xxi. 38, 39). unto the border of the children of Ammon—(see on Num. xxi. 24.) 11. Gilead—the southern region of Argob (Lejâh). the border of the Geshurites and Maachathites (Deut. iii. 13, 14). The district of Maachah probably included Hermon, and extended eastward towards Damascus and Trachon (*Reland, 'Palestine,'* p. 112). all Bashan unto Salcah. The ancient Bashan comprised what is now known as the provinces of the Jaulân and Haurân, which form an extensive plateau, stretching from the eastern bank of the Jordan valley into the great desert of Arabia. Salcah—a city with a castle on a conical hill,

in Ashtaroth and in Edrei, who remained of ^r the remnant of the giants :
^s for these did Moses smite, and cast them out.
 13 Nevertheless the children of Israel expelled not the Geshurites, nor the
 Maachathites ; but the Geshurites and the Maachathites dwell among
 14 the Israelites until this day. Only ^t unto the tribe of Levi he gave none
 inheritance ; the sacrifices of the LORD God of Israel made by fire *are*
 their inheritance, as he said unto them.
 15 And Moses gave unto the tribe of the children of Reuben *inheritance*
 16 according to their families. And their coast was ^u from Aroer, that *is* on
 the bank of the river Arnon, ^v and the city that *is* in the midst of the
 17 river, and all the plain by Medeba ; Heshbon, and all her cities that *are*
 18 in the plain ; Dibon, and ³ Bamoth-baal, and Beth-baal-meon, and
 19 ^w Jahaza, and Kedemoth, and Mephaath, and ^x Kirjathaim, and Sibmah,
 20 and Zareth-shahar in the mount of the valley, and Beth-peor, and
 21 ⁴ Ashdodh-pisgah, and Beth-jeshimoth, and ^y all the cities of the plain,
 and all the kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites, which reigned in
 Heshbon, ^z whom Moses smote ^a with the princes of Midian, Evi, and
 Rekem, and Zur, and Hur, and Reba, *which were* dukes of Sihon, dwell-
 22 ing in the country. Balaam ^b also the son of Beor, the ⁵ soothsayer, did

B. C. 1445.
^r Deut. 3. 11.
^s Num. 21. 21.
^t Num. 18 : 0.
^u ch. 12. 2.
^v Num. 21. 23.
³ Or, the high places of Eaal, and house of Eaal-meon.
^w Num. 21. 23.
^x Num. 32. 37.
^y Or, springs of Pisgah, or, the hill.
^z Deut. 3. 17.
^a Deut. 3. 10.
^b Num. 21. 24.
^c Num. 31. 8.
^d Num. 22. 5.
⁵ Or, diviner.

situated on the eastern boundary of Bashan. 12. Ashtaroth and in Edrei—(see on Num. xxi. 33.)

13. Nevertheless the children of Israel expelled not the Geshurites, nor the Maachathites. 'Argob (the Lejah) was probably in these early ages the mountain asylum of the Geshurites, who retired from the adjoining plain on the advance of the Israelites; and perhaps at first submitted to the foreigner, but were permitted to inhabit these strongholds; the Geshurites in the recesses of Argob (the Lejah) (cf. 1 Chr. xi. 23); the Maachathites amid the defiles of Hermon' (see on 2 Sam. iii. 3) ('Handbook of Syria and Palestine,' p. 506).
 14. Only unto the tribe of Levi he gave none inheritance. This interjectional remark was probably occasioned by the circumstance of nine and a-half tribes being mentioned in v. 7, and then two and a-half tribes in vv. 15-31 of this chapter, amongst whom the land was to be divided; and as there was now a thirteenth tribe, in consequence of Joseph's posterity forming two tribes, there was a necessity for a statement of the sources whence a provision for this peculiar tribe was to be derived (see on Lev. xviii. 30, 33; Num. xviii. 21-32; cf. Lev. xxvii. 30; see also on v. 33).

16. Aroer—(see on v. 9.) Medeba—(see on v. 9.)
 17. Heshbon—(see on ch. xii. 2; Num. xxi. 26.)
 Dibon—(see on v. 9.) Bamoth-baal—(see on Num. xxi. 20; xxii. 41.) Beth-baal-meon (the house or habitations of Baal)—or Baal-meon, now the ruins of Main, situated like Heshbon, from which it is about two miles distant (*Burckhardt*, ii. 624), in the Abarim range, on an eminence on the south bank of the Wâleh, which commands an extensive view of the subjacent plains (see on Num. xxxii. 3, 37, 38) (*Seetzen*, p. 431; *Burckhardt*, p. 632). Dibon, Bajith [בַּיִת] = Beth-baal-meon], and Bamoth-baal [בְּמֹת]—these three places are all mentioned as contiguous (Isa. xv. 2). 18. Jahaza—or Jahaz, or Jahzah—(see on Num. xxi. 23; Deut. ii. 32; Josh. xiii. 18; Judg. xi. 20; 1 Chr. vi. 78; Isa. xvi. 4; Jer. xlviii. 21, 34.) Kedemoth—(see on ch. xxi. 37; Num. xxi. 21; Deut. ii. 26; 1 Chr. vi. 79.) Mephaath (ch. xxi. 37; 1 Chr. vi. 79; Jer. xlviii. 21)—its site unknown; but in the latter passage referred to it is associated with Jahazah. 19. Kirjathaim—now Kureiyât, or Kureiyah, at the foot of Jebel-Attarûs (Gen. xiv. 5; Num. xxxii. 37; Jer. xlviii. 1, 23; Ezek. xxv. 9). Sibmah—or Shebmah (Num. xxxii. 38; Isa. xvi. 9; Jer. xlviii.

32). The vineyards which once rendered it famous have entirely disappeared, and the region is an uninhabited scene of desolation. *Jerome* ('Onomast.') says that it was only about 500 paces from Heshbon. Zareth-shahar in the mount of the valley [the Vulgate reads, in the midst of the valley; but the Septuagint, ἐν τῷ ὄρει Ἐθαβ, in the mount Enoh, meaning probably mount Nebo]—the name of a place situated probably upon a sunny hill, which is only mentioned here' (*Rosenmüller's* 'Scholia'). 20. Beth-peor = Baal-peor (Num. xxv. 3, 5), and Peor (Num. xxiii. 28)—not yet identified. Ashdodh-pisgah—i. e., ravines at foot of Pisgah (ch. xii. 3; Deut. iii. 17; iv. 49). Beth-jeshimoth—i. e., the house of the wastes, or 'house of muir,' as they would call it in Scotland. The waste or wilderness referred to is the desert tract on the east side of the Dead Sea. 21. And all the cities of the plain, and all the kingdom of Sihon. The sacred historian having particularized a few of the more prominent towns, includes all the other cities within the territory assigned to the tribe of Reuben in a general statement, that it comprised the whole kingdom of Sihon, so far as it extended over the plain (see on v. 27) towards the Gilead hills. with the princes of Midian, Evi, &c.—(see on Num. xxi. 4.) These were native princes, who, on the subjugation of the Emim by Sihon, were invested by that conqueror with his delegated authority over their respective tribes. which were dukes of Sihon, dwelling in the country [דְּבָרַי]—anointed ones.

'A more satisfactory proof than this could not have been given, short of an express declaration, to the effect that the political jurisdiction of the Emim had extended to the land of Midian; that the capital of this ancient race, Heshbon, was the central seat of their government; that, by establishing himself in their metropolis, Sihon the Amorite became, according to the usage of conquerors, lord over all their dependencies, and they must either serve and obey him as tributaries or flee; that all the provinces of the Emim had by right of conquest become his provinces, and their chiefs his subordinates or vassals' (*Corboux*; also *Kurtz*, vol. iii., pp. 394, 395; also *Henstenberg's* 'Balaam,' p. 363), and shared in the fate (Num. xxxi. 8) of their liege lord, with whom they had joined in opposing the Israelites. 22. Balaam also . . . the soothsayer, did the children of

23 the children of Israel slay with the sword among them that were slain by them. And the border of the children of Reuben was Jordan, and the border thereof. This was the inheritance of the children of Reuben after their families, the cities and the villages thereof.

24 And Moses gave inheritance unto the tribe of Gad, even unto the children of Gad according to their families: and their coast was Jazer, and all the cities of Gilead, and half the land of the children of Ammon, unto Aroer that is before Rabbah; and from Heshbon unto Ramath-mizpeh, and Betonim; and from Mahanaim unto the border of Debir; and in the valley, Beth-aram, and Beth-nimrah, and Succoth, and Zaphon, the rest of the kingdom of Sihon king of Heshbon, Jordan and his border, even unto the edge of the sea of Chinnereth on the other side Jordan eastward. This is the inheritance of the children of Gad after their families, the cities, and their villages.

29 And Moses gave inheritance unto the half tribe of Manasseh: and this was the possession of the half tribe of the children of Manasseh by their families. And their coast was from Mahanaim, all Bashan, all the kingdom of Og king of Bashan, and all the towns of Jair, which are in Bashan, threescore cities: and half Gilead, and Ashtaroth, and Edrei,

Israel slay with the sword [יִשְׂרָאֵל]—the diviner (see on Num. xxii. 5; xxxi. 8). The notice of his death is repeated here as having taken place in the battle in which the princes of Midian fell. 23. And the border of the children of Reuben was Jordan, and the border [גְּבוּל]—and the territory or country adjoining (see on Deut. iii. 16, 17). the cities [עָרִים]—the cities formerly referred to. 'The signification of this word,' says Gesenius, 'is of great extent, embracing not only the idea of an encampment, but also that of small fortifications, as watch-posts, watch-towers' (Num. xiii. 19). Of course, where there were so many cities as in the countries east and west of the Jordan, they would be comparatively small, though walled. and the villages thereof [וְהַכְּפָרִים]—and the enclosures, courts, nomadic encampments, here and elsewhere, when conjoined with [עָרִים] hamlets, farm buildings usually erected around an open space or court in the vicinity of cities (v. 28; ch. xv. 32; Lev. xxv. 31); sometimes called [בָּנוֹת] daughters of the city (ch. xvii. 11; Num. xxi. 25, 32; xxxii. 42; Judg. xi. 26). [Septuagint, αἱ ἐπαύλεις αὐτῶν.]

25. their coast was Jazer [יָזְרַע] (Num. xxxii. 1, 3)—Jaazer (Num. xxi. 32; xxxii. 35) and [יָזְרַעַי] Jaesir. The historian passes on to the territory of the Gadites. It was a town in Gilead (Num. xxxii. 1; 1 Chr. xxvi. 31) conquered by Moses (Num. xxi. 32), assigned to the Gadites (Num. xxxii. 35), and afterwards appropriated to the Levites (ch. xxi. 39; 1 Chr. vi. 66). It is supposed by Setzen and others to have stood on the site of the ruins called *Syur*, about fifteen miles from Heshbon (see on Num. xxxii. 35). and all the cities of Gilead—i. e., the southern part of Gilead (see on v. 31). and half the land of the children of Ammon—i. e., what of the Ammonite territory lay between the Arnon and the Jabbok. unto Aroer that is before Rabbah. Rabbah was the Ammonite metropolis (Deut. iii. 11; Judg. xi. 33; 2 Sam. xxiv. 5). 'Aroer before Rabbah,' in the territory of Gad, was quite distinct from the Aroer belonging to the Reubenites, which was "in the midst of the river," or wady. 26. from Heshbon unto Ramath-mizpeh—Heshbon (see on v. 17). Porter ('Handbook of Syria and Palestine, p. 310) thinks 'it is highly probable that Jebel Osl'a may

be the Ramath-mizpeh (the heights of the watch-tower) referred to in this passage and Judg. xi.' Betonim—perhaps *Batneh*, in the vicinity of the former. and from Mahanaim (the two hosts, Gen. xxxii.)—a town near the fords north of the Jabbok, on the border of the tribes Gad and Manasseh, and given to the Levites (ch. xxi. 38).

unto the border of Debir [גְּבוּל דְּבִיר]—the boundary of Gad, at a place which *Reland* conjectures should be Lodebar. *Grove* suggests that, from its position in the grazing country on the high downs east of Jordan, the name may be derived from Dabar, the same word which is the root of *Midbar*, the pasture district. [The Septuagint, instead of Debir, has Δαβῶν.] 27. And in the valley—i. e., of the Jordan, which on the east of the river extended from Heshbān, north of the Dead Sea, to the lake of Tiberias (ch. xii. 3). The site of Beth-aram (Num. xxxii. 36) was, according to *Jerome* ('Onomast.'), below Wady Phogor, at the foot of Peor. *Grove* places it in Wady Seir, or Sir, which falls into the Ghôr opposite Jericho, and half-way between *Wady Heshbān* and *Wady Shoaib*. Beth-nimrah (Num. xxxii. 36; Isa. xv. 6)—or simply Nimrah (Num. xxxii. 3), now the ruins called *Nimrim*, at the mouth of Wady Shoaib. *Jerome* ('Onomast.') states that the town was still standing in his day, two miles from Jordan and five miles north of Beth-aram, called by Herod Livias, in honour of Augustus. Succoth—perhaps the ruins called *Sukkot*, described by *Burckhardt* (p. 345). and Zaphon—near the sea of Galilee. The enumeration of places in the valley of Jordan, which formed the boundary of the Gadite territory, is made from south to north. [Septuagint, Σαφάν.]

30. their coast was from Mahanaim. The region occupied by the half tribe of Manasseh on the east of the Jordan was won by their own bravery, and confirmed to them by Moses (Num. xxxii. 39-42; Deut. xxxiii. 13-15). For Mahanaim, the point from which the boundary line is traced, see on v. 26. The description embraces the border of "all Bashan," which comprehended the sixty cities of Jair (Deut. iii. 4), together with "half Gilead"—i. e., the northern part of it (Deut. iii. 4, 5; 1 Ki. iv. 13)—of which the chief cities were Ashtaroth and Edrei. Ashtaroth had the epithet Karnaim ('the two horns,' or the crescent) joined to it; so called from the worship of Astarte, or

B. C. 1445.

^o Num. 2 35.
^d Num 21 26

28, 29,

with

Deut. 2 19.

Judg. 11 13.

2 Sam. 11 1.

2 Sam. 12.

20.

Eze. 21 20.

Amos 1 14.

Gen. 33 17.

Judg 8 5.

14 16.

1 Ki 7 46.

^o Num. 34 11.

Deut. 3 17.

ch. 11 2.

Natt. 14 31.

Luke 5 1.

^h Num 32 41.

1 Chr. 2 23.

ⁱ ch. 12 4.

Deut. 1 4.

- cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan, *were pertaining* unto the children of Machir the son of Manasseh, *even* to the one half of the children of Machir by their families.
- 32 These *are the countries* which Moses did distribute for inheritance in the plains of Moab, on the other side Jordan, by Jericho, eastward.
- 33 But ^junto the tribe of Levi Moses gave not *any* inheritance: ^kthe LORD God of Israel *was* their inheritance, as he said unto them.
- 14 AND these *are the countries* which the children of Israel inherited in the land of Canaan, ^awhich Eleazar the priest, and Joshua the son of Nun, and the heads of the fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel, 2 distributed for inheritance to them. By ^blot *was* their inheritance, as the LORD commanded by the hand of Moses, for the nine tribes, and 3 for the half tribe. For ^cMoses had given the inheritance of two tribes and an half tribe on the other side Jordan: but unto the Levites he 4 gave none inheritance among them. For ^dthe children of Joseph were two tribes, Manasseh and Ephraim: therefore they gave no part unto the Levites in the land, save cities to dwell *in*, with their suburbs for 5 their cattle and for their substance. As ^ethe LORD commanded Moses, so the children of Israel did, and they divided the land.
- 6 Then the children of Judah came unto Joshua in Gilgal: and Caleb the son of Jephunneh the ^fKenezite said unto him, Thou knowest ^gthe thing that the LORD said unto Moses the man of God concerning me and 7 thee ^hin Kadesh-barnea. Forty years old *was* I when Moses the servant of the LORD sent me from Kadesh-barnea to spy out the land; and I 8 brought him word again as *it was* in mine heart. Nevertheless my brethren that went up with me made the heart of the people melt: but I 9 wholly ⁱfollowed the LORD my God. And Moses sware on that day, saying, Surely ^jthe land ^kwhereon thy feet have trodden shall be thine inheritance, and thy children's for ever, because thou hast wholly followed 10 the LORD my God. And now, behold, the LORD hath kept me alive, ^las he said, these forty and five years, even since the LORD spake this word unto Moses, while *the children of Israel* ^mwandered in the wilderness: and

B. C. 1445.
^j ch 18. 7.
^k Num. 18. 20.
Deut. 10. 9.
Deut. 12. 12.
Deut. 14. 27.
20.
Deut. 18. 1.
2.
Eze 44. 28.
CHAP. 14.
^a Num. 34. 17.
^b Num. 33. 54.
Num. 34. 13.
Ps. 16. 5.
1 ro. 16. 33.
Pro. 18. 18.
^c Num. 32. 20-42.
Deut. 3. 12-17.
ch. 13. 8.
^d Gen. 48. 5.
1 Chr. 5. 1, 2.
^e Num. 35. 2.
ch. 21. 2.
Eze. 45. 1-8.
Eze. 48. 8.
22.
1 Cor. 9. 10.
^f Num. 32. 12.
ch. 15. 17.
^g Num. 14. 24.
Deut. 1. 36.
^h Num. 13. 26.
Deut. 1. 19.
ⁱ Num. 14. 21.
Deut. 1. 36.
^j ch 1. 3.
^k Num. 13. 22.
^l Num 14. 30.
^m walked.

Ashtaroth, the *Dea Syria* being established there. This city was the capital of Bashan at the time of the Israelite invasion. Edrei—now called Edh'r'a (see on Num. xxi. 33). 31. *pertaining unto* the children of Machir—(see on ch. xvii. 2; Num. xxvi. 29-33; 1 Chr. v. 23, 24.)

32. These are the countries which Moses did distribute . . . in the plains of Moab—(see on Num. xxii. 1; xxvi. 3; xxxiv. 15.)

CHAP. XIV. 1-5.—THE NINE TRIBES AND A-HALF TO HAVE THEIR INHERITANCE BY LOT.

1. these are the countries which the children of Israel inherited in the land of Canaan. This chapter forms the introduction to an account of the allocation of the land west of Jordan, or Canaan proper, to the nine tribes and a-half. It was also made by lot in presence of a select number of superintendents, appointed according to Divine directions given to Moses (see on Num. xxxiv. 16-29). In everything pertaining to civil government, and even the division of the land, Joshua was the acknowledged chief. But in a matter to be determined by lot, a solemn appeal was made to God, and hence Eleazar, as high priest, is named before Joshua. 4. the children of Joseph were two tribes. As two and a-half tribes were settled [לְשֵׁנֵי] on the other side—*i. e.*, on the east of Jordan (see on ch. i. 14, 15; ix. 10; xvii. 5)—and the Levites had no inheritance assigned them in land, there would have been only eight tribes and a-half to provide for. But Ephraim and Manasseh, the two sons of Joseph, had been constituted

two tribes (Gen. xlviii. 5); and although Levi was excluded, the original number of the tribes of Israel was still preserved. 5. the children of Israel . . . divided the land—*i. e.*, they made the preliminary arrangements for the work. A considerable time was requisite for the survey and measurement.

6-15.—CALEB BY PRIVILEGE REQUIRETH AND OBTAINETH HEBRON.

6. Then the children of Judah came unto Joshua in Gilgal: and Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite said. The genealogical descent of Caleb is traced in 1 Chr. iv. 13, 15. "He was not strictly an Israelite at all, and the designation, "the Kenezite," imports as much. His father, Jephunneh, and his grandfather or ancestor, Kenaz, belonged to some tribe, probably Idumea, friendly to the Israelites, and may be compared to Jethro and to the Kenites' (see on ch. xv. 13, and 1 Chr. xi. 8) (*Lord A. Hervey, 'Genealogy,' p. 30*).

7. I brought him word again as it was in mine heart—*i. e.*, I gave a true, unvarnished, and unbiassed report. This incident is recorded here because it occurred while the preparations were being made for casting the lots, which it appears were begun in Gilgal. The claim of Caleb to the mountains of Hebron as his personal and family possession was founded on a solemn promise of Moses forty-five years before (see on Num. xiii. 22; xiv. 24; Deut. i. 36), to give him that land on account of his fidelity. Being one of the nominees appointed to preside over the division of the

- 11 now, lo, I am this day fourscore and five years old. As ^m yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me: as my strength was then, even so is my strength now, for war, both ⁿ to go out, and to come in. Now therefore give me this mountain, whereof the LORD spake in that day; for thou heardest in that day how the Anakims were there, and that the cities were great and fenced: ^o if so be the LORD will be with me, then ^p I shall be able to drive them out, as the LORD said.
- 13 And Joshua ^q blessed him, ^r and gave unto Caleb the son of Jephunneh
- 14 Hebron for an inheritance. Hebron therefore became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite unto this day, because that he
- 15 wholly followed the LORD God of Israel. And ^s the name of Hebron before was Kirjath-arba; which Arba was a great man among the Anakims. ^t And the land had rest from war.
- 15 THIS then was the lot of the tribe of the children of Judah by their families; ^u even to the border of Edom the ^v wilderness of Zin southward was the uttermost part of the south coast.
- 2 And their south border was from the shore of the salt sea, from
- 3 the ^w bay that looketh southward: and it went out to the south side to ^x Maaleh-acrabbim, and passed along to Zin, and ascended up on the south side unto Kadesh-barnea, and passed along to Hezron, and went up to

B C. 1444.
^m Deut. 31. 7.
ⁿ Deut. 31. 2.
^o Ps. 18. 32.
 Ps. 60. 12.
 Rom. 8. 31.
 Phil 4. 13.
^p ch. 15. 14.
 Judg. 1. 2.)
^q ch. 22. 6.
^r ch. 10. 37.
 ch. 21. 11.
 Judg 1. 50.
 1 Chr. 6. 55.
^s Gen. 23. 2.
 ch. 15. 13.
^t ch. 11. 23.

CHAP. 1v.
^u Num 32.37.
 Num. 31. 3.
 Eze. 47. 19.
^v Num.33.36.
^w tongue.
^x Or, the going up to Acrabbim.

country, he might have been charged with using his powers as a commissioner to his own advantage had he urged his request in private; and therefore he took some of his brethren along with him as witnesses of the justice and propriety of his conduct. 12. give me this mountain—this highland region. for thou heardest in that day how the Anakims were there. The report of the spies who tried to kindle the flame of sedition and discontent related chiefly to the people and condition of this mountain district; and hence it was promised as the reward of Caleb's truth, piety, and faithfulness. The Anakim were a branch of the Rephaim race (see on Num. xiii. 33; Deut. ii. 10, 11; also ch. ix. 1, 4), formidable from their gigantic stature and warlike propensities. and that the cities were great and fenced. Massive fragments of stone are still lying in the neighbourhood of Hebron, supposed to be Anakim ruins, and giving an idea of what the walls of the ancient city must have been.

13. Joshua blessed him, and gave . . . Hebron. Joshua, who was fully cognizant of the whole circumstances, not only admitted the claim, but in a public and earnest manner prayed for the Divine blessing to succour the efforts of Caleb in driving out the idolatrous occupiers. 14. because that he wholly followed the Lord God of Israel. This of course points to his faithfulness as a spy of Canaan (Num. xiv. 30; xv. 6-9, 24); but additional significance is given to the words by the fact regarding Caleb noticed in v. 6. 15. Kirjath-arba—i. e., the city of Arba—a warrior among the native race remarkable for strength and stature. The verse literally rendered should stand thus: 'And the name of Hebron before was the city of Arba, the great man among the Anakims' (Robinson, 'Biblical Researches,' ii., p. 454, note; Haver-nick's 'Introduction,' pp. 145, 146). [בְּיָמָיו, 'before'—i. e., previous to the invasion, and when the spies went to search the land, the southern portion of which was occupied by the Anakim, who acquired it by conquest after the time of Abraham. The Septuagint has τὸ πρότερον. But that version reads, instead of Arba, the city of Argob.] The Israelites, on their settlement, restored the original name Hebron (see on Gen. xxiii. 22). the land had rest from war. Most of the kings

having been slain, and the natives dispirited, there were no general or systematic attempts to resist the progress and settlement of the Israelites (cf. ch. xi. 23).

CHAP. XV. 1-12.—BORDERS OF THE LOT OF JUDAH.

1. This then was the lot of the tribe of the children of Judah. In what manner the lot was drawn on this occasion the sacred historian does not say; but it is probable that the method adopted was similar to that described in ch. xviii. Though the general survey of the country had not been completed, some rough draught or delineation of the first conquered part must have been made, and satisfactory evidence obtained that it was large enough to furnish three cantons, before all the tribes cast lots for them; and they fell to Judah, Ephraim, and the half tribe of Manasseh. The lot of Judah came first, in token of the pre-eminence of that tribe over all the others; and its destined superiority thus received the visible sanction of God. even to the border of Edom. Literally rendered, the passage stands thus: [עַד-בְּרֵיתֵי עֵדוֹם] 'upon (unto) the boundary of Edom, the wilderness of Zin to the Negeb, even [בְּקֵצֵת הַדְּבָרִים] from the extremity of Teman'—i. e., the mountainous district of the A'zázimeh. This is the translation in the Arabic version; and it is preferred by Houbigant, Boothroyd, &c.

2. their south border was from the shore of the salt sea [בְּקֵצֵת הַיָּם]—from the extremity, explained in the following clause. from the bay that looketh southward [לְשׂוֹן הַלָּשׁוֹן], the tongue (cf. v. 5; ch. xviii. 19)—a projecting point of land, called by the Arabs *el lisan*, 'the tongue'; not that, however, which on the eastern side forms so striking a feature of the lake, as it could not have formed the boundary either of Judah or Benjamin, but that which forms the extreme point on the south.

3. And it went out (i. e., from the Salt Sea) to the south side to Maaleh-acrabbim—cliff of scorpions, which form an irregular curve, sweeping across the Ghôr, and extending obliquely from north-west to south-east (Robinson, 'Biblical Researches,' ii., p. 501). and passed along [עָבַר] over] to Zin, and ascended up on the south side unto Kadesh-barnea, and passed along [עָבַר], and

4 Adar, and fetched a compass to Karkaa: *from thence* it passed ^ctoward Azmon, and went out unto ^dthe river of Egypt; and the goings out of that coast were at the sea: this shall be your south coast.

5 And the east border *was* the salt sea, *even* unto the end of Jordan:

And *their* border in the north quarter *was* from the bay of the sea at 6 the uttermost part of Jordan: and the border went up to Beth-hogla, and passed along by the north of Beth-arabah; and the border went up 7 ^eto the stone of Bohan the son of Reuben: and the border went up toward Debir from ^fthe valley of Achor, and so northward, looking toward Gilgal, that *is* before the going up to Adummim, which *is* on the south side of the river: and the border passed toward the waters of En-shemesh, 8 and the goings out thereof were at ^gEn-rogel: and the border went up ^hby the valley of the son of Hinnom unto the south side of the ⁱJebusite; the same *is* Jerusalem: and the border went up to the top of the mountain that *lieth* before the valley of Hinnom westward, which *is* at the end

B. C. 1444.
^c Num. 34. 5.
^d Gen. 15. 18.
 1 Ki. 8. 65.
^e ch. 18. 17.
^f ch. 7. 27.
 Isa. 65. 10.
 Hos 2. 15.
^g Fuller's fountain.
 2 Sam. 17. 17.
 1 Ki. 1. 9.
^h ch. 18. 17.
ⁱ 2 Ki. 23. 10.
 2 Chr. 28. 3.
 Jer. 7. 3.
 Jer. 19. 2, 6.
^a ch. 18. 23.
 Judg. 1. 21.
 Judg. 19. 10.

over] to Hezron, and went up to Adar (or Hazar-adar, Num. xxxiv. 4; now 'Ain el-Kudeirat or Adeirat), and fetched a compass [פָּרָה, turned about] to Karkaa—called by the modern Arabs Kā'a el-Baruk, plain of the pools ('Lands of the Bible,' i., pp. 270-277): 'a broad level plain, or rather an extensive basin; for it is slightly depressed with the sands torn up in some places to the depth of six or seven feet by the torrents.' The Karkā'a was probably the Coracea of Ptolemy. 4. From thence it passed toward Azmon—now El Kusameh, or Aseimeh, and went out unto the river of Egypt—*i. e.*, after leaving Azmon it followed the course of El-'Arish, and terminated on the west at the shore of the Mediterranean. Notwithstanding these minute specifications, the southern boundary of Judah is involved in much obscurity, from the still imperfect exploration of the region through which the line runs, and even its real course is differently traced, according to the opinion entertained regarding the position of Kadesh. Thus *Robinson, Stanley, Porter*, delineate this border as beginning at the southern point of the Dead Sea, and running directly south through the Arabah to Kadesh-barnea (Ain El-Weibeh), a distance of about thirty-five miles, whence it diverged to the west, extending in an apparently straight line to Wady El-'Arish. On the other hand, *Rowland*, followed by *Kurtz* and *Wilson* ('Negeb'), in fixing the site of Kadesh-barnea at Ain Kadeis, on the northern base of the Azāzimeh hills, represents the boundary line by a very different route. Starting on the east at the southern point of the Dead Sea, where it touches the north-western district of Idumea, it took a westerly course through the wilderness of Zin (Wady Murreh), and after ascending to the south of Kadesh-barnea (Ain Kadeis) it crossed over to Hezron, and went up to Adar. Then "it fetched a compass to Karkā'a"—that is, as explained by the last-mentioned writers, 'instead of proceeding directly to the Wady El-'Arish along the Wady El-Kusameh, it turned southwards from the south-eastern extremity of that Wady, skirted the western wall of the 'Azāzimeh (or Temanite) mountains along its entire extent, and then, at the Karkā'a, swept round north-west to join the 'Arish' ('Negeb,' pp. 161, 162).

5. the east border was the salt sea, even unto the end of Jordan—*i. e.*, the territory of Judah was bounded on the east by the entire extent of the Dead Sea.

and their border in the north quarter was from the bay of the sea at the uttermost part

of Jordan—*i. e.*, the creek which, at the embouchure of the Jordan, forms the north-western extremity of the Dead Sea. Commencing at this point, the northern border line ran westward, and, passing by Beth-hogla ('partridge-house,' or, according to others, 'temple of the wheel,' or the 'circulator'—a kind of *Stonehenge*, where the stones were ranged in a circular order, and the rites performed according to the course of the sun), now Ain Hajla, two miles from the Jordan towards Jericho (*Jerome*, 'Ouomast,'), went on by the north of Beth-arabah (house of the desert) through the mountain defiles, and by the spot marked by the stone of Bohan (unrecognized by any traveller, except *De Sauley* (vol. ii., p. 50) and *Ainsworth*, who identify it with the venerable monolith called *Hadjar-lasbah*, at the entrance of the Wady *Dabeur*). Bohan was probably a Reubenite chief, who, while aiding his brethren in the war of invasion in the country west of Jordan, had distinguished himself; and the stone referred to was set up as a memorial of his valour, to Debir, an unknown place (though also supposed by *De Sauley* and *Ainsworth* to be found in the ruined khan called *Thour-ed-Dabour*), beside the valley of Achor, Wady Debir or Dabour (the Septuagint does not view it as a proper name, but renders the words ἐπὶ τὸ τέταρτον τῆς παραγωγῆς Ἀχὼρ); thence through *Adummim* (the pass of the red) (*Adummim* is supposed by *Jerome* ('De locis Hebraicis') to derive its name from the blood shed by the robbers who have always infested that spot. 'But the more natural meaning of the word is "the pass of the red-haired men," in allusion to some Arab tribe; and so the LXX. take it [ἀνάβασις κόκκων]. It may be worth while to mention that there are no red rocks, as some have fancied, in order to make out a derivation. The whole pass is white limestone' (*Stanley*, 'Sinai and Palestine,' p. 416). It is beside the eminence opposite Gilgal, on the south side [לְקֵרַת] of the torrent Wady Kelt, along the line of road which still conducts from Jericho (*Robinson*, 'Biblical Researches,' i., p. 558) to Enshemesh (spring of the sun), supposed to be *Ain-Haud* (the fountain of the apostles), about a mile below Bethany (*Bonar*, 'Land of Promise,' p. 309), or the fountain near St. Saba (*Robinson*, vol. i., p. 493), and En-rogel (the spring of the fuller, Bir Eyub); whence, going up the valley on the south side of "the Jebusite" (Jerusalem), it crossed the hill near the point where the valley of Hinnom or Tophet (2 Ki. xxiii. 10) unites with that of Jehoshaphat (*Bonar*, 'Land of Promise,' p. 122; also 'Appendix,' v., p.

- 9 'of the valley of ⁴the giants northward : and the border was drawn from the top of the hill unto the fountain of the water of Nephtoah, and went out to the cities of mount Ephron; and the border was drawn to ³Baalah, 10 which *is* ⁴Kirjath-jearim : and the border compassed from Baalah westward unto mount Seir, and passed along unto the side of mount Jearim, which *is* Chesalon, on the north side, and went down to Beth-shemesh, 11 and passed on to ¹Timnah : and the border went out unto the side of Ekron ^mnorthward : and the border was drawn to Shiron, and passed along to mount Baalah, and went out unto Jabneel; and the goings out of the border were at the sea.
- 12 And the west border *was* ⁿto the great sea, and the coast *thereof*.
This *is* the coast of the children of Judah round about according to their families.
- 13 And ^ounto Caleb the son of Jephunneh he gave a part among the children of Judah, according to the commandment of the LORD to Joshua, 14 *even* ⁵the city of Arba the father of Anak, which *city is* Hebron. And Caleb drove thence ^pthe three sons of Anak, ^qSheshai, and Ahiman, and 15 Talmi, the children of Anak. And ^rhe went up thence to the inhabitants of Debir : and the name of Debir before *was* Kirjath-sepher. And Caleb said, He that smiteth Kirjath-sepher, and taketh it, to him will I 16 give Achsah my daughter to wife. And ^oOthniel the 'son of Kenez, the brother of Caleb, took it : and he gave him Achsah his daughter to wife.

B. C. 1444.
 1 ch. 13. 16.
 2 Sam. 5. 18, 23.
 Isa. 17. 5.
 4 Or, Repha'im.
 2 Sam. 5. 18.
 1 Chr. 13. 6.
 7 Judg. 18. 12.
 1 Gen. 38. 13.
 Judg. 14. 1.
 8 ch. 19. 43.
 1 Sam. 5. 10.
 9 Num. 34. 6.
 Deut. 11. 21.
 Eze. 47. 20.
 10 Num. 13. 30.
 ch. 14. 13.
 6 Or, Kirjath-arba.
 Gen. 23. 2.
 Judg. 1. 10.
 7 Judg. 1. 10.
 8 Num. 13. 22.
 7 ch. 10. 38.
 9 Judg. 3. 9.
 10 Num. 32. 12.
 ch. 14. 6.

492; *Bovet*, 'Voyage en Terre Sainte,' p. 307; *Barelay*, 'City,' p. 314). 8. the valley of the giants—better rendered as a local proper name, "the valley of Rephaim" (2 Sam. v. 18, 22; xxiii. 13; Isa. xvii. 5). From the top [שֶׁרֶץ, the head or end] of the hill it extended along the bottom of the valley of Jehoshaphat to the water of Nephtoah, supposed by *Robinson* ('Biblical Researches,' vol. i., p. 493) to be the fountain now called Yálo, in Wady el-Werd (valley of roses: four miles south-west of Jerusalem); but it is generally identified, as a position more conformable with Joshua's description, with *Ain-Liita*, or *Lifteh*, 'not far from the head of the valley that runs into Wady *beit-Hanina*, about two and a half miles north-west of Jerusalem' (*Barelay's* 'City of the Great King,' p. 545); and thence to Baalah (Baale, 2 Sam. vi. 2; or Kirjath-baal, ch. xviii. 14, the ancient name given by the Canaanite or Gibeonite (ch. ix. 17) idolaters), which is Kirjath-jearim (or Kirjath-arim (city of woods), identified with the modern Kuryet el-Enab (city of grapes), nine miles from Jerusalem on the road to [Διοσπολις] Lydda, now Ludd). [*Eusebius*, *περί τῶν τοπικῶν*.] Proceeding further westward, it came to mount Seir [ὄρος Ἀσάρ], which was, in the opinion of *Dr. Robinson* ('Physical Geography of the Holy Land,' p. 42), the ridge between the Wady Aly and the Wady Ghúral; thence passed unto the side [שֶׁרֶץ, by the shoulder] of mount Jearim, which is Chesalon—a large village or town, so called probably from being situated on the *loins* of mount Jearim, identified by *Robinson* with the present village of Kesla, six miles to the north-east of *Ain-Shems*, Beth-shemesh. From Beth-shemesh it went to Timnah, or Thimnathah (ch. xix. 43), now Tibneh. The north border then went out unto the side (*lit.*, shoulder) of Ekron [Septuagint, Ἀκκαρων], now 'Akir [שֶׁרֶץ is used here, in a geographical sense, to denote the rising ground or elevation of a country along a sea-coast, and to Shiron [Septuagint, Σοκρώδι] (its site has not been ascertained); thence it passed along to mount Baalah and to Jabneel, now Jabneh, or Jebna, the extreme north-west

frontier point of the allotted inheritance of Judah. The Mediterranean formed the boundary on the west, called the "great sea" (ch. i. 4; ix. 1; Num. xxxiv. 6; Ezek. xlvi. 20).

13-15.—CALEB'S PORTION AND CONQUEST.

13. unto Caleb . . . he gave a part (see on ch. xiv. 6-15) . . . even the city of Arba, the father of Anak—the progenitor or founder of the race, which city is Hebron. It is said in general terms that Caleb obtained "Hebron for an inheritance" (ch. xiv. 13). But as the city itself was given to "the children of Aaron . . . to be a city of refuge for the slayer" (see on ch. xxxi. 13), it appears that Caleb's possession consisted of the *field* of the city and the *villages* thereof [קָרְיָתָיו, pastoral enclosures] (ch. xxi. 12). 14. drove thence the three sons of Anak—rather, three chiefs of the Anakim race (see on ch. xiv. 15), which seem to have been divided into three clans (cf. Judg. i. 20). This exploit is recorded to the honour of Caleb, as the success of it was the reward of his trust in God. 15. Debir—oracle. Its former name, Kirjath-sepher, signifies 'city of the book,' being probably a place where public registers were kept.

16-20.—OTHNIEL, FOR HIS VALOUR, HATH ACHSAH TO WIFE.

16. He that smiteth Kirjath-sepher—or Kirjath-sannah (v. 9), afterwards Debir. [*Kirjath* means a walled edifice or fortress of the Anakim placed upon a hill. *Sepher* denotes *book*, 'the city of book': Septuagint, πόλις γραμματικῶν.] It was a place of strength, requiring a bold and vigorous leader to attack it. This offer was made as an incentive to youthful bravery (see on 1 Sam. xvii. 25); and the prize was won by Othniel, son of Caleb's younger brother (Judg. i. 13; iii. 9). This was the occasion of drawing out the latent energies of him who was destined to be the first judge in Israel. In the East a father has the absolute right to dispose of his daughter as he pleases (1 Sam. xvii. 25). She is never consulted; and in most cases never sees her future husband till the marriage has been fixed for. Thus Achsah may have had no opportunity of conferring with

- 18 And "it came to pass, as she came unto him, that she moved him to ask of her father a field: and "she lighted off her ass; and Caleb said unto her,
 19 What wouldest thou? Who answered, Give me a "blessing; for thou hast given me a south land; give me also springs of water. And he gave her the upper springs, and the nether springs.
 20 This "is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Judah according to their families.
 21 And the uttermost cities of the tribe of the children of Judah toward
 22 the coast of Edom southward were ⁶Kabzeel, ⁷and Eder, and Jagur, and

B. C. 1444.
⁴ Judg. i. 14.
⁵ Gen. 24. 64.
1 Sam. 25.
23.
¹⁰ Gen. 33. 11.
² Gen. 49. 6-12.
⁶ Jekabzeel.
Neh. 11. 25.
⁷ Gen. 35. 21.

Othniel till the moment of her departure. 18. as she came unto him [חָבַבָהּ, in bringing her home; Septuagint, εν τῷ εκπορεύεσθαι αὐτῆν]—i. e., when about to remove from her father's to her husband's house. She suddenly alighted from her travelling equipage—a mark of respect to her father (cf. Gen. xxiv. 64), and a sign of making some request. [The Septuagint represents her as retaining her seat upon the beast, and bawling out her request, ἐβόησεν ἐκ τοῦ ὄνου (cf. Judg. i. 14, where the Greek translation uses still stronger terms.) she moved him to ask of her father a field. [The parallel passage, Judg. i. 14, has ἡ γῆ, the field—viz., his own allotted inheritance.] She had urged Othniel to broach the matter; but he not wishing to do what appeared like evincing a grasping disposition, she resolved herself to speak out; and, taking the advantage of the parting scene, when a parent's heart was likely to be tender, begged that, as her marriage portion consisted of a field which, having a southern exposure, was comparatively an arid and barren waste, he would add the adjoining one, which abounded in excellent springs. 19. Give me a blessing [בְּרָכָה]—a gift, a favour (Gen. xxxiii. 11; 1 Sam. xxv. 27, 30; 2 Ki. v. 15). for thou hast given me a south land [צָרַף אֶרֶץ]—the south land. [Septuagint, εις τὴν Νανυεβ δέωκας με, thou hast given (placed) me in the Negeb.] give me also springs of water [מַיִם, bubbling fountains, from מָיָא, a fountain (Song ii. 12). The word indicating the welling up of the waters is used only in this and the parallel passage of Judg. i. 14. The Septuagint translates thus, δὸς μοι τὴν βοτθαιαν καὶ ἐδωκεν αὐτῇ τὴν Γουαθλάν τὴν ἄνω καὶ τὴν Γουαθλάν τὴν κάτω.] These springs are supposed to be described by Dr. Robinson in his account of Kurrül (the ancient Carmel—i. e., fruitful land), of Judah, which lies near the point where the fertile plain of Hebron slopes down eastwardly to the less favoured Negeb. 'The ruins of the town lie around the head and along the two sides of a valley of some width and depth, the head of which forms a semicircular amphitheatre, shut in by rocks. The bottom of the amphitheatre is a beautiful grass plat, with an artificial reservoir in the middle, measuring 117 feet long by 74 feet broad. The spring from which it is supplied is in the rocks on the north-west, where a chamber has been excavated. The water is brought out by an underground channel, first to a small basin near the rocks, and then five or six rods further to the reservoir. It is only necessary to add the important facts, that there is no living water within the territory, and that, when the cisterns become exhausted late in summer, the Arab shepherds have no resource but to remove their flocks and other animals to the vicinity of Kurrül, in order to complete the chain of evidence which goes to prove that this rich plain is the very "field" desired by Achsah, and that the fountain of Kurrül, with its "excavated chamber" and "basin" high up among the rocks, and

its capacious "reservoir" in the grassy "amphitheatre" below, is identical with those "upper and nether springs" which so richly supplemented the dowry of Othniel's bride' ('Biblical Researches,' ii., p. 197, quoted 'Negeb,' p. 17). The request, being reasonable, was granted; and the story, while it shows the invaluable privilege of an abundant water-supply in the East, conveys this important lesson in religion, that if earthly parents are ready to bestow on their children that which is good, much more will our heavenly Father give every necessary blessing to them who ask Him.

21-63.—CITIES OF JUDAH.

21. There is given a list of cities within the tribal territory of Judah, arranged in four divisions, corresponding to the districts of which it consisted:—the cities [בְּרָכָה] in the southern part—i. e., in the Negeb; those in the low land [בְּשֵׁתְרָה], in the plain of Philistia; those in the high land [רָקַךְ]; and those in the desert [בְּמִדְבָּר]. The best idea of the relative situation of these cities will be got from looking at the map. the uttermost cities of the tribe of the children of Judah toward the coast of Edom southward [בְּרָכָה]—in the Negeb [Septuagint, ἐπι τῆς ἐρήμου], so that "the uttermost cities" were those situated in the most southerly portion of Judah's inheritance, where the extremity touches upon that of Idumea. The catalogue of those cities extends to the close of r. 32, where they are stated to be twenty-nine in number; whereas, according as they stand in the present text, they amount to thirty. Various methods have been suggested for removing the discrepancy. The general opinion both of Jewish and Christian writers is that nine cities originally included in the portion of Judah, but afterwards given to Simeon, are left out in the collective enumeration (see Patrick's 'Commentary'). Some think that the summation given in the text comprised only cities, while villages were omitted; and others, regarding the text as corrupt, adopt the reading in the Syriac version, which has thirty-six, instead of twenty-nine. It is believed by learned and sober-minded critics of the present day that the Hebrew text, carefully examined, gives no more than twenty-nine, as will be shown in the sequel (see this subject fully discussed, *Reland's* 'Palæstina,' pp. 143, 144). (1.) Kabzeel [קַבְזֵאֵל]—or Jekabzeel (Neh. xi. 25); gathering of God—i. e., the affix *el* being intensive, a mighty gathering. As the enumeration of the cities would naturally be made according to the order adopted in tracing the boundaries, which was begun at the southern point, where Palestine reaches the southern point of the Dead Sea, on the north-western corner of Idumea, Kabzeel may probably be looked for in that quarter; and there is direct evidence that it stood there (2 Sam. xxiii. 20; 1 Chr. xi. 22). Its site is generally regarded by Biblical geographers as unknown. But Wilton ('Negeb,' p. 70) considers it identified with a place in Wady el-Kuseib; and [taking the final כ from קַבְזֵאֵל, where it is useless, to

23 Kinah, and Dimonah, and Adadah, and Kedesh, and Hazor, and Ithnan, 24, ²Ziph, and ^aTelem, and Bealoth, and Hazor, Hadattah, and Kerioth, and 26, Hezron, which *is* Hazor, Amam, and Shema, and Moladah, and Hazar-

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^a 1 Sam. 23. 14.^a 1 Sam. 15. 4.

be a prefix to **קָרְיָתִים**, the mighty gathering] he considers that this name meets the conditions of the place, which was an immense accumulation of waters, el-Kuseib being 'the deep, broad wady issuing from the south upon the Ghor, and, in fact, the vast drain of all the 'Arabah' (*Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' ii., p. 497). [The Septuagint has *καὶ βασιλείη*, and other varieties, 2 Sam. xxiii. 20; 1 Chr. xi. 22.] (2.) **Eder** [עֵדֶר, from עָדַר, a flock]—probably the same as the Edar where Jacob encamped (see on Gen. xxxv. 21). [Septuagint, *καὶ Ἀρά*. Hence *Wilton* concludes that the Hebrew text originally read עָדַר, a place of importance in the Negeb (ch. xii. 14; Num. xxi. 1; xxxiii. 40), the name of which is still preserved in Tell 'Arād, a high, barren-looking eminence twenty miles south of Hebron (*Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' ii., pp. 473, 622).] (3.) **Jagur** [יָגוּר]—lodging-place. [The Septuagint has *καὶ Ἀσώρ*, which, it has been ingeniously conjectured by *Wilton*, implies that the Hebrew text originally had יָגוּר, a pastoral village, an encampment of nomadic tribes; and that this word was prefixed to Kinah, as Hazor-kinah, a settlement of the pastoral Kenites, who, we are informed (Judg. i. 16; cf. ch. iv. 11; Exod. iii. 1), dwelt in the neighbourhood of 'Arād, and which settlement is identified with el-Hudairah; *Hüdry* being applied to the Arabs who live in villages enclosed by a wall—i. e., 'the houses are contiguous, so as to present by their junction a defence against the Arab robbers; and the entrance into the villages is through a strong wooden gate, which is carefully secured every evening' (*Burckhardt*, 'Syria,' p. 212).] 'The Kenites being a nomadic people, we can well understand the employment of the appellative Hazor in combination with their name; nor shall we be far wrong if we identify Hazor-kinah with the ruined site el-Hudhairah, and that again with "the main encampment" of the Jehālin, about three miles east-north-east of Tell 'Arād ('Negeb,' p. 76). 22. (4.) **Dimonah**—or Dibun (Neh. xi. 25), identified by *Wilton* with the ruin Ed-Deib. [Septuagint, Πεγμά.] (5.) **Adadah** [Septuagint, Ἀροῦνίλ]—suggesting the great probability that [as **τ** was very apt to be confounded with **ך**] the Hebrew reading was originally Aroer, now 'Arārāh (*Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' ii., p. 618). 23. And (6.) **Kedesh** [Septuagint, Κάδης]—supposed by *Dr. Robinson* to be 'Ain el-Weibeh; but far more likely, by *Rowland*, to be 'Ain Kadais, situated 'to the east of the highest part of Jebel Halal, towards the northern extremity, about twelve miles to the east-south-east of Moilāhi, near the point at which the longitude of Khulasah intersects the latitude of 'Ain el-Weibeh' (*Williams's* 'Holy City,' pp. 488-491) (7.) **Hazor, and Ithnan**. Omitting "and," which in all probability was inserted through the error of a transcriber, the name of this place should be Hazor-ithnan, which may be presumed to be the correct form,—the Septuagint making them one word [*Ἀσσορῶναι*]. Its site is unknown, although *Wilton* conjecturally places it at Hhora, north of Beer-sheba. 24. **Ziph**. *Wilton* rejects this from the lists as an interpolation, since there is apparently no equivalent for the name in the Septuagint, and on other grounds more or less satisfactory. and (8.) **Telem**—identified by *Reland* ('Palestina,' p. 1020) with Telaim (Josh. xv. 24), and by *Wilton* with el-Kuseir (little castle or fortlet), which is occupied

by the Arab tribe Dhūllām (see *Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' ii., p. 473, 617; also *Wilson's* 'Lands of the Bible,' i., p. 345). and (9.) **Bealoth**—Baalath-beer (ch. xix. 8) or Baal (1 Chr. iv. 33). [Septuagint, Βαλμανάν.] Its position is fixed by *Wilton* ('Negeb,' p. 91) in the neighbourhood of the last-mentioned town, Telem (el-Kuseir, at a ruin called 'Kurnub or Kurnou' (*Lindsay*), on the southern declivity of the 'swell or low ridge' which bears the name of Kubbet el-Baul (see also *Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' ii., p. 616; *Wilson's* 'Lands of the Bible,' i., p. 344; *Bonar*, 'Land of Promise,' pp. 84, 85; *Lord Lindsay's* 'Letters,' ii., pp. 47, 48; *Van de Velde*, 'Syria and Palestine,' ii., p. 130). The latter, however, finds Bealoth in an old fortress (el-Lechiéh, or Lekieh) at the entrance of the hill-country, where it arrested his attention—as the outermost frontier stronghold towards the south. 25. And (10.) **Hazor, Hadattah** [חָזֵר, Chaldee form of Hebrew חָזַר, new; Septuagint omits, unless it be included in the words *καὶ ἰκκαμαῖ αὐτων*; Vulgate has *Azor-nova*; *Bos*, has *Atasōr-την καύνη*. This city is placed erroneously by *Eusebius* and *Jerome* ('Onomast.,' 'Azor') in the Shephela. This list comprises exclusively the cities in the Negeb; and hence *Wilton*, following *De Saucy*, fixes its site at a ruin called *Qasr el-Adadah*, about two miles north-west of the Upper Zuweirah pass, on the summit of a hill. This situation, at the head of the important pass of *Ez-zuweirah*, serves to explain why it should immediately follow Bealoth (Kurnub), which stands in a similar relation to the only other main route by which central Palestine is approached from the south-east ('Negeb,' p. 99). and (11.) **Kerioth**. Some take this as the name of a town, which *Stewart* ('Tent and Khan,' p. 217) suggests might be Kharbet-kourah, near Moladah. But Kerioth must be joined to the following word, dropping "and;" **Kerioth-hezron**, which is **Hazor-amam** [חָזֵר-אָמָם], which is rendered literally by the Septuagint *καὶ αἱ πόλεις Ἀσσορών*, and the cities of Hezron. *αὐτῶν Ἀσσορών*. It is evident that this place, which had originally been a pastoral settlement, from the prefix Hazor, had been taken and fortified by the Anakim. The Israelites, when they obtained possession of it, added to this Kirjath the name of Hezron, 'in honour of the father of two of their most distinguished worthies, Jerahmeel and Caleb, to each of whom a portion of the Negeb was assigned' ('Negeb,' p. 101. But see on ch. xiv. 6-15, where a different view of Caleb's descent is supported; and besides, Hezron occurs in this chapter (v. 3) as the name, not of a person, but a place). This place has been hesitatingly suggested by *Robinson* ('Biblical Researches,' ii., p. 472; *Van de Velde*, ii., p. 82), and confidently pronounced by *Wilton* ('Negeb,' p. 20) to be what is now known as *el-Kuryetein*—the two cities, or 'the double city'—the heights around being covered with ruins of populous towns, which might form one large Hazor. It is called Hazor-amam, from *Hemām* (Gen. xxxvi. 22), or *Homam* (1 Chr. i. 39), a Horite chieftain; and in accordance with this hypothesis, as to the place having been anciently an outlying settlement of the Horites, the neighbourhood of el-Kuryetein abounds, with excavations made by human hands, to serve as the habitations of a Troglodyte people. (12.) **Shema** is considered by *Reland* ('Palestina,' p. 145) to be identical with Sheba (ch. xix. 2), both on account of the associa-

28 gaddah, and Heshmon, and Beth-palet, and Hazar-shual, and Beer-sheba, 29, and Bizjothjah, Baalah, and Im, and Azem, and Eltolad, and Chesil, and 31, Hormah, and ^bZiklag, and Madmannah, and Sansannah, and Lebaoth,

B C. 144.
^b ch. 19. 5.
 1 Sam. 27. 6.

tion in both passages with Moladah and of the frequent interchange of the letters מ and נ (see on ch. xiv. 2). *Wilton* thinks that the reading of this name in the Septuagint [Σαμαά] affords a clue to the discovery of its modern representative 'in a site of ruins and a mound or low tell (described by *Robinson*, 'Biblical Researches,' ii., pp. 423, 424, about five miles east-south-east of 'Arād), called Rujeim-selāmeḥ (cairn of Selāmeḥ, the mound of peace), situated in a basin formed by some green hills, which the Arabs call Wady er-Ramāl (valley of Jerahmeel) (*Vande Velde*, 'Syria and Palestine,' ii., pp. 84, 85). (13.) **Moladah** (1 Chr. iv. 23; Neh. xi. 26)—the Malatha of the classics and of *Josephus* ('Antiquities,' l. xviii., ch. vi., sec. 2). is identified by *Robinson* ('Biblical Researches,' ii., pp. 621, 622) with el-Milh, four English miles south-west from 'Arād, and twenty from Hebron. There are here the vestiges of an extensive town, with important wells. There is a general concurrence in the correctness of the identification with el-Milh (see, besides *Reland's* 'Palestina,' p. 885, *Wilson's* 'Lands of the Bible,' i., pp. 347, 348; *Porter*, 'Handbook of Syria and Palestine,' p. 54; *Stewart*, 'Tent and Khan,' p. 217). *Wilton* derives the name Moladah from *Molid*, a descendant of Jerahmeel. *Robinson* ('Biblical Researches,' ii., p. 621) and *Keil* can trace no etymological connection between *Moladah* and *Milh*. On the other hand, *Fürst* (in his 'Hebrew Lexicon,' *sub voce*) states that Moladah is etymologically and literally the same as Mylitta, a Phœnician goddess, whose worship was evidently established there. 27. **And** (14.) **Hazar-gaddah**—i. e., the enclosure of the kid (as En-gedi), identified by *Wilton* with Tamar (Ezek. xlvii. 19), the Thamara of the classics, in Wady Mubughik, between Jebel and Wady Hudhrār and Wady Nedjid, at the south-western extremity of the Dead Sea. Ent *Eusebius* and *Jerome* place Tamar at Kurnub (*Reland*, 'Palestina,' p. 1031). and (15.) **Heshmon**—placed by the same writer in Wady Hasb (cf. v. 3). (16.) and **Beth-palet**—so called probably from the name of its founder, Peleth (1 Chr. ii. 26-33). From its position in this list before Hazar-shual and Beer-sheba, and also from its close association with Moladah, a limited range is marked within which it must be sought. 'Its site is probably found in the ruin called *Jerrah*, near the juncture of the Wadies 'Arār'ah and Milh, Moladah. Here, therefore, I venture provisionally to locate Beth-palet; and in the present designation of the ruin (*Jerrah*) I am not indisposed to recognize a fragment of the name of Jerahmeel, the common ancestor of Peleth and Molid' ('Negeb,' p. 136). 28. **And** (17.) **Hazar-shual**—i. e., the habitat of the Shual. [Septuagint, Χολασωλά.] The Scripture notices of this place, which describe it as lying between Moladah and Beer-sheba (Neh. xi. 27), and towards Baalah, south-west of Gaza (ch. xix. 3; 1 Chr. iv. 28), sufficiently determine its whereabouts; and *Vande Velde* ('Syria and Palestine,' ii., p. 136) mentions a ruin, named Sāāwe, on a hill near the last-mentioned town. A mud-built village, called Beni-shail, about half an hour north-east of Khanoune (Khan Yūnas), was fixed upon by the Scottish Deputation ('Narrative,' p. 84). The district of country in which both places are situated abounds with jackals, a small species of foxes, and gregarious (*Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' ii., p. 624; *Keith's* 'Evidence of Prophecy,' p. 255, 27th edition). and (18.) **Beer-sheba**

—now Bēr es-Seba (see on Gen. xxi. 31; xxvi. 32, 33), and (19.) **Bizjothjah**. The Septuagint omits it, and no trace of it is to be found in the Negeb. *Wilton* suggests that it should be joined to the following word, Bizjothjah-baalāh—the latter name being given to the place from the ancient prevalence of Baal-worship, and the former being added by the Israelites, expressing, according to the meaning of the words, 'Jehovah's contempt' of Baal. *Deir el-Belah* (the temple of Baal), about half-way between Khan Yūnas and Gaza, and a little to the north of Beni-shail. 29. and (20.) **Im**. *Wilton*, founding on a comparison of this list with those in ch. xix. and 1 Chr. iv., considers Im = Azem, as if the word, like its analogue (Num. xxxiii. 44, 47), should be Ije-azem, or Azmon (v. 4; Num. xxxiv. 4), or *Kesam* (Targum of Jonathan), which is placed at a ruin, el-'Ab'deh or el-'Aujeh, near a wady called Kusāimeh by *Robinson*, and Aseimeh by *Rowland*; while the ancient name is perpetuated in that of the dominant Arab tribe of the district, the Azāzimeh (singular, Azmy). 'Im means ruins, and so does 'Aujeh. It is applied, according to *Robinson*, to a conical hill crowned by the ruins of a town north of Jericho. Here, too, in the 'Aujeh of the Negeb, the same meaning is expressed—viz., the hill or rocky ridge on which the ancient ruins are situated ('Negeb,' pp. 155-177). 30. **And** (21.) **Eltolad**—or Tolad (1 Chr. iv. 29), 'born of God'; a name which *Wilton* supposes Abraham gave to this place as the scene of Isaac's nativity. It was situated in the far south-west of the Negeb, at no great distance from el-'Aujeh. and Chesil. This name was apparently the same as Bethul (ch. xix. 4), and Bethuel (1 Chr. iv. 30), and Beth-el or Beith-el (1 Sam. xxx. 27). [The Septuagint, Βαιθῆλ, being given probably in memory of Abraham's making it a sanctuary of the true God (Gen. xxi. 33, 34).] When, at a later period, the place had been desecrated by the establishment of star-worship (Amos v. 4-6; viii. 14), the Jews on the return from the captivity called it *Chesil* (folly), as the northern Beth-el received the contemptuous name of Beth-aven (house of vanity); the name Chesil remained, and the site is identified with that of el-Khūlasah, the Elusa of the classics, a little to the south-west of Beer-sheba, the ruins of which cover an area of fifteen or twenty acres (*Williams's* 'Holy City,' p. 488; *Wilson's* 'Lands of the Bible,' i., p. 342; *Stewart's* 'Tent and Khan,' p. 205; *Robinson*, 'Biblical Researches,' i., pp. 296-298). The latter, however, though he recognizes the Elusa of profane history, did not find the *Chesil* of the Bible in Khūlasah. and (23.) **Hormah**—i. e., laid under the ban, doomed to destruction. Its former name was Zephath (Judg. i. 17), which is preserved in its modern representative es-Sepāt (or Sebāta), rather Tebāta, about seven miles south-west of Khūlasah (*Chesil*) (*Wilson's* 'Lands of the Bible,' i., p. 342; *Stewart's* 'Tent and Khan,' p. 205; *Kurtz*, iii., p. 330). 31. **And** (24.) **Ziklag** [Septuagint, Ζεκλάκ]. It has been hypothetically placed at a site of ancient ruins called 'Aslāj or Kaslāj by *Rowland* ('Holy City,' i., pp. 463-468; and *Wilton*, 'Negeb,' p. 209), about three hours east of Sebāta and south-west of Milh (Moladah), on the way to 'Aujeh (Ije-azem) (*Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' ii., p. 621; also iii., 'List of Arabic Names of Places,' No. 3). and (25.) **Madmannah** [Septuagint, Μαμαμῆ]. It is called (ch. xiv. 5) Beth-marcaboth (chariot-house or station). It must have been

and Shilhim, and Ain, and Rimmon : all the cities are twenty and nine, with their villages :

33, And in the valley, Eshtaol, and Zoreah, and Ashnah, and Zanoah, 35 and En-gannim, Tappuah, and Enam, Jarmuth, and Adullam, Socoh,

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 e Neh. 11. 29.
 d ch. 19. 41.
 e ch. 10. 3. 5.
 f ch. 12. 15

situated in a plain or open country where wheeled carriages could be used; and from the times of Eusebius and Jerome it has generally been placed at Μῆνας, now el-Mingây, the stage south of Gaza (Robinson's 'Biblical Researches,' iii.; 'Notes and Illustrations,' xxii.; 'Routes through the Desert,' No. v. : see also Map at the end of his 'Later Biblical Researches'). and (26.) Sansannah [Septuagint, Σασηνάκ]. It is called (ch. xix. 5) Hazar-susah, and (1 Chr. iv. 31) Hazar-susim (a depot of horses); supposed to be Wady es-Suny, where, from the vicinity to the shore of this and the preceding place, horses and wagons are in common use, as travellers testify. 32. And (27.) Lebaath (place of lionesses). It is called (ch. xix. 6) Beth-lebaath and (1 Chr. iv. 31) Beth-birei [Septuagint, Ααβῶς]; placed by Wilton on a low hill north-east of 'Arâd, the site of a ruin called el-Beyûdh. There are numerous caves in the neighbourhood, and the footprints of lions have been discovered by several modern travellers. and (28.) Shilhim. The list of cities in the Negeb assigned to Simeon contains (ch. xix. 6) Sharuhén, and that in 1 Chr. iv. 31, Shaa'raim, in lieu of Shilhim. These seem to have been variations of the name, or perhaps corruptions of a later age. Its site is supposed by Wilton to be el-Birein (the wells), and Khurbet es-Serâm. and (29.) Ain. This is regarded by Robinson ('Biblical Researches,' ii., p. 625) as a separate place, being mentioned among the cities of the south (see on ch. xix. 7; xxi. 16). But it may be taken here as qualifying the following word, Ain Rimmon (fountain of the pomegranate). It is called, ch. xix. 7, Remmon in our version, though neither in that passage, nor 1 Chr. iv. 32, nor Neh. xi. 29, is there any alteration in the Hebrew form of the word [Septuagint, Ῥομμόν]. Wilton identifies it with Umer-rumâmim (Arabic, 'the mother of pomegranates'), beyond Beer-sheba, near the north-east angle of that portion of the Negeb formed by the junction of the hill country with the Wadies Sheriah and Khuweilfeh, the latter always an important watering-place. all the cities are twenty and nine, with their villages [עָרֵיהֶם וְכִפְרֵיהֶם]—and their hamlets; moveable enclosures usually erected in the vicinity of cities (see ch. xiii. 23; Lev. xxv. 31). In the preceding exposition, as to the number, arrangement, and identification of the cities, we have for the most part followed the theory Mr. Wilton supports in his 'Negeb,' under the impression that, in our present imperfect acquaintance with the region south of Palestine, no more trustworthy guide can be obtained. Not that we put implicit faith in all his interpretations—for we deem some of them merely conjectural, and others doubtful—but his work must be acknowledged to be an interesting and ingenious application of philological reasoning and the researches of modern travellers, to elucidate an obscure department in Biblical geography; and the rules he prescribed to himself in conducting his enquiries into the comparative etymology of the ancient and modern names, as well as into all the conditions required by the various Scripture notices of the cities in the Negeb, are founded upon principles unquestionably sound and comprehensive, though the conclusions to which they have led him remain to be tested by the results of future and systematic exploration.

33. in the valley [עֲרֵב]. This word, signifying a low level tract of country, with the article prefixed, is applied in all instances, except one (Zeph. ii. 5), as the designation of the maritime plain of Philistia [Septuagint, ἐν τῇ πεδίῳ]. The cities of this district are divided into four groups. First group comprised the cities in the lowland, adjoining the western mountains, and extending to the road from Jerusalem to Beit-Jibrin. Eshtaol [עֶשְׁתָּאֹל] (perhaps petition, entreaty, Gesenius); Septuagint, Αστιαλλ—usually associated with Zoreah (cf. ch. xix. 41; Judg. xvi. 31; see 'Onomast,' article 'Esthau') ; and hence, although no trace of it has been found (Robinson's 'Biblical Researches,' iii., p. 20), it may be inferred that it stood at the foot of the western mountains of Judah, near the great Wady Strâr. Porter, who made a careful survey of the district, thinks it to be 'a high probability that the site of this ancient town is now occupied by the village of Yeshua, or Eshua, lying at the eastern extremity of the broad valley which runs up among the hills between Zorah and Beth-shemesh. The mountains rise steep and rugged immediately behind it, but the village is encompassed by fruitful fields and orchards.' Zoreah [צֹרָה], hornet's town. The form of the word in the original is never changed; and although our version has Zoreah in this passage, it has Zorah in all others (ch. xix. 41; Judg. xiii. 25; xvi. 31; xviii. 2, 8, 11; 1 Chr. iv. 2) except in 1 Chr. ii. 53; Neh. xi. 29, where it is Taveah [Septuagint, Πάα and Σαράα], now Sûr'ah, a small miserable hamlet situated on the spur of a steep high ridge, or conical hill, jutting out from the hills of Judah, scarcely two miles west from Yeshua (Porter's 'Handbook of Syria and Palestine,' p. 248). Its position is described ('Onomast,' article 'Saara') as about ten miles from Eleutheropolis (Beit-Jibrin) towards Nicopolis (Amvâs) (Robinson's 'Biblical Researches,' ii., pp. 340, 343, 365; iii., p. 18). Ashnah [אַשְׁנָה], the fortified; Septuagint, Ἀσσα. It stood between Zorah and Zanoah; but its site has not yet been discovered. 34. Zanoah [צָנוּחַ], or צָנָה (Neh. xi. 30) (perhaps marsh, bog, Gesenius); Septuagint, Ταῦδ and Ζανω, Tischendorf's MSS.]—now Zanua. It is described ('Onomast,' article 'Zanohua') as in the region of Eleutheropolis (Beit-Jibrin), on the way to Jerusalem; and this description is confirmed by Dr. Robinson ('Biblical Researches,' ii., p. 343), who says that Zanûâ lies on the low slope of a hill not far from Zorah and Beth-shemesh (Ain-thems). En-gannim (fountain of gardens)—the name of a city of Judah, situated at the western base of the mountains, near to Zanoah. Its site is not yet identified. There is another place to which this name is applied (see on ch. xix. 21). Tappuah [תַּפְּוּחַ]. The Septuagint does not notice it. It stood on the slope of the western mountains, amongst the other towns here enumerated; but its position is unknown (see another Tappuah in v. 53; and a third, ch. xvi. 8; xvii. 18). Enam [עֲנָם], the two fountains; Septuagint, Μαυαι and ηναετι (Tischendorf's MSS.)—the name of a city adjoining Timnath (see on Gen. xxxviii. 14). The Peshito version joins this word with the preceding,

36 ^g and Azekah, and ^hSharaim, and Adithaim, and Gederah, ⁷and Geder-
37 thaim; fourteen cities with their villages: Zenan, and Hadashah, and
38 Migdal-gad, and Dilean, and Mizpeh, ⁱ and Joktheel, Lachish, and
40, Bozkath, and Eglon, and Cabbon, and Lahmam, and Kithlish, and
41 Gederoth, Beth-dagon, and Naamah, and Makkedah; sixteen cities with

B. C. 1444.
^g ch. 10. 10.
^h 1 Sam. 17.
62.
⁷ Or: or.
ⁱ 2 Ki 14. 7.

'Pathuch-elam.' 35. Jarmuth [יַרְמֻת] height; Septuagint, Ἰερμοῦθ—anciently a royal city of the Canaanites (ch. x. 3; xii. 11: cf. Neh. xi. 29), now Yarnûk. It stood ('Onomast.,' article 'Jer-mus') ten miles from Eleutheropolis (Beit-Jibrîn), on the way to Jerusalem, and is called by *Eusebius*, *Jermucha*; by *Jerome*, *Jarimuth* (*Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' ii., p. 344; *Van de Velde*, ii., p. 156). **Adullam** [אָדּוּלַם] (justice of the people, *Gesenius*); Septuagint, Ὀδωλλάμα—anciently a royal city of the Canaanites (ch. xii. 15), and situated in the undulating plain below Timnath (Gen. xxxviii. 1), and near Gath (2 Chr. xi. 7, 8). *Eusebius* and *Jerome* place it ('Onomast.,' article 'Adullam') near Eleutheropolis (Beit-Jibrîn), at the western foot of the mountain range of Judah. It is identified by *Van de Velde* ('Syria and Palestine,' ii., pp. 157, 160) with Deir-dublân. **Socoh** [סֹכֹחַ], branch; Septuagint, Σαωχώ—the name of a city in the Shephelah of Judah; now Shuweihah, a ruin; reckoned ('Onomast.,' article 'Soccho') at nine miles towards Jerusalem, on another road than Jarmuth (Jarmûk), from which it is only half an hour's distance (*Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' ii., pp. 348, 349). It is a different place from that mentioned, *v.* 48. **Azekah** [אַזְקָה] (dug over, broken up, *Gesenius*); Septuagint, Ἀζακα and Ἰαζακά (*Tischendorf's* MSS.)—a town in the cultivated plain, as its name imports, near Socoh (1 Sam. xvii. 1). Its site has been fixed at Tell Zakariya (*Reland*, 'Palæstina,' pp. 660, 753; *Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' ii., pp. 343, 344, 350). 36. **Sharaim** [שָׂרַיִם], two gates. In other passages (1 Sam. xvii. 52; 1 Chr. iv. 31) it is in accordance with the Hebrew 'Shaaraim'; Septuagint, Σακαριμ and Σαργαριμ, (*Tischendorf's* MSS.)—not far from Gath (Tell es-Safieh). **Adithaim** [אֲדִיתַיִם], double prey]. The Septuagint makes no mention of it. It was the name of a town in the Shephelah; its site has not been ascertained. **Gederah** [גֵּדְרָה], the fold, the enclosure; Septuagint, Γάδρηα—a city in the lowland of Judah, probably that described ('Onomast.,' article 'Gahedur') as a large village ten miles from Eleutheropolis (Beit-Jibrîn), near Azekah, and probably situated in the valley of Elah (Wady es-Sünt). *Van de Velde* takes it to be a village now called Ghetera, a few hours' distance from Gath (Tell es-Safieh). **Gederothaim** [גֵּדְרוֹתַיִם], two folds—*i. e.*, for the goats and the sheep separately; Septuagint translates καὶ ἡ ἐπαύλις αὐτῆς, and its folds—*i. e.*, the folds of the preceding town, Gederah]. This reading of the LXX. suggests a natural way of removing a difficulty from this verse; for otherwise there would be fifteen cities in this group instead of fourteen. 37. **Zenan** [זֵנַן] or זָנַן, place of flocks (Mic. i. 11; *Reland*, 'Palæstina,' p. 1058); Septuagint, Ζεννά. It stood, as may be inferred from the towns with which it is here associated, on the west coast, and has been supposed by *Porter* to have occupied the site of a small village, Jenin; but by *Schwartz* with another village, one mile south-east of Mareshah, called by him Zan-abra, and by *Robinson* ('Biblical Researches,' iii., Appendix, p. 117; 'Arabic List of Towns between the Mountains and the Plain of Gaza') es-Senâbirah. **Hadashah** [Septuagint, Ἀδασ-

σαν]. The Talmud, quoted by *Reland* ('Palæstina,' p. 701) says that it was an insignificant village, comprising no more than fifty houses. It was in all probability the *Adasa* of Maccabean story, situated about thirty furlongs west from Beth-horon (*Josephus*, 'Antiquities,' b. xii., ch. x., sec. 5). **Migdal-gad** [tower of Gad; Septuagint, Μαγαδάγαό]—the Magdala where the Syrians were defeated by Pharaoh-necho (*Herodotus*, b. ii., ch. clix.), north-west of Lachish, identified with Mejdél, one of the largest and most flourishing towns in the west of Palestine, surrounded by extensive gardens and orchards, but exhibiting at the same time, in its broken columns and large hewn stones, the relics of an ancient site. It stands two miles east of Ascalon (*Porter's* 'Handbook of Syria and Palestine,' p. 272; *Van de Velde*, ii., p. 177). 38. **Dilean** [דִּילְיָן], gourd-field, or place of cucumbers; Septuagint, Δαλάδ—supposed by *Van de Velde* to be represented by the modern *Tina*, a small clay-built village, bearing, however, many marks of antiquity. **Mizpeh** [מִצְפֵּה], the watch-tower; Septuagint, Μαφά. As it stands in this enumeration, its place must have been intermediate between Migdal-gad (Mejdél) and Lachish (um-Lâkis). 'The southern part of the Shephelah (says *Porter*) abounds in little tells, to any one of which the name of Mizpeh would be applicable.' **Joktheel** [יֹכְתֵּל], subdued of God; Septuagint, Ἰαχραεὺλ]. Its site is unknown. 39. **Lachish** [לָחִישׁ] (either the smitten, captured, or the tenacious, impregnable, *Gesenius*). The Septuagint omits, but *Tischendorf's* MSS. notes have λαχεῖς—now um-Lâkis, on a tell (*Porter's* 'Handbook,' pp. 260, 261; *Van de Velde*, ii., p. 188; but see also *Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' ii., p. 388, where this identification is disputed). **Bozkath** [בֹּזְכַת], (stony region, high, *Gesenius*); Septuagint, Βασηδῶθ; *Josephus* ('Antiquities,' b. x., ch. iv., sec. 1), Βοσκῆθ (called in our version Boscath, 2 Ki. xxii. 1.) It stood near Lachish; but the exact spot has not been discovered. **Eglon** [עִגְלוֹן], vituline; the Septuagint omits; but *Tischendorf's* MSS. notes insert εγλωμ]. Its modern representative is Ajlâm (*Porter's* 'Handbook,' p. 261), or Ajlân (*Van de Velde*, ii., p. 188; *Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' ii., p. 392). The only remains are some pottery and scattered broken stones. 40. **Cabbon** [Septuagint, Χαββά]—not identified. **Lahmam** [the present Hebrew text has לחמ, Lahmas; but 32 MSS. read לחמל, as in our version; Septuagint, Μαχῆς]—not ascertained. **Kithlish** [כִּיתְלִישׁ] (a man's wall, *Gesenius*); Septuagint, Μααχῶς—undiscovered. 41. **Gederoth** [גֵּדְרוֹת], folds; and with the article, 2 Chr. xxviii. 18; Septuagint, Γεδδῶθ]. It was not connected with the towns of similar name, *v.* 36. **Beth-dagon** [temple of Dagon; Septuagint, Βαγαδῶν]. *Reland* has suggested that, in the absence of the copulative, Gederoth-Beth-dagon, was meant to be read as the distinctive name of one place. But it is objected to this combination of the words that the *vau* is frequently omitted in similar circumstances; that Gederoth stands alone in the passage of Chronicles above quoted; and that such an arrangement of the words would disturb the

42 their villages : Libnah, and Ether, and Ashan, and Jiphtah, and Ashnah, 44 and Nezip, and Keilah, and Achzib, and Mareshah ; nine cities with their 45 villages : Ekron, with her towns and her villages : from Ekron even unto 47 the sea, all that lay ^s near ^j Ashdod, with their villages : Ashdod with her towns and her villages, Gaza with her towns and her villages, unto the ^k river of Egypt, and ^l the great sea, and the border thereof : 48 And in the mountains, Shamir, and Jattir, and Socoh, and Dannah, 50 and Kirjath-sannah, which is Debir, and Anab, and Eshtemoh, and 51 Anim, and ^m Goshen, and Holon, and Giloh ; eleven cities with their 52 villages : Arab, and Dumah, and Eshean, and ^o Janum, and Beth-

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 8 by the place of.
 j ch. 13, 3.
 1 Sam. 6, 1, 6.
 k Gen. 15, 18, Ex. 23, 31.
 l Num. 34, 6.
 ch. 1, 4.
 m ch. 10, 41.
 ch. 11, 16.
 o Cr. Janus.

textual enumeration. No trace of the site has been obtained. Naamah [נַמַּח] pleasant ; Septuagint, *Ναμᾶν*—unknown. Makkedah [מַקְדֵּה] place of shepherds ; Septuagint, *Μαχθηδαν*. Eusebius and Jerome ('Onomast.', article 'Maceda') say that its position is eight miles to the east of Eleutheropolis (Beit-Jibrin) ; but their account is evidently erroneous. On the right bank of Wady es-Sūmt, above one mile above the tell, is a ruin called el-Klédiah, answering to the position, and bearing some resemblance to the name of Makkedah (Porter, 'Handbook,' p. 251). These are the sixteen cities which compose this group ; but the site of few of them is known. 42. Libnah [לִבְנָה] whiteness ; Septuagint, *Λεβνά*. It stood on the plain between Makkedah and Lachish, a little north-west of Lachish. Ether [אֶתֶר] (see on 1 Chr. iv. 32) ; Septuagint, *Ἰθᾶκ*—not known. Ashan [אַשָּׁן] (or Chorashan, 1 Sam. xxx. 30). Eusebius describes it as sixteen and Jerome as fifteen miles west from Jerusalem ; unknown. 43. Jiphtah. [The Septuagint omits ; but Tischendorf's MSS. have *Ἰεφθᾶ*.] It was near Eleutheropolis (Beit-Jibrin) ; but the site has not been identified. Ashnah [אַשְׁנָה] the strong, fortified ; Septuagint, *Ἀσωνά*—about sixteen miles south-west of Jerusalem. Nezip [נְצִיב] Septuagint, *Νασιβ*—now Beit-Nāsib. Eusebius states it to have been situated nine and Jerome seven Roman miles from Beit-Jibrin, on the way to Hebron ('Onomast.', article 'Nasib' ; cf. *Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' ii., pp. 344, 399 ; iii., pp. 12, 13). 'There is a ruined tower, about sixty feet square, solidly built ; some of the larger blocks are levelled, but the crevices are cobbled with smaller stones. Not far from it are the foundations of another and still older structure, measuring 120 feet long by 30 wide. On a mound to the south are more ruins, and the whole surrounding ground is strewn with square stones and fragments of columns' (Porter's 'Handbook,' p. 280). 44. Keilah [כַּיִלָּה] grouped with Nezip and Mareshah ; but its site has not been fixed by modern explorers. Achzib [אַחְצִיב] (falsehood, a lie : cf. Mic. i. 14) ; Septuagint, *Κεζιβ*—a town in the tribe of Judah, different from the place of the same name mentioned, ch. xix. 29. Mareshah [מַרְשָׁה] Septuagint, *Μαθησᾶ*—i. e., on the top of a hill ; supposed to be represented by the modern Marashi, which lies south-south-west of Beit-Jibrin (*Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' ii., pp. 422, 423). This is a separate group of nine cities, the sites of several of which have been discovered on the edges of the mountains. 46. Ekron [אַκְרֹן] eradication ; Septuagint, *Ἀκκαρών*—one of the cities retained by the Philistines, situated in the northern part of their territory, which were assigned in the first instance to Judah ; now 'Akir. It was situated on the northern border of Judah. According to Eusebius and Jerome ('Onomast.', article 'Accaron') it lay between Azotus (Ashdod) and Jannia, towards the

east ; 'that is to say, to the eastward of a right line between those two places ; and such is the actual position of 'Akir, relative to Esdūd and Yebna, at the present day' (*Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' iii., pp. 22-25). even unto the sea. [The Septuagint, instead of this latter clause, has *ἀπὸ Ἀκκαρών Γεμά, ἢ Γεμά* (i. e., Jabuch) ; *Tischendorf's* various readings.] 47. Ashdod [אַשְׁדֹד] Septuagint, *Ἀσθηδὼδ*—now Esdūd, south-west of Ekron, with her towns—*lil*, her daughters. and her villages—i. e., pastoral enclosures. Gaza [גַּזָּא] the strong ; Septuagint, *Γάζα*—now Ghuzzeh, situated about three miles from the sea. river of Egypt—el-Arish. 48. And in the mountains [בְּהַרֵּי]—and in the mountain, the hill-country of Judah [Septuagint, *καὶ ἐν τῇ ὄρει*]. Shamir [שַׁמִּיר] Septuagint, *Σαμίρ*—a town classed with Jattir and Socoh, which have been discovered eight or ten miles south of Hebron ; so that it may be concluded to have stood in the same quarter ; but its exact site has not been ascertained. Jattir [יַתִּיר] pre-eminent ; Septuagint, *Ἰεθῆρ*—perhaps the modern 'Attir (*Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' ii., pp. 194, 625). Socoh [סוּכֹה] Septuagint, *Σωχά*—now Shaukeh, or Shuweikeh. 49. Dannah [דַּנָּה] Septuagint, *Πενά*. Judging from the associated towns, it stood south or south-west of Hebron. Kirjath-sannah, which is Debir—Kirjath-sannah = city of palms (*Gesenius*) ; so-called from its palm trees, 'the lingering traces of the desert' (*Stanley*, 'Sinai and Palestine,' p. 161) ; called also Kirjath-sepher (the city of the book). [Septuagint, *πόλις γραμμάτων*.] 'Debiri' (oracle) [Septuagint, *Δαβιρ*] was the name given to this town after its capture by Caleb (see on Judg. i. 11). It was not far from Hebron. 50. Anab [אַנָב] grape-town ; Septuagint, *Ἀνάβ*—the 'Anáb of the present day (*Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' ii., pp. 194, 195). Eshtemoh (obedience, *Gesenius*) [Septuagint, 'Es]—now Sem'á, the site of an extensive ancient town (*Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' ii., p. 194 ; also 627 ; *Bonar*, 'Land of Promise,' p. 54). Anim [אַנִּים] (contract. for *אַנִּים*, fountains (*Gesenius*) ; Septuagint, *Ἀσιμά*). Eusebius and Jerome ('Onomast.', art. *Ἀνομή*) say it was about nine miles south of Hebron. Wilson ('Lands of the Bible,' i., pp. 353-354) considers this Anim as el-Ghuwein ; not the Ain (p. 32), as *Robinson* does. 51. Goshen [גֹּשֶׁן] Septuagint, *Γοσᾶν*. Its site is unknown. Holon [חֹלוֹן] (sandy) or Hilea (1 Chr. vi. 58) [Septuagint, *Χαλον*]—not ascertained. Giloh [גִּילוֹה] Septuagint, *Γηλόμ*—not yet identified. This first group of eleven cities seem to have clustered round Debir, which is the largest and most important. 52. Arab [אַרָב] Septuagint, *Ἀίρεν* or *ερεβ*—not discovered. Dumah [דּוּמָה] silence ; Septuagint, *Ἰεμνά*—probably *el-Daumeh*, a ruined village six miles south-west of Hebron and seventeen from Beit-Jibrin ('Onomast.', art. 'Dumah' ; *Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' i., p. 314). 'Although it does not lie on a hill, yet it is in the heart of a hilly region, and must itself be

54 tappuah, and Aphekah, and Humtah, and * Kirjath-arba, which is 55 Hebron, and Zior; nine cities with their villages: Maon, Carmel, and 56, Ziph, and Juttah, and Jezreel, and Jokdeam, and Zanoah, Cain, Gibeah, 58 and Timnah; ten cities with their villages: Halhul, Beth-zur, and 59 Gedor, and Maarath, and Beth-anoth, and Eltekon; six cities with their 60 villages: ° Kirjath-baal, which is Kirjath-jearim, and Rabbah; two cities with their villages:

61. In the wilderness, Beth-arabah, Middin, and Secacah, and Nibshan, 62 and the city of Salt, and ° En-gedi; six cities with their villages.

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° ch. 14. 15.
Judg. 1. 10.
° ch. 16. 14.
1 Sam. 7. 1.
2 Sam. 6. 2.
1 Chr. 13. 6.
° 1 Sam. 23.
29.
1 Sam. 21. 1.
2 Chr. 20. 2.

very considerably elevated above the level of the sea. It must have been well-watered, and surrounded by a fruitful soil; but only the name remains to us in Scripture' (*Bonar*, 'Land of Promise,' p. 60). **Eshean** [עֶשְׂיָן], support, prop; Septuagint, Σομά; Alexandrian, Εσών]—not yet met with. 53. **Janum** [יָנִים, Janim (chiet, in the Hebrew text); Septuagint, Ἰεμαῖν; Alexandrian, ανομη (*Tischendorf's* MSS.)]—unknown. **Beth-tappuah** [בֵּית-תַּפּוּחַ, house of the citron or the apple; Septuagint, Βασιλαγών; Alexandrian, Βεθ-Σαπφουε]—now Tefhah (*Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' ii., p. 428; *Porter's* 'Handbook,' p. 259); situated one hour forty-five minutes, or about five miles, west from Hebron. 'It appears an old village on a high and broad ridge. It contains a good number of inhabitants, and lies in the midst of olive-groves and vineyards, with marks of industry and thrift on every side. Indeed, many of the former terraces along the hill-sides are still in use; and the land looks somewhat as it may have done in ancient times. Several portions of walls, apparently those of an old fortress, are visible among the houses, and seem to attest the antiquity of the place.' **Aphekah** [Septuagint, Φακουά]. 54. **Humtah** [חֻמְתָּה, place of lizards; Septuagint, Εβνά; Alexandrian, Χαμματα]—not known. **Kirjath-arba**, which is **Hebron**—(see on ch. xv. 15.) **Zior** [צִיּוֹר, smallness; Septuagint, Σωραῖς; Alexandrian, σιωρ]. *Eusebius* and *Jerome* notice it ('Onomast.,' art. 'Σιών') as lying between Ælia (Jerusalem) and Eleuthero-polis (Beit-Jibrin). It may probably be represented by Sa'ir (*Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' second appendix, Arabic Lists, iv., el-Khūlil, Hebron), a village about six miles north of Hebron, on the road to Tekdab. This group clustered round Hebron. 55. **Maon** [Septuagint, Μαῶρ; Alexandrian, Μαων]—now Ma'in, a town in ruins, situated on a round hill called Tell Ma'in, twenty minutes distance from Carmel (*Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' ii., pp. 193-195; *Porter's* 'Handbook,' p. 61; *Willon's* 'Negeb,' p. 13, where it is shown that the town Maon was in the hill-country; but "the wilderness of Maon," where Nabal's flocks pastured (cf. 1 Sam. xx. 21; xxiii. 24, 25) was in the Negeb, "the south country"). **Carmel** [fruitful; Septuagint, Χερμᾶλ]—a city about six miles south-east of Hebron, now Kurmūl (1 Sam. xv. 12), different from the Carmel of Eljāh. The ruins of Carmel are the largest of any in the whole district (*Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' ii., p. 195; *Porter's* 'Handbook,' pp. 61, 62; 'Negeb,' pp. 16-18). **Ziph**—a ruined city on a mound called Tell Zif. It was at the distance of an hour and a half from el-Ramah. *Robinson* thought the extensive ruins to the east of Tell Ziph to be those of the city itself. **Juttah**—now Yūtta. 56. **Jezreel** [Septuagint, Ἰαρθῆλ]—a town, undiscovered in connection with the southern Carmel. **Jokdeam** [Septuagint, Ἀρικᾶμ]—unknown. **Zanoah**—different from that mentioned,

v. 34 (*Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' ii., p. 343) [Septuagint, Ζαμων]—perhaps identified in Za'nūtah (*Robinson's* 'Appendix,' 'Arabic Lists,' iv., No. 4, containing the places south-west of el-Khūlil) (Hebron). 57. **Cain** [קַיִן, the lance; Septuagint, Ζακα ναιυ; Alexandrian, Ζαωκέιμ]—unknown. **Gibeah** [Septuagint, Γαβαά]—now Jeb'a, a village south-west of Jerusalem, on its conical hill in Wady Musur (*Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' ii., p. 327, and iii., 'Appendix,' 'Arabic Lists,' viii.; *Porter's* 'Handbook,' p. 248). **Timnah** [Septuagint, Θαμναθά]—a place associated with Maon, Carmel, &c., in the mountain region of Judah, and therefore different from that mentioned, v. 10. This group of ten cities doubtless had a centre; but it does not appear which of them served as the *nexus*. [The Septuagint enumerates only ἐννέα, nine cities, in this group.] 58. **Halhul** [Septuagint, Ἀλλούα; Alexandrian, Ἀλουα]—a little village, now Hūhūl. *Jerome* placed it near Hebron ('Onomast.,' article 'Elul': cf. *Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' i., p. 319; also iii., 'Appendix,' 'Arabic Lists,' iv., of towns north of el-Khūlil (Hebron), and east of the road from Jerusalem to Carmel, &c., in the mountain region of Judah; also 'Later Biblical Researches,' pp. 281, 282; *Porter's* 'Handbook,' p. 72). **Beth-zur** [בֵּית-צוּר, house of the rock; Septuagint, Βηθζουρ]. *Eusebius* and *Jerome* ('Onomast.,' article 'Bethsur') place this town twenty miles from Jerusalem, and only two from Hebron: now identified with a place called *Edd. Dwireh*: the name of its tower is Beit-Sār (see *Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' i., p. 320; iii., p. 14; *Porter's* 'Handbook,' p. 72). **Gedor** [Septuagint, Γεδῶωρ]—now Jeddr, on the brow of the mountains (cf. 1 Chr. xii. 7 with 1 Chr. iv. 39; *Robinson's* 'Later Biblical Researches,' pp. 282, 283). 59. **Maarath** (bare place, *Gesenius*) [Septuagint, Μαγαρωῖς]—a town north of Hebron; not yet identified. **Beth-anoth** [בֵּית-אֲנוֹת, house of response, perhaps of echo, *Gesenius*]; Septuagint, Βαθσανάμ]—probably the modern Beit-'Ainūn, 40' N. W. Hebron (*Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' ii., p. 186; 'Later Researches,' p. 281). **Eltekon** [עֶלְטֵקוֹן, God is its foundation; Septuagint, Θεκουμ; Alexandrian, Ελτεκεν]—a few miles north of Hebron, but not yet identified. It is uncertain on what principle this group also was associated. The Septuagint inserts here the names of eleven cities not in the Hebrew text. *Jerome* alludes to these in his Commentary on Micah v. 2 [Ἐθεκὼ καὶ Ἐφραθὰ αὐτῆ ἐστὶ Βηθλεέμ, &c., and αὶ κώμαι αὐτῶν]. He thinks it very probable that this group of cities was omitted by the Jews out of malicious hatred to Christianity, because Bethlehem Ephrath, the birthplace of Christ, was one of them. 60. **Kirjath-baal**, which is **Kirjath-jearim**. The first was the earlier name, doubtless from Baal, the chief object of Canaanitish idolatry; the later name signified the 'city of forests' (see on v. 9). **Rabbah** [רַבְבָּה; Septuagint, Σωβηβᾶ; Alexandrian, Αρεββα].

61. In the wilderness [בְּסִרְיָר]. Midbar, when

63 As for the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, ² the children of Judah could not drive them out: ⁷ but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Judah at Jerusalem unto this day.

16 AND the lot of the children of Joseph ¹ fell from Jordan by Jericho, unto the water of Jericho on the east, to the wilderness that goeth up 2 from Jericho, throughout mount Beth-el, and goeth out from Beth-el to 3 ^a Luz, and passeth along unto the borders of Archi to Ataroth, and goeth down westward to the coast of Japhleti, ^b unto the coast of Beth-horon the nether, and to ^c Gezer: and the goings out thereof are at the sea. 4 So ^d the children of Joseph, Manasseh and Ephraim, took their inheritance. 5 And the border of the children of Ephraim according to their families was *thus*: even the border of their inheritance on the east side was

B. C. 1414.
² Judg 1. 8.
 21.
⁷ Judg 1. 21.
 Judg 19. 10-12.
 CHAP. 16.
¹ went forth.
^a ch 18. 13.
 Judg 1. 23.
^b 2 Chr. 8. 5.
^c 1 Ki. 9. 15.
^d 1 Chr 7. 28.
 ch 17. 14.

preceded by the article, is generally applied to designate the Arabian desert; but sometimes it is used to denote the barren regions on the confines of Palestine, as here in the valley of the Jordan, especially the western shore of the Dead Sea, and the rugged cliffs that stretch along it. Beth-arabah [בֵּית הָעֲרָבָה], house of the desert, with or without Beith (ch. xviii. 18); Septuagint, Βαδδαργεις; Alexandrian, Βηθαραβα]—a place situated on the north border-point of the territory assigned to Judah. Middin [Septuagint, Αιδών; Alexandrian, Μαδών]—not ascertained. Secacah [סַעְכָּח, enclosure; Septuagint, Αιοχοιά; Alexandrian, Σοχοχα]—perhaps Sēkākch, N. 13° W. from Sinjil (Robinson's 'Biblical Researches,' iii., p. 83). 62. Nibshan [נִבְשָׁן, light soil; Septuagint, Ναφλαζών; Alexandrian, Νεβσω]. Its position has not been discovered. the city of Salt [Septuagint, αι πολεις Σαδων, and αι πολεις αλων]. Van de Velde, justly conceiving that this city lay at no great distance from the salt mountain, and arrested by the fountains at the ruins of Embarreg, which he considered amply sufficient to supply a town with water, was led to conclude that the 'city of Salt' stood there ('Syria and Palestine,' ii., p. 123; also De Sauley, 'Journey round the Dead Sea,' i., p. 258). En-gedi [עֵן גֵּדִי, fountain of the kid]—anciently Hazeton-tamar (see on Gen. xiv. 7) [Septuagint, Αγκάδιος; Alexandrian, Ηνγαδδί], now 'Ain-Jidy. 'Traces of the ancient city exist upon the plain and lower declivity of the mountain, on the south side of the brook which runs into the shore of the Dead Sea. They are rude and uninteresting, consisting merely of foundations and shapeless heaps of unhewn stones' (Porter's 'Handbook,' p. 242; Robinson's 'Biblical Researches,' ii., pp. 209-211; Van de Velde, 'Syria and Palestine,' ii., pp. 75, 101). This group in the Arabah, on the high levels in the northern part of the tribe, comprised six cities, which studded a district where no trace of human habitation is to be found but the tent of the wild Arab. Setzeu remarks that 'in very early ages this country was very populous, and that the furious rage of the Arabs was able to convert into a waste this blooming region, extending from the limit of the Hedjaz to the neighbourhood of Damascus' ('Reisen,' vol. iii., pp. 17, 18).

63. As for the Jebusites the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the children of Judah could not drive them out. There is no discrepancy between this passage and the statement in ch. xi. 19. Although the city of Jerusalem, on the defeat of the king, did, together with the adjoining territory, become the acquisition of the victors, the fortress of Zion continued to resist, and remained in the power of the Jebusites; and as the Israelites were unable to occupy, by taking immediate possession of all

the places which by the fortunes of war fell into their power, the Jebusites recovered a large part of the city, from which, however, they were eventually expelled (Judg. i. 8), although the stronghold of Zion remained impregnable till the reign of David.

CHAP. XVI. 1-4.—THE GENERAL BORDERS OF THE SONS OF JOSEPH.

1. the lot of the children of Joseph fell [נָפַל, the small pebble or calculus used in casting lots, frequently the portion awarded by lot: סָף, went forth]—referring either to the lot as drawn out of the uru, or to the tract of land thereby assigned. The first four verses describe the territory allotted to the family of Joseph—viz., the tribe of Ephraim and the half tribe of Manasseh—in the rich domains of central Palestine. It was drawn in one lot, that the brethren might be contiguously situated; but it was afterwards divided. The southern boundary only is described here; that on the north, being irregular and less defined (ch. xvii. 10, 11), is not mentioned. from Jordan by Jericho—יְרִיחוֹ, from Jordan Jericho (cf. Num. xxvi. 3, 63; xxxiii. 48), meaning the point of the river exactly facing Jericho. unto the water of Jericho—the winter stream of the Wady Kelt (ch. xv. 7), which, flowing by Jericho, receives the waters of 'Ain Duk and 'Ain es-Sultān, Elisha's fountain (Robinson's 'Biblical Researches,' ii., pp. 304, 305, 309; 'Physical Geography,' p. 86). Then, passing through Wady Harith or Wady Suweinit, it ascended "the wilderness" [הַבְּרָדָה], the untilled pasture-lands, to mount Beth-el—i. e., the shelving ridge or elevated ground around the city of Beth-el (cf. 1 Sam. xiii. 2; Robinson's 'Physical Geography,' p. 37; Porter's 'Handbook,' p. 218)—and Luz, the Canaanite town probably on the other side of the hill; thence it extended to the borders of [הַרְחֵיב] the Archite (probably some aboriginal tribe) to Ataroth, or perhaps "A'taroth-addar" (v. 5), situated thereabouts in the mountains (Robinson's 'Biblical Researches,' iii., p. 80) [הַרְחֵיבָה] (another ancient tribe). Beth-horon the nether (lower: see on ch. x. 11). and to Gezer (between that and the sea: cf. 1 Ki. ix. 17). The two opposite extremities of the southern boundary line are, conformably with this description, stated (1 Chr. vii. 28) to have been Beth-el on the east and Gezer on the west, the course of the line from these points running across the country in a N.E. by E. direction. Having described the position of Joseph's family generally, the historian proceeds to define the territory, first, of Ephraim.

5-9.—THE BORDERS OF THE INHERITANCE OF EPHRAIM.

5. the border of their inheritance . . . was Ataroth-addar. Ataroth-addar (now Atāra), four

- 6 Ataroth-adar, ¹ unto Beth-horon the upper; and the border went out toward the sea to ⁹ Michmethah on the north side; and the border went about eastward unto Taanath-shiloh, and passed by it on the east to Janohah; and it went down from Janohah to Ataroth, ^h and to Naarath, and came to Jericho, and went out at Jordan. The border went out from Tappuah westward unto the ² river Kanah; and the goings out thereof were at the sea. This *is* the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Ephraim by their families. And the separate cities for the children of Ephraim *were* among the inheritance of the children of Manasseh, all the cities with their villages. And ³ they drave not out the Canaanites that dwelt in Gezer; but the Canaanites dwell among the Ephraimites unto this day, and serve ^k under tribute.
- 17 THERE was also a lot for the tribe of Manasseh; for he *was* the "first-born of Joseph; *to wit*, for ^b Machir, the first-born of Manasseh, the father of Gilead: because he was a man of war, therefore he had ^c Gilead and Bashan. There was also a lot for ^d the rest of the children of Manasseh by their families; for ^e the children of ¹ Abiezer, and for the children of Helek, and for the children of Asriel, and for the children of Shechem, and ^f for the children of Hephher, and for the children of Shemida: these *were* the male children of Manasseh the son of Joseph by their families.
- 3 But ⁹ Zelophehad, the son of Hephher, the son of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, had no sons, but daughters: and these *are* the names of his daughters, Mahlah, and Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. And they came near before ^h Eleazar the priest, and before Joshua the son of Nun, and before the princes, saying, ⁱ The LORD commanded Moses to give us an inheritance among our brethren. Therefore, according to the ² commandment of the LORD, he gave them an inheritance among the brethren of their father.

B. C. 1414.
^a ch. 18. 13.
^f 2 Chr. 8. 5.
^g ch. 17. 7.
^h 1 Chr 7. 23.
ⁱ ch. 17. 9.
ch. 19. 28.
^j ch. 15. 63.
Judg. 1. 29.
1 Ki. 9. 16.
^k Gen. 9. 25.
ch. 17. 12.
11.
1 Ki. 9. 20.
21.
CHAP. 17.
^a Gen. 41. 51.
Gen. 46. 20.
Gen. 45. 18.
Deut. 21. 17.
^b Gen. 50. 23.
Num. 26. 29.
^c Deut. 3. 15.
^d Num. 26. 29-32.
^e 1 Chr. 7. 18.
1 Num. 6. 30.
Jezer.
Num. 26. 32.
⁹ Num. 26. 33.
Num. 27. 1.
Num. 39. 2.
^h Num. 54. 17-29.
ch. 11. 1.
ⁱ Num. 27. 6.
7.
2 mouth.

miles south of Jetta (*Robinson*), is fixed on as a centre, through which a line is drawn from upper Beth-horon to Michmethah, showing the western limit of their actual possessions. The tract beyond that line to the sea was still unconquered. 6. Michmethah on the north side—*lit.*, the Michmethah, a place of note. [Septuagint, Ἰκασμαῦν.] The northern boundary is traced from this point eastward to the Jordan. Janohah—now Janūn, an extensive ruin. *Eusebius* and *Jerome* ("Quomast," article "Janohah") place it twelve Roman miles to the east of Shechem; *i. e.*, just where it is (*Van de Velde*, "Syria and Palestine," ii., pp. 303, 304). 7. And it went down from Janohah. The rapid descent of the valley eastward shows the exactness of the sacred historian's expression, "went down." and to Naarath [נַאֲרָתָה], with the affix expressive of motion, so that the name of the place was Naarah]—farther down in Wady Snweinitt than Ataroth (Atāra) (see on v. 2). [Instead of Naarah, the Septuagint has ἀπὸ κώμης αὐτῶν.] 8. From Tappuah (see on v. 53) westward unto the river Kanah [קָנָה], brook Kanah, so called from its luxuriant cane-brakes]—Wady el-Akhdar, south of Cesarea (*Porter's* "Handbook," p. 383). [The Septuagint has ἐπὶ Χελκωνά.] It is retraced from east to west, to describe the prospective and intended boundary, which was to reach to the sea. Kanah (reedy) flows into the Mediterranean. 9. separate cities . . . were among the inheritance of . . . Manasseh (ch. xvii. 9) [Septuagint, ἀπὸ πόλεως ἀπὸ ἀφορμῶν εἰσάται, assigned, appointed]—because it was found that the tract allotted to Ephraim was too small in proportion to its population and power. 10.

drave not out the Canaanites . . . serve under tribute. This is the first mention of the fatal policy of the Israelites, in neglecting the Divine command (Deut. xx. 16) to exterminate the idolaters.

CHAP. XVII. 1-6.—LOT OF MANASSEH.

1. There was also a lot for the tribe of Manasseh. Ephraim had been mentioned first, as the more numerous and powerful branch of the family of Joseph (Gen. xviii. 19, 20); but Manasseh still retained the right of primogeniture, and had a separate inheritance assigned. Machir—his descendants, the father of Gilead. Though he had a son of that name (Num. xxvi. 29; xxvii. 1), yet, as is evident from the use of the Hebrew article [אֲבִירֵי בְנֵי־גִלְעָד], reference is made, not to the person, but the province of Gilead. "Father" here means lord or possessor of Gilead; and this view is confirmed by the fact that it was not Machir, but his descendants, who subdued Gilead and Bashan (Num. xxxii. 41; Deut. iii. 13-15). These Machirites had their portion on the east side of Jordan. The western portion of land allotted to the tribe of Manasseh was divided into ten portions, because the male descendants who had sons consisted of five families, to which, consequently, five shares were given; and the sixth family—*viz.*, the posterity of Hephher—being all females, the five daughters of Zelophehad were, on application to the valuers, endowed each with an inheritance in land (see on Num. xxvii. 1), so that daughters in their circumstances inherited the rights of sons. The fifth and sixth verses are calculated to convey the impression that Gilead and Bashan were different names or portions of the same region. The

5 And there fell ten portions to Manasseh, besides the land of Gilead
 6 and Bashan, which *were* on the other side Jordan; because the daughters
 of Manasseh had an inheritance among his sons: and ^jthe rest of
 Manasseh's sons had the land of Gilead.
 7 And the coast of Manasseh was from Asher to Michmethah, that *lieth*
 before Shechem; and the border went along on the right hand unto the
 8 inhabitants of En-tappuah. *Now* Manasseh had the land of ³Tappuah;
 but ^kTappuah on the border of Manasseh *belonged* to the children of
 9 Ephraim; and the coast descended ^lunto the ⁴river Kanah, southward of
 the river: these ^mcities of Ephraim *are* among the cities of Manasseh:
 the coast of Manasseh also *was* on the north side of the river, and the
 10 outgoings of it were at the sea: southward *it was* Ephraim's, and north-
 ward *it was* Manasseh's, and the sea is his border; and they met together
 11 in Asher on the north, and in Issachar on the east. And ⁿManasseh
 had in Issachar and in Asher, ^oBeth-shean and her towns, and Ibleam
 and her towns, and the inhabitants of Dor and her towns, and the
 inhabitants of En-dor and her towns, and the inhabitants of Taanach and
 her towns, and the inhabitants of Megiddo and her towns, *even* three
 12 countries. Yet ^pthe children of Manasseh could not drive out *the*
inhabitants of those cities; but the Canaanites would dwell in that land.
 13 Yet it came to pass, when the children of Israel were waxen strong, that
 they put the Canaanites to ^qtribute; but ⁵did not utterly drive them
 out.
 14 And ^rthe children of Joseph spake unto Joshua, saying, Why hast
 thou given me *but* ^sone lot and one portion to inherit, seeing I *am* ^ta
 15 great people, *forasmuch* as the LORD hath blessed me hitherto? And
 Joshua answered them, If thou *be* a great people, *then* get thee up to the
 wood *country*, and cut down for thyself there in the land of the Periz-
 zites and of the ⁶giants, if mount Ephraim be too narrow for thee.

B. C. 1444.
^j Num. 26. 29.
 Num. 32. 39.
 41.
³ Or, City of
 apples.
^k ch. 12. 17.
 ch. 15. 34.
 ch. 16. 8.
^l ch. 16. 8.
⁴ Or, brook
 of reeds.
^m ch. 16. 9.
ⁿ 1 Chr. 7. 29.
^o 1 Sam. 31.
 10.
 1 Ki. 4. 12.
^p Ex. 23. 29-
 33.
 Num. 33. 52-
 56.
 Judg. 1. 27.
 28.
 Rom. 6. 12-
 14.
^q ch. 18. 10.
⁵ driving
 they drive
 them not
 out.
^r ch. 16. 4.
^s Gen. 48. 22.
^t Gen. 48. 19.
⁶ Num. 26. 34.
 37.
⁶ Rephaim.
 Gen. 14. 5.
 Gen. 15. 20.

former, however, was south of the latter, and the two countries were separate and distinct (cf. Deut. iii. 12).

7-11.—THIS COAST.

7. the coast of Manasseh was from Asher to Michmethah . . . the border went along on the right hand—i. e., the south. The southern boundary is here traced from the east. Asher (now Yafir), the starting-point, was a town fifteen Roman miles east of Shechem, and anciently a place of importance. 9. the coast descended unto the river Kanah, southward of the river. The line which separated the possessions of the two brothers from each other ran to the south of the stream, and thus the river was in the territory of Manasseh; but the cities which were upon the river, though all were within the limits of Manasseh's possessions, were assigned partly to Ephraim and partly to Manasseh—those on the south side being given to the former; those upon the north to the latter (*Keil*). It appears (v. 10) that Manasseh was still further interlaced with other neighbouring tribes.

11. Beth-shean and her towns—Greek, Scythopolis (now Beisan), in the valley of the Jordan, towards the east end of the plain of Jezreel. "Beth-shean" means 'house of rest'; so called from its being the halting-place for caravans travelling between Syria or Midian and Egypt, and the great station for the commerce between these countries for many centuries. Beth-san, the Hamitic name = the house of the sun [Septuagint, Βασιταν]. Ibleam and her towns—in the neighbourhood of Megiddo (2 Ki. ix. 27). the inhabitants of Dor and her towns—now Tantoura; anciently a strong fortress. A wall of wild precipitous rock defended the shore fortifications against

attack from the land side. En-dor and her towns—situated on a rocky eminence, four Roman miles south of Tabor. Taanach . . . and Megiddo. These were near to each other, and they are generally mentioned in Scripture together. They were both royal and strongly fortified places (see on Judg. i. 27). three countries—districts or provinces. It is computed that Manasseh possessed in Asher and Issachar portions of ground to the extent of more than 200 square miles.

12, 13.—CANAANITES NOT DRIVEN OUT.

12. Manasseh could not drive out the inhabitants of those cities. Indolence, a love of ease, perhaps a mistaken humanity, arising from a disregard or forgetfulness of the Divine command, a decreasing principle of faith and zeal in the service of God, were the causes of their failure.

14-18.—THE CHILDREN OF JOSEPH SUE FOR ANOTHER LOT.

14. the children of Joseph spake unto Joshua. The two tribes join in laying a complaint before the leader as to the narrow boundaries of their allotment, and its insufficiency to be the residence of tribes so vastly increased. But Joshua's answer was full of wisdom as well as patriotism. Knowing their character, he treated them accordingly, and sarcastically turned all their arguments against themselves. Thus he rebuked their unbelief and cowardice. 15. cut down for thyself there [חָרַץ]—and hew out; i. e., make for thyself a place there (*Keil*). (The verb is used in the same sense—cut; i. e., make for thyself—v. 18). the land of the Perizzites [פְּרִזְזִי]—the peasants, inhabitants of open, unwall'd villages (cf. 1 Sam. vi. 18). and of the giants [גִּבּוֹרִים]—and of the

16 And the children of Joseph said, The hill is not enough for us: and all the Canaanites that dwell in the land of the valley have "chariots of iron, both they who are of Beth-shean and her towns, and they who are
 17 "of the valley of Jezreel. And Joshua spake unto the house of Joseph, even to Ephraim and to Manasseh, saying, Thou art a great people, and
 18 hast great power: thou shalt not have one lot *only*: but the mountain shall be thine; for it is a wood, and thou shalt cut it down: and the outgoings of it shall be thine: for thou shalt drive out the Canaanites, "though they have iron chariots, and though they be strong.
 18 AND the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled together "at Shiloh, and "set up the tabernacle of the congregation ¹there. And the land was subdued before them.
 2 And there remained among the children of Israel seven tribes, which
 3 had not yet received their inheritance. And Joshua said unto the children of Israel, "How long are ye slack to go to possess the land,
 4 which the LORD God of your fathers hath given you? Give out from among you three men for each tribe: and I will send them, and they shall rise and go through the land, and describe it according to the
 5 inheritance of them; and they shall come *again* to me. And they shall divide it into seven parts: Judah "shall abide in their coast on the south, and "the house of Joseph shall abide in their coasts on the north.
 6 Ye shall therefore describe the land *into* seven parts, and bring the description hither to me, "that I may cast lots for you here before the
 7 LORD our God. But "the Levites have no part among you; for the priesthood of "the LORD is their inheritance: "and Gad, and Reuben, and half the tribe of Manasseh, have received their inheritance beyond Jordan on the east, which Moses the servant of the LORD gave them.

B. C. 1444.
 Judg. 1. 19.
 Judg. 4. 3.
 ch. 19. 18.
 Judg. 6. 33.
 1 Ki. 4. 12.
 1 Ki. 18. 46.
 Deut. 20. 1.
 ch. 11. 4-6.
 CHAP. 18.
 ch. 19. 51.
 ch. 21. 2.
 ch. 22. 9.
 Jer 7. 12.
 Judg. 18. 31.
 1 Sam. 1. 3.
 24.
 1 Where it remained till taken by the Philistines at the death of Eli.
 Judg. 18. 9.
 ch. 15. 1.
 ch. 16. 1, 4.
 ch. 14. 2.
 ch. 13. 33.
 Num. 13. 20.
 Deut. 10. 9.
 Deut. 18. 1.
 Eze. 44. 23.
 ch. 13. 8.

Rephaim, mount Ephraim—called so here by anticipation. The Gilboa range between Beth-shean and the plain of Jezreel is meant, anciently covered with an extensive forest. 16. chariots of iron—unusually strengthened with that metal, and perhaps armed with projecting scythes. valley of Jezreel [אֶמֶק יִזְרְעֵל]—in the plain of Jezreel. 'Emek' denotes a long, broad level between parallel ranges of hills; and the valley of Jezreel lies between Gilboa and little Hermon. Jezreel, called also Esdraelon, which is only the Greek form of the Hebrew word.

CHAP. XVIII. 1.—THE TABERNACLE SET UP AT SHILOH.

1. the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled together at Shiloh. The main body of the Israelites had been diminished by the separation of the three tribes, Judah, Ephraim, and Manasseh, into their respective allotments; and the country having been in a great measure subdued, the camp was removed to Shiloh, anciently Taanath (ch. xvi. 6; according to Kurtz, vol. ii., p. 70), now Seilun. "Shiloh," denoting 'rest,' was a name given in allusion to the ark being now placed in a permanent station. It was twenty or twenty-five miles north of Jerusalem, twelve north of Beth-el, and ten south of Shechem, and embosomed in a rugged and romantic glen. This sequestered spot in the heart of the country might have been recommended by the dictates of convenience: there the allotment of the territory could be most conveniently made, north, south, east, and west, to the different tribes. But, 'the tabernacle of the congregation was also set up there,' and its removal therefore must have been made or sanctioned by Divine intimation (Deut. xii. 11). It remained in Shiloh for more than 300 years (1 Sam. iv. 1-11).

2-9.—THE REMAINDER OF THE LAND DESCRIBED.

2. there remained . . . seven tribes, which had not yet received their inheritance. The selection of Shiloh for the seat of worship, together with the consequent removal of the camp thither, had necessarily interrupted the casting of lots, which was commenced by fixing localities for the tribes of Judah and Joseph. Various causes led to a long delay in resuming it. The satisfaction of the people with their change to so pleasant and fertile a district, their preference of a nomad life, a love of ease, and reluctance to renew the war, seem to have made them indifferent to the possession of a settled inheritance. But Joshua was too much alive to the duty laid on him by the Lord to let matters continue in that state; and accordingly, since a general conquest of the land had been made, he resolved to proceed immediately with the lot, believing that when each tribe should receive its inheritance, a new motive would arise to lead them to exert themselves in securing the full possession. 3. How long are ye slack to go to possess the land. This reproof conveys an impression that the seven tribes were dilatory to a criminal extent. 4. Give out from among you three men for each tribe. Though the lot determined the part of the country where each tribe was to be located, it could not determine the extent of territory which might be required; and the dissatisfaction of the children of Joseph with the alleged smallness of their possession gave reason to fear that complaints might arise from other quarters, unless precautions were taken to make a proper distribution of the land. For this purpose a commission was given to twenty-one persons—three chosen from each of the seven tribes which had not yet received their inheritance—to make an accurate survey of the country.

- 8 And the men arose, and went away: and Joshua charged them that went to describe the land, saying, Go and walk through the land, and describe it, and come again to me, that I may here cast lots for you
- 9 before the LORD in Shiloh. And the men went and passed through the land, and described it by cities into seven parts in a book, and came
- 10 again to Joshua to the host at Shiloh. And Joshua cast ^j lots for them in Shiloh before the LORD: and there Joshua divided the land unto the children of Israel according to their divisions.
- 11 And the lot of the tribe of the children of Benjamin came up according to their families: and the coast of their lot came forth between the children of Judah and the children of Joseph.
- 12 And ^k their border on the north side was from Jordan; and the border went up to the side of Jericho on the north side, and went up through the mountains westward; and the goings out thereof were at the wilderness of Beth-aven. And the border went over from thence toward Luz, to the side of Luz, ^l which is Beth-el, southward; and the border descended to Ataroth-adar, near the hill that *lieth* on the south side ^m of the nether Beth-horon.
- 14 And the border was drawn *thence*, and compassed the corner of ² the sea southward, from the hill that *lieth* before Beth-horon southward; and the goings out thereof were at ⁿ Kirjath-baal, which is Kirjath-jearim, a city of the children of Judah: this *was* the west quarter.
- 15 And the south quarter *was* from the end of Kirjath-jearim, and the border went out on the west, and went out to ^o the well of waters of Nephtoah: and the border came down to the end of the mountain that *lieth* before ² the valley of the son of Hinnom, and which is in the valley of ³ the giants on the north, and descended to the valley of Hinnom, to the side of Jebusi on the south, and descended to ⁴ En-rogel, and was drawn from the north, and went forth to En-shemesh, and went forth toward Geliloth, which is over against the going up of Adummim, and descended to the ⁵ stone of Bohan the son of Reuben, and passed along toward the side over against ⁵ Arabah northward, and went down unto Arabah; and the border passed along to the side of Beth-hoglah northward: and the outgoings of the border were at the north ⁶ bay of the salt sea at the south end of Jordan: this *was* the south coast.
- 20 And Jordan was the border of it on the east side. This *was* the inheritance of the children of Benjamin, by the coasts thereof round about, according to their families.

- B C. 1444.
- ^j Pro. 16. 33.
Eze. 47. 22.
Eze. 45. 29.
Matt. 27. 35.
Acts 13. 19.
Ps. 16. 4. 5.
Ps. 47. 4.
Ps. 61. 5.
^k ch. 16. 1.
^l Gen. 28. 19.
ch. 16. 2.
Judg 1. 2'.
26.
^m ch. 16. 3.
² The pool of Gibeon.
2 Sam. 2. 13.
Jer. 41. 12.
ⁿ ch. 9. 17.
ch. 15. 9.
60.
1 Sam. 7. 1.
2.
2 Sam. 6. 2
1 Chr. 13. 6.
^o ch. 15. 9.
^p ch. 15. 8.
2 Ki. 23. 10.
2 Chr. 28. 3.
2 Chr. 33. 6.
Isa. 30. 33.
Jer. 7. 31.
32.
Jer. 19. 2.
Jer. 32. 35.
³ Or.
Rephaim.
⁴ Fuller's fountain.
ch. 15. 7.
2 Sam. 17.
17.
1 Ki. 1. 9.
Isa. 7. 3.
⁵ ch. 15. 6.
⁶ Or, the plain.
ch. 15. 6.
⁶ tongue.

They "went and passed through the land, and described it by cities into seven parts in a book" (v. 9); dividing the land according to its value, and the worth of the cities which it contained, into seven equal portions. This was no light task to undertake. It required learning and intelligence, which they or their instructors had, in all probability, brought with them out of Egypt. Accordingly, *Josephus* ('Antiquities,' b. v., ch. i., sec. 21) says that the survey was performed by men expert in geometry. And, in fact, the circumstantial account which is given of the boundaries of each tribe and its situation well proves it to have been the work of no mean or incompetent hands.

10.—DIVIDED BY LOT.

10. Joshua cast lots for them in Shiloh before the Lord—before the tabernacle, where the Divine presence was manifested, and which associated with the lot the idea of Divine sanction.

11. the lot of . . . Benjamin came up. It has been supposed that there were two urns or vessels from which the lots were drawn, one containing the names of the tribes, the other containing those

of the seven portions, and that the two were drawn out simultaneously. the coast of their lot . . . between the children of Judah and the children of Joseph. It lay intermediate on the south of Ephraim and north-east of Judah (cf. ch. xv. 5-9). Its northern border, commencing on the east from the Jordan, extended on the north of Jericho as far as the wilderness of Beth-aven. From this point its western border ran to the nether Beth-horon, whence, *west* (not by "the sea," as in our version), it descended southward to the wooded district of Kirjath-jearim, forming there an angle with the north border of the canton of Judah. The southern border was drawn from Jericho to Jerusalem, the principal landmarks which divided it from Judah being Nephtoah, En-rogel, En-shemesh (now Bir el-Haoud), and the stone of Bohan (see on ch. xv. 6). The eastern border was the Jordan. It was the smallest allotment of all the tribes, in consequence, as *Josephus* says, of the superior richness of the soil ('Antiquities,' b. v., ch. i., sec. 22). Thus the prophecy of Moses respecting the inheritance of Benjamin was remarkably accomplished (see on Deut. xxxiii. 12).

21 Now the cities of the tribe of the children of Benjamin according to their families were ^rJericho, and ^sBeth-hoglah, and the valley of Keziz, 22 and Beth-arabah, and Zemaraim, and Beth-el, and Avim, and Parah, and 24 Ophrah, and Chephar-haammonai, and Ophni, and ^tGaba; twelve cities 25 with their villages: Gibeon, and Ramah, and Beeroth, and Mizpeh, and 27, Chephirah, and Mozah, and Rekem, and Irpeel, and Taralah, and ^uZelah, 28 Eleph, and ^vJebusi, which is Jerusalem, Gibeath, and Kirjath; fourteen cities with their villages. This is the inheritance of the children of Benjamin according to their families.

19 AND the second lot came forth to Simeon, even for the tribe of the children of Simeon according to their families: and their inheritance

B C. 1444.
^r ch 2. 1.
^s ch 15. 6.
^t Judg 19. 12-16.
^u 2 Sam. 21. 14.
^v ch 15. 8.
 Which belonged partly to Benjamin, and partly to Judah.

21. the cities of the tribe of . . . Benjamin . . . were Jericho (see on ch. xi. 1). . . Beth-hoglah (see on ch. xv. 6) . . . the valley of Keziz [Septuagint, Ἀυκεασις]—situated towards the eastern boundary of the territory. The name is derived from a root verb signifying to cut off; and hence Mr. Grove remarks suggestively, "Is it possible that this place can have any connection with the general circumscription which took place at Gilgal, in the neighbourhood?" 22. Beth-arabah—(see on ch. xv. 61.) Zemaraim [Septuagint, Σαρά]—now Es-Sumrah, in the Jordan valley, between Beth-arabah and Beth-el. Beth-el—(see on ch. xvi. 1: cf. Gen. xxviii. 19.) 23. Avim [Septuagint, Αἰών]—probably a corruption of Ai. Parah [Septuagint, Παρά]. Jerome ("Onomast.") says it stood five miles off Bethel. Ophrah [Septuagint, Ὀφρα] (cf. 1 Sam. xiii. 17)—said by Eusebius and Jerome ("Onomast.") to have been five Roman miles east of Beth-el; and supposed by Robinson ("Biblical Researches," ii., p. 125) to be identified in et-Taiyibeh. 24. Chephar-haammonai—i. e., hamlet of the Ammonites [Septuagint, Καφαφα, Κεφρά, Μοῦ]—not ascertained. Ophni [פְּנִי]—the Ophnite. The Septuagint omits. Gaba [Septuagint, Γαβὰ]—the same as Gaba. twelve cities with their villages. This group of cities lay in the north and north-eastern parts of the allotment of Benjamin. 25. Gibeon—i. e., situated on a hill [Septuagint, Γαβών]—one of the Hivite cities (see on ch. ix. 17). Ramah [רָמָה], the height; Septuagint, Ραμὰ. Its position is indicated by its being mentioned here between Gibeon and Beeroth, and still more exactly in Isa. x. 28-32. Beeroth [Septuagint, Βερωθὰ]—(see on ch. ix. 17.) 26. Mizpeh [מִצְפֶּה], the watch-tower, pillar, or elevated place; Septuagint, Μάσσημα—a place of popular convention (Judg. xx. 1, 3; 1 Sam. vii. 5-16: cf. 1 Ki. xv. 22; 2 Chr. xvi. 6). chephirah [כְּפִירָה], the hamlet; Septuagint, κεφρά—identified with Kefir, two miles east of Yālo (see on ch. ix. 17). Mozah [מֹזָה]—i. e., the springhead (Stanley, "Sinai and Palestine," Appendix, sec. 53); Septuagint, Ἀμωνή—supposed to have stood on the site now occupied by Kállonieh (Colonia), a village on the Jaffa road, four miles west of Jerusalem (Schwarz; Robinson, "Biblical Researches," iii., see Appendix; "Arab. List," Part I., viii., 4). 27. Rekem—perhaps Ain Karim, near Kállonieh (Motza). Irpeel—i. e., what God hears (Gesenius). Its position has not been discovered. Taralah [Septuagint, Ὀσπερλά]—not yet identified. 28. Zelah [the Septuagint omits]—(cf. 2 Sam. xxi. 14.) No trace of it has been found. Eleph [אֵלֶפֶת]—the ox or cow, indicating the pastoral character of the place. Jebusi, which is Jerusalem [יְבוּסִי], the Jebusite; Septuagint, Ἰεβούσ—(see on ch. xv. 8.) The import of Jerusalem is, according to Reland ("Palæstina," p.

832), Hengstenberg (Ps. iii., p. 331), and Ewald ("Hebrew Grammar"), the peaceful possession; but according to Hofmann, the foundation of peace (cf. Gen. xxxi. 51: see on 2 Sam. v. 9). Another derivation has been suggested from Luke xiv. 42. Gibeath [Septuagint, Γαβὰθ]. The three towns, Gibeon, Gibeath, and Gaba, are all enumerated as belonging to Benjamin. The two latter are clearly distinguished, 1 Sam. xiii. 2, 3. Gibeath of Benjamin (Tuleil el-Tūl, the hill of the beans) was at least five miles north of Jerusalem, in the immediate vicinity of Gibeon and Ramah, with which, therefore, it might have been expected to be associated in this enumeration. But it is here in the construct state; and hence it has been suggested that it should be joined to the following word, Gibeath-kirjath—i. e., the hill of Kirjath, viz., Kirjath-jearim. It is no fatal objection to this conjecture that it diminishes the number of cities. The Septuagint version shows plainly that the text here has been altered. fourteen cities with their villages. This second group of cities was situated in the southern part of the allotment.

CHAP. XIX. 1-9.—THE LOT OF SIMÉON.

1. the second lot came forth to Simeon. The next lot that was drawn at Shiloh gave the tribe of Simeon his inheritance within the territory which had been assigned to that of Judah. The knowledge of Canaan possessed by the Israelites when the division of the land commenced was but very general, being derived from the rapid sweep they had made over it during the course of conquest; and it was on the ground of that rough survey alone that the distribution proceeded by which Judah received an inheritance. Time showed that this territory was too large (v. 9), either for their numbers, however great, to occupy, and their arms to defend, or too large in proportion to the allotments of the other tribes. Justice, therefore, required, what kind and brotherly feeling readily dictated, a modification of their possession; and a part of it was appropriated to Simeon. By thus establishing it within the original domain of another tribe, the prophecy of Jacob in regard to Simeon was fulfilled (Gen. xlix. 7); for, from its boundaries being not traced, there is reason to conclude that its people were divided and dispersed among those of Judah. It seems to have obtained only what land and cities Judah could spare. It was, in fact, dispersed over the south and south-west of Canaan; and though one group of its cities, named v. 2-6, give the idea of a compact district, as it is usually represented by mapmakers, the other group (v. 7, 8) were situated, two in the south and two elsewhere, with tracts of the country around them, (see on ch. xv. 21, &c.) There is a Jewish tradition, besides, that the tribe of Simeon were scattered over the land, discharging the offices of schoolmasters and lawyers, just as that of Levi furnished the priests (Kcil on

- 2 was ^a within the inheritance of the children of Judah. And ^b they had
 3 in their inheritance ^c Beer-sheba, and Sheba, and ^d Moladah, and Hazar-
 4 shual, and Balah, and Azem, and ^e Eltolad, and Bethul, and Hormah,
 5 and Ziklag, and Beth-marcaboth, and Hazar-susah, and Beth-lebaoth,
 7 and Sharuhēn; thirteen cities and their villages: Ain, Remmon, and
 8 Ether, and Ashan; four cities and their villages: and all the villages
 that were round about these cities to Baalath-beer, Ramath of the south.
 This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Simeon according
 9 to their families. Out of the portion of the children of Judah was the
 inheritance of the children of Simeon: for the part of the children of
 Judah was too much for them: therefore the children of Simeon had
 their inheritance within the inheritance of them.
- 10 And the third lot came up for the children of Zebulun according to
 11 their families: and the border of their inheritance was unto Sarid: and
 their border went up toward ^j the sea, and Maralah, and reached to Dab-
 12 basheth, and reached to the river that is before ^q Jokneam; and turned
 from Sarid eastward toward the sun-rising unto the border of Chisloth-
 13 tabor, and then goeth out to Daberath, and goeth up to Japhia, and from
 thence passeth on along on the east to Gittah-hepher, to Ittah-kazin, and
 14 goeth out to Remmon-¹ methoar, to Neah; and the border compasseth it
 on the north side to Hannathon: and the outgoings thereof are in the
 valley of Jiphtlah-el:
- 15 And ^h Kattath, and Nahallal, and ⁱ Shimron, and Idalah, and Beth-
 16 lehem: twelve cities with their villages. This is ^j the inheritance of the
 children of Zebulun according to their families, these cities with their
 villages.
- 17 And the fourth lot came out to Issachar, for the children of Issachar
 18 according to their families. And their border was toward ^k Jezreel, and
 19 Chesulloth, and ^l Shunem, and Haphraim, and Shihon, and Anaharath,

B. C. 1444.

^a Gen. 49. 7.
^b 1 Chr. 4. 23.
^c Gen. 21. 14,
 31.
 Gen. 26. 33,
 ch. 15. 23.
^d Neh. 11. 26.
^e 1 Chr. 4. 29,
 30.
^f Gen. 49. 13.
 Ex. 23. 31.
 Num. 31. 6.
 The Medi-
 terranean.
^g ch. 12. 22.
 1 Ki. 4. 12.
 1 Chr. 6. 68.
^h Or, which
 is drawn.
ⁱ ch. 21. 34,
 35.
 Judg. 1. 30.
^j ch. 11. 1.
 ch. 12. 20.
^k Acts 17. 26.
^l ch. 15. 16.
 Judg. 6. 33.
 1 Sam. 21. 9.
 1 Ki. 21. 1,
 23.
 2 Ki. 8. 29.
 2 Ki. 9. 15.
 1 Sam. 23. 4.
 1 Ki. 1. 3.
 1 Ki. 2. 17,
 21.
 2 Ki. 4. 8.

'Joshua;' *Reland*, 'Palestina,' i., pp. 143-151).
 2. Beer-sheba, and Sheba [Septuagint, Σαμαά].
Keil, in reference to these towns, espouses the
 traditional view of the Jews, that there were two
 places bearing the name of Beer-sheba; *Reland*, on
 the other hand, is of opinion that the Sheba of
 this passage is the Shema of ch. xv. 26, and sup-
 ports it by an appeal to the LXX., who give,
 however, a different name to Shema in the last-
 cited passage. 3. Balah (ch. xv. 29)—or Bilhah (1
 Chr. iv. 29). 4. Bethul—or Beth-el (1 Sam. xxx. 27),
 or Bethul (1 Chr. iv. 30) = Chesil (see on ch. xv.
 30). 6. Sharuhēn [Septuagint renders it δὲ ἀγροὶ
 αὐτῶν, probably reading ἰσραήλ]—their fields, as
Reland ('Palestina') conjectures. 8. Ramath of
 the south—Ramath-negeb (according to the
 reading of four MSS.), low ridges of the Negeb.

10-16.—OF ZEBULUN.

10. the third lot came up for the children of
 Zebulun. The boundaries of the possession as-
 signed to them extended from the lake of Chin-
 nereth (sea of Galilee) on the east, to the Medi-
 terranean on the west; for although they do not
 seem at first to have touched on the western
 shore—a part of Manasseh running north into
 Asher (ch. xvii. 10)—they afterwards did, accord-
 ing to the prediction of Moses (Deut. xxxiii. 19).
 The extent from south to north cannot be very
 exactly traced, the sites of many of the places
 through which the boundary line is drawn being
 unknown. Some of the cities were of note.

15. Kattath [Septuagint, Καταθά]—is supposed
 by *Schwarz* to be the Cana of Galilee. Nahallal
 —or Nahalal (ch. xxi. 35) [Septuagint, Ναβαλλάλ].
 Shimron [Septuagint, Συμωνί]—identified by
Schwarz with Simūniyeh (the Simonias of

Josephus), a village situated a little west of
 Nazareth. Idalah [Septuagint, Ἰδαλά]—un-
 known. Beth-lehem [Septuagint, Βαιθλεμ]—now
 Beit-lahm, described by *Robinson* as about six
 miles west of Nazareth.

17-23.—OF ISSACHAR.

17. the fourth lot came out to Issachar. In-
 stead of describing the boundaries of this tribe,
 the inspired historian gives a list of its principal
 cities. These cities are all in the eastern part of
 the plain of Esdraelon. Jezreel (town of God)
 [Septuagint, Ἰαζρέλ, and Ἰεζραελ ('Tischendorf')]—
 now Zer'in. *Eusebius* and *Jerome* ('Onomast.,'
 art. 'Jezrael') describe it as situated between Legio
 (el-Lejjūn) and Eleutheropolis (now Beisan) (see
Robinson's 'Biblical Researches,' iii., pp. 163-167;
Porter's 'Handbook,' p. 363). Chesulloth [חֶסְלוֹת],
 the loins; Septuagint, Χασαλλῶθ]—or Chisloth-
 tabor (v. 12); identified by *Robinson* ('Biblical
 Researches,' iii., p. 162, and note 3) with the
 village of Iksāl, situated on a low rocky ridge or
 mound near Tabor. Shunem [שֻׁנָם or שֻׁנַם (two
 resting-places, *Gesenius*); Septuagint, Σουνάμ].
Eusebius called it Salem, now Sōlam, lying on the
 declivity at the western end or lower slope of
 Jebel ed-Dūhy, over against Zer'in (*Robinson's*
 'Biblical Researches,' iii., p. 169; *Porter's* 'Hand-
 book,' p. 357). Haphraim [חַפְרַיִם], the two pits; Sep-
 tuagint, Ἀγρίν]—supposed to be represented by
 the modern village el-Afūleh, about two miles
 west of Sōlam (Shuunem). Shihon [שִׁיחֹן; Septua-
 gint, Σιωνα]. It is mentioned by *Eusebius* and
Jerome ('Onomast.,' as standing in their time 'near
 mount Tabor.' But it has not been identified.
 Anaharath [Septuagint, Ἀναχρηθῶ]. Its site is

20 and Rabbith, and Kishion, and Abez, and ^mRemeth, and En-gannim,
 22 and En-haddah, and Beth-pazzez; and the coast reacheth to ⁿTabor, and
 Shahazimah, and Beth-shemesh; and the outgoings of their border were
 23 at Jordan; sixteen cities with their villages. This is the inheritance of
 the tribe of the children of Issachar according to their families, the cities
 and their villages.
 24 And the fifth lot came out for the tribe of the children of Asher
 25 according to their families. And their border was ^oHelkath, and Hali,
 26 and Beten, and Achshaph, and Alammelech, and Amad, and Misheal;
 27 and reacheth to ^pCarmel westward, and to Shihor-libnath; and turneth
 toward the sun-rising to Beth-dagon, and reacheth to Zebulun, and to
 the valley of Jiphthah-el toward the north side of Beth-emek, and Neiel,
 28 and goeth out to ^qCabul on the left hand, and Hebron, and Rehob, and
 29 Hammon, and ^rKanah, ^seven unto great Zidon; and then the coast
 turneth to Ramah, and to the strong city ¹Tyre; and the coast turneth
 to Hosah; and the outgoings thereof are at the sea from the coast to
 30 'Achzib: Ummah also, and Aphek, and Rehob: twenty and two cities
 31 with their villages. This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children
 of Asher according to their families, these cities with their villages.
 32 The sixth lot came out to the children of Naphtali, *even* for the children
 33 of Naphtali according to their families. And their coast was from Heleph,
 from Allon to Zaanannim, and Adami, Nekeb, and Jabneel, unto Lakum;
 34 and the outgoings thereof were at Jordan: and then ^vthe coast turneth
 westward to Aznoth-tabor, and goeth out from thence to Hukkok, and

B. C. 1444.
 " ch. 21. 21,
 Jarmuth.
 " 1 Sam. 10. 3.
 Ps. 9. 12.
 ° 1 Chr. 6. 75,
 Hukok.
 " 1 Ki. 18. 19.
 2 Ki. 2. 25.
 2 Ki. 4. 25.
 Isa. 31. 2.
 Jer. 46. 18.
 Amos 1. 2.
 Mic. 7. 14.
 " 1 Ki. 9. 13.
 " John 2. 1,
 Cana.
 " Gen. 10. 15,
 19.
 ch. 11. 8.
 Judg. 1. 31.
 Judg. 10. 12.
 Acts 27. 3.
 1 Tzor, that
 is, The
 rock.
 2 Sam. 5. 11.
 " Gen. 33. 5.
 " Judg. 1. 31.
 Mic. 1. 14.
 " Deut. 33. 23.

unknown. 20. Rabbith [רַבִּיִּית, the multitude; Septuagint, Δαβιρών]. Nothing is known of it. Kishion [קִישִׁיֹן, hardness; Septuagint, Κισών]—unknown. Abez [אַבֶּז, tin; Septuagint, Πεβές]—unknown. 21. Remeth [Septuagint, Ρεμιάς]. Several conjectures have been advanced respecting the position of this city; but as they are doubtful, it is needless to mention them. Engannim [עַנְגַּנִּים, fountain of gardens; Septuagint, Ἰεὼν καὶ Τομυάν]—the Genza of Josephus ('Antiquities, b. xx., ch. vi., sec. 1; also 'Jewish Wars,' b. iii., ch. iii., sec. 4), on the borders of the great plain towards Samaria, now Jenin (Robinson's 'Biblical Researches,' iii., p. 156; Bovey, 'Voyage en Terre Sainte,' p. 352). En-haddah [עֵן הַדָּדָה, swift fountain]—not identified. Beth-pazzez [בֵּית פַּצְצִיז, house of dispersion; Septuagint, Βησσαφύς]—unknown. 22. Tabor—a Levitical city (1 Chr. vi. 77; Hos. v. 1). Shahazimah [שַׁחַזִּימָה; Septuagint, Σαλιμ κατὰ Σαλασσαν]—unknown. Beth-shemesh—house of the sun [Septuagint, Βαιθσαμύς]; unknown. 24-31.—OF ASHER.

24. The fifth lot came out for the tribe of the children of Asher. The western boundary is traced from north to south through the cities mentioned; the site of which, however, is unknown. 26. to Carmel westward, and to Shihor-libnath—i. e., the black or muddy river; probably the Nahr Belka, below Dor (Tantoura); for that town belonged to Asher (ch. xvii. 10). Thence the boundary line turned eastward to Beth-dagon, a town at the junction of Zebulun and Naphtali, "on the left hand," and ran northwards as far as Cabul, about three and a half miles from 'Akka (Accho, Ptolemais), now Kabul, with other towns, amongst which is mentioned (v. 28) "great Zidon;" so called on account of its being even then the flourishing metropolis of the Phœnicians. Though included in the inheritance of Asher, this town was never possessed by them (Judg. i. 31). 27. to the valley of Jiphthah-el [Septuagint, Ἐγκαί

καὶ φθαίηλ]—identified with Jotapata, now Jéfât, a village in the mountains of Galilee, midway between the lake of Gennesaret and the bay of Acre. The valley of Jiphthah-el is 'the wady which, commencing among the hills near Jéfât, runs down westward into the plain of 'Akka, under the name of Wady Abilin. The border of Asher passed from Carmel till it met Zebulun' (Porter's 'Hand-book,' 378). 29. And then the coast turneth to Ramah—now el-Hamma, which stood where the Leontes (Litany) ends its southern course, and flows westward. and to the strong city Tyre. The original city appears to have stood on the mainland, and was well fortified. This is the first Scriptural notice of Tyre, which was of later origin than Zidon (Hengstenberg, 'De reb. Tyr.,' pp. 6, 7). From Tyre the boundary ran to Hosah, an inland town; and then passing the unconquered district of Achzib, or Ecdippa, which was above the thirty-third degree of north latitude, and about fifteen miles north of Aecho (Judg. i. 31), terminated at the sea-coast (see Michaelis, 'Commentary on the West Boundary of the Promised Land').

32-39.—OF NAPHTALI.
 32. The sixth lot came out to the children of Naphtali. Although the cities mentioned have not been discovered, it is evident, from Zaanannim, which is by Kedesh—i. e., on the north-west of lake Merom (Judg. iv. 11)—that the boundary described (v. 34) ran from the south-west towards the north-east, up to the sources of the Jordan. 34. Aznoth-tabor—on the east of Tabor towards the Jordan, for the border ran thence to Hukkok, touching upon that of Zebulun; and as the territory of Zebulun did not extend as far as the Jordan, Aznoth-tabor and Hukkok must have been border towns on the line which separated Naphtali from Asher (1 Chr. vi. 75), where it is spoken of as a city of refuge in Asher. It is elsewhere called Helkath (v. 25; ch. xxi. 31). 'The reading Hukkok,' as Robinson suggests, 'is perhaps an error of copyists' ('Later Biblical Researches,'

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^a Gen. 10. 18.
 Num. 13. 21.
 1 Ki. 8. 65.
 Jer. 33. 5.
 Eze. 47. 15-20.
^w Deut. 3. 17.
 ch. 11. 2.
 ch. 12. 3.
 ch. 13. 27.
 Mark. 6. 53.
 Luke 5. 1.
^x Judg. 13. 2.
^y Judg. 1. 35.
 1 Ki. 4. 9.

reacheth to Zebulun on the south side, and reacheth to Asher on the west side, and to Judah upon Jordan toward the sun-rising.

- 35 And the fenced cities are Ziddim, Zer, and ^v Hammath, Rakkath, and
 36 ^w Chinnereth, and Adamah, and Ramah, and Hazor, and Kedesh, and
 38 Edrei, and En-hazor, and Iron, and Migdal-el, Horem, and Beth-anath,
 39 and Beth-shemesh; nineteen cities with their villages. This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Naphtali according to their families, the cities and their villages.
 40 And the seventh lot came out for the tribe of the children of Dan
 41 according to their families. And the coast of their inheritance was
 42 ^x Zorah, and Eshtaol, and Ir-shemesh, and ^y Shaalabbin, and Ajalon, and
 43 Jethlah, and Elon, and Thimnathah, and Ekron, and Eltekeh, and
 45 Gibbethon, and Baalath, and Jelud, and Bene-berak, and Gath-rimmon,

p. 81). to Judah upon Jordan toward the sun-rising. The sixty cities, Havoth-jair, which were on the eastern side of the Jordan, opposite Naphtali, were reckoned as belonging to Judah, because Jair, their possessor, was a descendant of Judah (1 Chr. ii. 4. 22) (*Keil*).

35. Ziddim [צִדִּים], the sides; instead of which the Septuagint, apparently reading צִדְדִים, render, 'these are the fenced cities of the Tyrians'. *Mr. Grove* (*Smith's* 'Dictionary') remarks, 'The Jerusalem Talmud is probably near the mark in identifying bat-Ziddim with Kefr Chittai, which *Schwarz*, with much probability, takes to be the present Hattin, at the northern foot of the well-known Kurn Hattin ('Horns of Hattin'), a few miles west of Tiberias (see also *Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' iii., p. 250). Zer [Septuagint, *Topos*, erroneously]. It seems to have been situated on the south-west side of the lake. Hammath [חַמַּת], warm springs; Septuagint, *Quaδακαεδ;* *Josephus* calls it *Ἀμμαὸν* ('Antiquities,' b. xviii., ch. ii., sec. 3; 'Jewish Wars,' b. iv., ch. i., sec. 31)—now Hümâm, or Emmaus, a little south of Tiberias. It stood about a mile west of the lake: a position which would make it more naturally come within the limits of Zebulun. 'Yet,' as *Robinson* remarks ('Biblical Researches,' iii., p. 260), 'the place might still be assigned to another tribe, as was done in many other instances' (cf. *Ireland*, 'Palestina,' p. 161). But a different explanation has been proposed. 'Hammath, which is described as one of the towns of Naphtali, may have occupied the place on which the tetrarch Herod caused the city Tiberias to be built. On comparing the numerous passages of the Talmud where these two cities are spoken of, I should conclude that the two towns are not identical, but very near, and that after the erection of Tiberias, Hammath became its suburb' (*Dobet*, 'Voyage on Terre Sainte,' p. 419). Rakkath—unknown. Chinnereth [Septuagint, *Κενεθ*]. No trace of the town has been found. It is called Chinnereth in the Old Testament, and Genezareth in the New. The first name was bestowed from the resemblance of the lake in form to a harp. Genezath signifies garden of the princes; perhaps of the captains or princes of Naphtali (1 Chr. xii. 34; Ps. lxxviii. 27). Be that as it may, this district was evidently a real garden, a terrestrial paradise (*Josephus*, 'Jewish Wars,' b. iii., ch. iii., sec. 2). 36. Adamah [Septuagint, *Αγαία*]. It was probably situated on the north-west of the lake. Ramah. *Robinson* ('Biblical Researches,' iii., p. 133) found a place on the heights north of the lake Tiberias, called Rameh, which may be the modern representative of the town of Naphtali (cf. *Van de Velde*, i., p. 285). Hazor [Septuagint, *Ἄσάφ*]. The association of this town with Ramah and Kedesh, south of which it

lay (cf. 2 Ki. xv. 29; *Josephus*, 'Antiquities,' b. v., ch. i., sec. 18), clearly points it out to be the capital of Jabin, the metropolis of the north of Canaan, in the plain of Hüleb. It is supposed by *Porter* ('Handbook' p. 434) to have occupied the site of the ancient ruin called Kasyün, but by *Van de Velde* (i., pp. 178, 179) to be Hazar or Haziri, one of the most extensive collections of ruins he met with anywhere. 37. Kedesh [Septuagint, *Καδές*],—so called probably from having been anciently the seat of a pagan temple, and hence 'a holy city.' It has been identified by *Robinson* with Kades, at the western bank of the Ard el-Hüleb, ten miles north of Safed, and four north-west of the sea of Merom. Edrei [עֲדְרַי, strong, mighty]—identified with an ancient ruin situated on a conical hill, and thence called Tell Khurabeh (the tell of the ruin), about two miles south of Kedesh. En-hazor—fountain of the village [Septuagint, *πηγή Ἀσάφ*]. Its site is unknown. 38. Iron [Septuagint, *Κερω*]. *Van de Velde*, who carefully explored the northern districts of Palestine, found Iron in the ruins at Yaran, an hour's distance south-east of Bint-jehel. Migdal-el—tower of God: Magdala of the Gospel history, now Mejdal, on the western coast of the sea of Galilee, not far from Tiberias (*Robinson*, 'Biblical Researches,' iii., p. 279; *Van de Velde*, ii., pp. 394, 395). Horem—now Hhârah, or Hhorah, an extensive ruin (*Van de Velde*, i., p. 178). Beth-anath—now represented by the village Ain-ata. Beth-shemesh. This city is mentioned also (Judg. i. 33) in connection with Beth-anath.

40-48.—OF DAN.

40. the seventh lot came out for the tribe . . . of Dan. It lay on the west of Benjamin, and consisted of portions surrendered by Judah and Ephraim. Its boundaries are not stated, as they were easily distinguishable from the relative position of Dan to the three adjoining tribes. 41. (See on ch. xv. 33.) Ir-shemesh [city of the sun; Septuagint, *πόλις Σαυμαβ*] = Beth-shemesh and mount Heres, 'mount of the sun' (Judg. i. 35). 42. Shaalabbin—or Shaalbim (Judg. i. 35; 1 Ki. iv. 9), city of foxes or jackals; not discovered. Ajalon [אֲיָלוֹן]—deer-field, now Yâlo (*Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' iii., p. 63). Jethlah [hanging high; Septuagint, *Σαλαβα*]—unknown. 43. Elon [אֵילָן, an oak]. It probably stood in a well-wooded region. Thimnathah—or Timnah and Timnath (portion), now Tibneh, about an hour's distance south-west from Zorah (*Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' ii., p. 345; *Porter's* 'Handbook,' pp. 282, 368). Ekron—now 'Akir (see on ch. xiii. 3; xv. 45, 46). 44. Eltekeh [Septuagint, *Ἄλακαθά*]—unknown. Gibbethon [Septuagint, *Βεγεθών*]—not yet traced. Baalath [Septuagint, *Γεβελάν*]

- 46, and Me-jarkon, and Rakkon, with the border ² before ³ Japho. And
 47 ² the coast of the children of Dan went out *too little* for them: therefore
 the children of Dan went up to fight against Leshem, and took it, and
⁴ smote it with the edge of the sword, and possessed it, and dwelt therein,
 48 and called Leshem, ⁵ Dan, after the name of Dan their father. This ⁶ is
 the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Dan according to their
 families, these cities with their villages.
 49 When they had made an end of dividing the land for inheritance by
 their coasts, the children of Israel gave an inheritance to Joshua the son
 50 of Nun among them: according to the word of the LORD, they gave him
 the city which he asked, *even* ⁷ Timnath-serah ⁸ in mount Ephraim: and
 he built the city, and dwelt therein.
 51 These ⁹ are the inheritances, which Eleazar the priest, and Joshua the
 son of Nun, and the heads of the fathers of the tribes of the children of
 Israel, divided for an inheritance by lot ¹⁰ in Shiloh before the LORD, at
 the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. So they made an end of
 dividing the country.

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² Or, over
 against
³ Or, Joppa,
 Ezra 3. 7.
⁴ Chr. 2. 16.
 Jon. 1. 3.
 Acts 9. 34.
⁵ Judg. 18. 1.
⁶ Gen. 49. 17.
⁷ Judg. 18. 29.
⁸ Num. 26. 54.
 Acts 17. 26.
⁹ ch. 21. 30.
¹⁰ 1 Chr. 7. 21.
 Num. 34. 17.
 ch. 14. 1.
¹¹ ch. 13. 1, 10.
 Judg. 21. 19.
 Ps. 78. 55.
 Jer. 7. 12.
 Jer. 23. 6.

probably that referred to in 1 Ki. ix. 18; 2 Chr. viii. 6, but not identified. 45. Jehud [Septuagint, Ἰερώ]—perhaps represented by an inhabited village called el-Yehudiyeh, in the district of Ludd (*Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' iii., p. 45). Bude-berak [Septuagint, Βαυβαράκτ]—unknown. Gath-rimmon—press of the pomegranate [Septuagint, Γεθρεμμών]. 46. Me-jarkon—waters of yellowness [Septuagint, ἀπο Σαλασσός Ἰεράκων]. The name was derived from a fountain or stream in the neighbourhood of the city. *Van de Velde*, following *Schwarz*, finds this place in the old ruin, Ras el-'Ain, over against Jaffa. Rakkon [רַקּוֹן], the thinnis; [Septuagint includes the name of this and the preceding city under the same word, Ἰεράκων, which seems to indicate a mistaken repetition by a copyist]. The place is unknown. Japho [Septuagint, Ἰοπηή]—Joppa, now Yāfa. 47. the coast of the children of Dan went out too little for them. The only patch of the land that remained unappropriated was the central but narrow and mountainous region which projected on the western side of Judah into the territory of the Philistines, and it was assigned to the Danites. Besides the natural smallness of the extent, it was liable to be diminished by the frequent and predatory incursions of the Amorites (Judg. i. 34), so that it proved entirely inadequate to the requirements of the tribe; and their leaders were compelled to look out for some additional territory, which was at length acquired in the northern extremity of Canaan, (see on Judg. xviii.) The original allotment of this tribe was the most open and exposed in the whole country, not only on the side of the sea, where Jaffa might easily serve as a point of debarkation for foreign invaders, but especially on the side of the Philistines; for the plain of Sharon was only a continuation of their territory, and there was no kind of barrier between it and the Shephelah. Thus Dan was roused by the attacks of his restless enemies to act as "a young lion" (Deut. xxxiii. 22) in guarding this weak frontier of the land of Israel; and most valiantly did he guard it. In fact, his vigilance being wholly directed towards that point of interest, he did not furnish the expected contingent in support of his oppressed brethren in other provinces; and for his apparent want of patriotism was denounced in the triumphant psalm of Deborah (Judg. v. 17). The only enemy he recognized or thought of encountering were the Philistines; and though they were his superiors both in numbers and in physical forces,

he often defeated them by his ingenious stratagems and sudden surprises (Gen. xlix. 17). therefore the children of Dan went up to fight against Leshem. The Danites, finding their inheritance too small, meditated enlarging its boundaries by the sword; and having conquered Leshem (Laish), planted a colony there, calling the new settlement by the name of Dan, now Tell el-Kady (the hill of the judges). See on Judg. xviii.

49-51.—THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL GIVE AN INHERITANCE TO JOSHUA.

50. they gave him the city which he asked. It was most proper that the great leader should receive an inheritance suited to his dignity, and as a reward for his public services. But the gift was not left to the spontaneous feelings of a grateful people. It was conferred "according to the word of the Lord"—probably an unrecorded promise, similar to what had been made to Caleb (ch. xiv. 9). Timnath-serah—or Heres, on mount Gaash (Judg. ii. 9). Joshua founded it, and was afterwards buried there (ch. xxiv. 30).

51. These are the inheritances. This verse is the formal close of the section which narrates the history of the land distribution; and to stamp it with due importance, the names of the commissioners are repeated, as well as Shiloh, the then spiritual metropolis of the country. Viewed abstractly from the Divine command in which it originated, it was a wise and prudent measure for the prevention of all private disputes and claims of preference to particular localities. Immediately on the conquest of Canaan it was divided by the supreme authority into twelve portions, which were assigned by lot to each of the twelve tribes; and these allocated cantons were again subdivided, so that a piece of land was appropriated to every family in the tribe as their patrimonial possession. It was a military division of the country, a share in the soil being given as a reward to every soldier who had fought for the promised land. But political effects of the highest importance were contemplated by this arrangement; for it was the means of converting a vast horde of nomads at once into a settled nation of peaceful and industrious agriculturists. Such a result was secured by one simple law. Instead of introducing a feudal system, dividing the country to military chiefs, for whom the people should labour as serfs, he gave the land to all. Each tribe was marched to its new possession, every family entered on its humble estate, and Israel began its national existence. The miracle was as

- 20.** THE LORD also spake unto Joshua, saying, Speak to the children of Israel, saying, Appoint out for you cities of refuge, whereof I spake unto you by the hand of Moses: that the slayer that killeth any person unawares and unwittingly may flee thither: and they shall be your refuge from the avenger of blood. And when he that doth flee unto one of those cities shall stand at the entering of the gate of the city, and shall declare his cause in the ears of the elders of that city, they shall take him into the city unto them, and give him a place, that he may dwell among them. And if the avenger of blood pursue after him, then they shall not deliver the slayer up into his hand; because he smote his neighbour unwittingly, and hated him not beforetime. And he shall dwell in that city, until he stand before the congregation for judgment, and until the death of the high priest that shall be in those days: then shall the slayer return, and come unto his own city, and unto his own house, unto the city from whence he fled.
- 7** And they appointed Kedesh in Galilee in mount Naphtali, and Shechem in mount Ephraim, and Kirjath-arba, which is Hebron, in the mountain of Judah.
- 8** And on the other side Jordan by Jericho eastward, they assigned Bezer in the wilderness upon the plain out of the tribe of Reuben, and Ramoth in Gilead out of the tribe of Gad, and Golan in Bashan out of the tribe of Manasseh.
- 9** These were the cities appointed for all the children of Israel, and for the stranger that sojourneth among them, that whosoever killeth any person at unawares might flee thither, and not die by the hand of the avenger of blood, until he stood before the congregation.
- 21** THEN came near the heads of the fathers of the Levites unto Elea-

E. C. 1444.
 CHAP. 23.
 a Ex. 21. 13.
 Num. 35. 6.
 11, 14.
 Deut. 19. 2.
 9.
 b Deut. 21. 19.
 Ruth 4. 1, 2.
 Job 5. 4.
 Jer. 33. 7.
 1 gather.
 Ps. 26. 9.
 c Num. 35. 12.
 d Num. 35. 12.
 25.
 e sanctified.
 f ch. 21. 32.
 1 Chr. 6. 76.
 g ch. 21. 21.
 2 Chr. 10. 1.
 h ch. 14. 15.
 ch. 21. 11.
 13.
 i Luke 1. 39.
 j Deut. 4. 43.
 ch. 21. 36.
 1 Chr. 6. 78.
 k ch. 21. 37.
 1 Ki. 22. 3.
 l ch. 21. 27.
 m Num. 35. 15.
 CHAP. 21.
 a ch. 14. 1.
 ch. 17. 4.

great as if immense hordes of wandering Bedouins were instantly transformed into quiet husbandmen ('Bibliotheca Sacra,' April, 1853, p. 358). Thus, on their first settlement in the land of Canaan, the Israelites exhibited the unparalleled spectacle of a whole nation, comprising a population of upwards of two millions, all equal in rank, and nearly so in condition. They were universally trained to the cultivation of the soil; and whether Moses inherited his dislike of foreign commerce from the Egyptians, who were proverbial for their hatred of the sea, or his views of the policy best adapted to the character and destinies of the Hebrew people were derived from a higher source of inspiration, their exclusive restriction to rural employments must have produced a beneficial influence on their national character. 'For where the land, as in Judea, is divided at the beginning amidst the whole people, the absence of foreign commerce, although incompatible with any high advancement in knowledge and general cultivation of mind, is not incompatible with a large amount of national virtue and happiness' (Arnold's Miscellaneous Works, 'Essay on the Social Progress of States,' p. 99).

CHAP. XX. 1-16.—THE LORD COMMANDS THE CITIES OF REFUGE.

1. The Lord also spake unto Joshua . . . 2. Appoint out for you cities of refuge—(see Num. xxxv. 9-28; Deut. xix. 1-13.) The command here recorded was given on their going to occupy their allotted settlements. The sanctuaries were not temples or altars, as in other countries, but inhabited cities; and the design was not to screen criminals, but only to afford the homicide protection from the vengeance of the deceased's relatives, until it should have been ascertained whether the death had resulted from accident and momentary passion, or from premeditated

malice. The institution of the cities of refuge, together with the rules prescribed for the guidance of those who sought an asylum within their walls, was an important provision, tending to secure the ends of justice as well as of mercy. 4. he that doth flee . . . shall stand at the entering of the gate of the city. It was the place of public resort; and on arriving there he related his tale of distress to the elders, who were bound to give him shelter and the means of support until the local authorities (v. 6), having carefully investigated the case, should have pronounced the decision. If found guilty, the man-slayer was surrendered to the blood-avenger; if extenuating circumstances appeared, he was to remain in the city of refuge, where he would be safe from the vindictive feelings of his pursuers; but he forfeited the privilege of immunity the moment he ventured beyond the walls. 6. until the death of the high priest. His death secured the complete deliverance of the man-slayer from his sin, only because he had been anointed with the holy oil (Num. xxxv. 25), the symbol of the Holy Ghost; and thus the death of the earthly high priest became a type of that of the heavenly One (Heb. ix. 14, 15).

7-9.—THE ISRAELITES APPOINT BY NAME THE CITIES OF REFUGE.

7. they appointed . . . 9. cities. There were six; three on the west, and three on the east of Jordan. In the first instance they were a provision of the criminal law of the Hebrews, necessary in the circumstances of that people (see on Num. xxxv. 9-15; Deut. xix.); and at the same time they were designed also typically to point out the sinner's way to Christ (Heb. vi. 18).

CHAP. XXI. 1-8.—EIGHT AND FORTY CITIES GIVEN BY LOT OUT OF THE OTHER TRIBES UNTO THE LEVITES.

- zar the priest, and unto Joshua the son of Nun, and unto the heads of
 2 the fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel; and they spake unto them at ^bShiloh in the land of Canaan, saying, ^cThe LORD commanded by the hand of Moses to give us cities to dwell in, with the suburbs
 3 thereof for our cattle. And the children of Israel gave unto the Levites out of their inheritance, at the commandment of the LORD, these cities and their suburbs.
 4 And the lot came out for the families of the Kohathites: and the children of Aaron the priest, *which were* of the Levites, ^dhad by lot out of the tribe of Judah, and out of the tribe of Simeon, and out of the tribe of Benjamin, thirteen cities.
 5 And the rest of the children of Kohath *had* by lot out of the families of the tribe of Ephraim, and out of the tribe of Dan, and out of the half tribe of Manasseh, ten cities.
 6 And the children of Gershon *had* by lot out of the families of the tribe of Issachar, and out of the tribe of Asher, and out of the tribe of Naphtali, and out of the half tribe of Manasseh in Bashan, thirteen cities.
 7 The children of Merari by their families *had* out of the tribe of Reuben, and out of the tribe of Gad, and out of the tribe of Zebulun, twelve cities.
 8 And ^ethe children of Israel gave by lot unto the Levites these cities with their suburbs, ^fas the LORD commanded by the hand of Moses.
 9 And they gave out of the tribe of the children of Judah, and out of the tribe of the children of Simeon, these cities which are *here* ¹mentioned by name, which the children of Aaron, *being* of the families of the Kohathites, *who were* of the children of Levi, had: for theirs was the first
 11 lot. And ^gthey gave them ²the city of Arba the father of ^hAnak, which *city is* Hebron, ⁱin the hill *country* of Judah, with the suburbs thereof
 12 round about it. But ^jthe fields of the city, and the villages thereof, gave
 13 they to Caleb the son of Jephunneh for his possession. Thus ^kthey gave to the children of Aaron the priest ^lHebron with her suburbs, *to be a city*
 14 of refuge for the slayer, and ^mLibnah with her suburbs, and ⁿJattir with
 15 her suburbs, ^oand Eshtemoa with her suburbs, and ^pHolon with her
 16 suburbs, ^qand Debir with her suburbs, and ^rAin with her suburbs, ^sand
 17 Juttah with her suburbs, and ^tBeth-shemesh with her suburbs; nine
 18 cities out of those two tribes. And out of the tribe of Benjamin, Gibeon
 19 ^uwith her suburbs, ^vGeba with her suburbs, Anathoth with her suburbs,
 20 and ^wAlmon with her suburbs; four cities. All the cities of the children of Aaron, the priests, *were* thirteen cities with their suburbs.
 21 And ^xthe families of the children of Kohath, the Levites which remained of the children of Kohath, even they had the cities of their lot

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^b ch. 18. 1.
^c Num. 35. 2.
 Eze. 48. 9-18.
 Matt. 10. 10.
 Gal. 6. 6.
 1 Tim. 6. 17, 18.
^d ch. 24. 33.
^e Gen. 49. 7.
 Num. 33. 54.
 Num. 33. 3.
 ch. 18. 6.
 Fro. 16. 33.
 Fro. 18. 18.
^f Lev. 25. 32, 33.
 Num. 33. 2.
 1 called.
^g 1 Chr. 6. 55.
^h Or, Kirjath-arba, Gen. 3. 2.
ⁱ ch. 15. 13.
^j 2 Sam. 1. 7.
 Luke 1. 39.
^k ch. 14. 14.
^l Num. 35. 13-15.
 ch. 20. 7-9.
 1 Chr. 6. 57.
^m ch. 15. 54.
ⁿ ch. 15. 42.
 1 Chr. 6. 57.
 Isa. 37. 8.
^o ch. 15. 48.
 1 Sam. 30. 27, 28.
^p ch. 15. 50.
^q ch. 15. 51.
 1 Chr. 6. 53.
 Hilen.
^r ch. 12. 13.
 ch. 15. 49.
^s 1 Chr. 6. 59.
 Ashan.
^t ch. 15. 55.
^u ch. 15. 10.
^v ch. 18. 25.
 1 Chr. 6. 60.
^w ch. 18. 24.
 Gaba.
^x 1 Chr. 6. 69.
 Alemeth.
^y 1 Chr. 6. 66.

1. Then came near the heads of the fathers of the Levites — the most venerable and distinguished members of the three Levitical families, who, on behalf of their tribe, applied for the special provision that had been promised them to be now awarded (see on Num. xxxv. 1-5). Their inheritance lay within the territory of every tribe. It was assigned in the same place and manner, and by the same commissioners, as the other allotments; and while the people, knowing the important duties these were to perform, are described (v. 3) as readily conceding this 'peculiar' to them, it had most probably been specified and reserved for their use, while the distribution of the land was in progress.

4. The lot came out for the families of the Kohathites. The Levites were divided into Kohathites, Gershonites, and Merarites. Among the former the family of Aaron were exclusively

appointed to the priesthood, and all the rest were ranked in the common order of Levites. The first lot was drawn by the Kohathites; and the first of theirs, again, by the priests, to whom thirteen cities were granted, and ten to the rest of the Kohathites (v. 5); thirteen to the Gershonites (v. 6), and twelve to the Merarites (v. 7).

9-42.—THE CITIES OF THE PRIESTS.

9. they gave . . . these cities which are here mentioned by name. Most or all of them have been previously noticed in connection with other passages. 16. Ain. The true reading is obviously Ashan, as in 1 Chr. vi. 59. It was overruled by the unerring providence of the Divine lawgiver that the cities of the priests lay within the territories of Judah and Benjamin; and this was a provision the admirable wisdom and propriety of which was fully manifested on the schism that took place in the reign of Rehoboam.

21 out of the tribe of Ephraim. For they gave them ²Shechem with her suburbs in mount Ephraim, *to be* a city of refuge for the slayer; and
 22 Gezer with her suburbs, and Kibzaim with her suburbs, and Beth-horon
 23 with her suburbs; four cities. And out of the tribe of Dan, Eltekeh
 24 with her suburbs, Gibbethon with her suburbs, Aijalon with her suburbs,
 25 Gath-rimmon with her suburbs; four cities. And out of the half tribe of
 Manasseh, Taanach with her suburbs, and Gath-rimmon with her suburbs:
 26 two cities. All the cities *were* ten with their suburbs for the families of
 the children of Kohath that remained.
 27 And ²unto the children of Gershon, of the families of the Levites, out
 of the *other* half tribe of Manasseh, *they gave* Golan ⁶in Bashan with her
 suburbs, *to be* a city of refuge for the slayer; and ³Beeshterah with her
 28 suburbs; two cities. And out of the tribe of Issachar, Kishon with her
 29 suburbs, Dabareh with her suburbs, Jarmuth with her suburbs, En-
 30 gannim with her suburbs; four cities. And out of the tribe of Asher,
 31 Mishal with her suburbs, Abdon with her suburbs, Helkath with her
 32 suburbs, and Rehob with her suburbs; four cities. And out of the tribe
 of Naphtali, Kedesh ⁵in Galilee with her suburbs, *to be* a city of refuge for
 the slayer; and Hamoth-dor with her suburbs, and Kartan with her
 33 suburbs; three cities. All the cities of the Gershonites according to their
 families *were* thirteen cities with their suburbs.
 34 And ⁶unto the families of the children of Merari, the rest of the Levites,
 out of the tribe of Zebulun, Jokneam with her suburbs, and Kartah with
 35 her suburbs, Dimnah with her suburbs, Nahalal with her suburbs; four
 36 cities. And out of the tribe of Reuben, ⁴Bezer with her suburbs, and
 37 Jahazah with her suburbs. Kedemoth with her suburbs, and Mephaath
 38 with her suburbs; four cities. And out of the tribe of Gad, ⁶Ramoth in
 Gilead with her suburbs, *to be* a city of refuge for the slayer; and ⁷Maha-
 39 naim with her suburbs, Heshbon with her suburbs, Jazer with her
 40 suburbs; four cities in all. So all the cities for the children of Merari, by
 their families, which were remaining of the families of the Levites, were
by their lot twelve cities.
 41 All ²the cities of the Levites within the possession of the children of
 42 Israel *were* forty and eight cities with their suburbs. These cities were
 every one with ⁴their suburbs round about them: thus *were* all these
 cities.
 43 And the LORD gave unto Israel ²all the land which he sware to give
 44 unto their fathers; and they possessed it, and dwelt therein. And ¹the
 LORD gave them rest round about, according to all that he sware unto

B. C. 1444.
⁷ Gen. 33. 14.
 ch. 20. 7.
 Judg. 9. 1.
 1 Ki. 2. 1.
⁸ 1 Chr. 6. 71.
⁹ Deut. 1. 4.
 Deut. 4. 3.
 ch. 20. 8.
 1 Chr. 6. 71.
³ Or.
 Ashtaroth
^b ch. 19. 37.
 ch. 10. 7.
 1 Chr. 6. 76.
^c 1 Chr. 6. 77.
^d ch. 20. 8.
 1 Chr. 6. 75.
 70.
 Dan. 4. 47.
^e Deut. 4. 43.
 ch. 20. 8.
 1 Ki. 4. 17.
 1 Ki. 22. 3.
 1 Chr. 6. 80.
^f Gen. 32. 1.
 2 Sam. 2. 8.
 2 Sam. 17.
 27.
 1 Ki. 2. 8.
^g Gen. 49. 7.
 Lev. 25. 32.
 Num. 35. 2.
 7.
 Deut. 33. 10.
⁴ That is,
 608 yards
 broad for
 barns,
 garde's,
 etc. and
 12.6 more
 for fields
 and vine-
 yards.
^h Gen. 13. 15.
 Gen. 15. 18.
 Gen. 26. 3.
 Gen. 28. 4.
 1.
ⁱ ch. 11. 23.
 ch. 12. 4.

41. All the cities of the Levites . . . were forty and eight cities with their suburbs. This may appear too great a proportion compared with those of the other tribes, and it forms one of the strongest objections which *Colenso* has urged against the historical character of this book. But it must be borne in mind that the list given here contains the names of every Levitical city (see on 1 Chr. vi. 39 66); whereas only those cities of the other tribes are mentioned which lay on the frontier or along the boundary line. Besides, the Levites were not the exclusive inhabitants of those forty-eight cities; for there must have been also a considerable number of people kept there to cultivate the globe lands and tend the cattle (cf. 2 Sam. v. 5; Jer. xi. 21). Further, the Levitical cities had nothing but 'their suburbs—a limited circuit of ground—round about them;' whereas the other cities in Israel possessed a group of independent villages, (see chs. xvii., xviii., xix.) Still further, the number of cities allotted to the priests was to be a permanent arrangement

for the accommodation of those sacred functionaries, however large their increase might be, and as it became in the reign of David.

43-45.—GOD GAVE THEM REST.

43. the Lord gave unto Israel all the land. 'The distribution of property in the Jewish nation was founded on this principle, that the Lord having been the sole power which gave them possession of the land of Canaan, each individual was to consider himself as holding his portion of it directly by a Divine grant, on such tenure and such conditions as that grant prescribed (cf. Lev. xxv. 23, 42, 53; xxvi. 34, 35; *Graves*, i., p. 227). This is a general winding up of the history from ch. xiii., which narrates the occupation of the land by the Israelites. All the promises made, whether to the people or to Joshua (ch. i. 5), had been, or were in the course of being, fulfilled; and the recorded experience of the Israelites (v. 45) is a ground of hope and confidence to the people of God in every age, that all other promises made to the Church will in due time be accomplished.

their fathers: and there stood not a man of all their enemies before 45 them; the LORD delivered all their enemies into their hand. There
^kfailed not ought of any good thing which the LORD had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass.

22 THEN Joshua called the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and the half 2 tribe of Manasseh, and said unto them, Ye have kept "all that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, ^band have obeyed my voice in all 3 that I commanded you: ye have not left your brethren these many days unto this day, but have kept the charge of the commandment of the LORD 4 your God. And now the LORD your God hath given rest unto your brethren, as he promised them: therefore now return ye, and get you 5 unto your tents, and unto the land of your possession, ^cwhich Moses the servant of the LORD gave you on the other side Jordan. But ^dtake diligent heed to do the commandment and the law, which Moses the servant of the LORD charged you, ^eto love the LORD your God, and to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and to cleave unto him, and to serve him with all your heart, and with all your soul.

6 So Joshua ^fblessed them, and sent them away: and they went unto 7 their tents. Now to the *one* half of the tribe of Manasseh Moses had given possession in Bashan; ^gbut unto the *other* half thereof gave Joshua among their brethren on this side Jordan westward. And when Joshua 8 sent them away also unto their tents, then he blessed them, and he spake unto them, saying, Return with much riches unto your tents, and with very much cattle, with silver, and with gold, and with brass, and with iron, and with very much raiment: ^hdivide the spoil of your enemies with your brethren.

9 And the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, returned, and departed from the children of Israel out of Shiloh, which *is* in the land of Canaan, to go unto ⁱthe country of Gilead, to the land of their possession, whereof they were possessed, according to the word of the LORD by the hand of Moses.

10 And when they came unto the borders of Jordan, that *are* in the land of Canaan, the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, built there an altar by Jordan, a great altar to see to.

11 And the children of Israel ^jheard say, Behold, the children of Reuben,

B. C. 1414.

^j Deut. 7. 24.
^k ch. 23. 14.
 Ex. 3. 7, 8.
 Ex. 23. 13-31.

CHAP. 22.

Num. 3. 20.

Deut. 3. 18.

^b ch. 1. 16, 17.^c Num. 32. 3.

Deut. 29. 8.

ch. 13. 8.

^d Deut. 6. 6.

17.

Deut. 11. 5, 2.

2 Ki. 10. 31.

Ps. 119. 4.

Matt. 23. 35.

Rom. 13. 10.

1 Tim. 1. 5.

^e Deut. 10. 12.

Deut. 11. 1.

13. 12.

Deut. 12. 6.

16.

Deut. 19. 9.

ch. 23. 11.

Luke 11. 4.

John 15. 9.

10.

1 John 5. 3.

2 John 6.

^f Gen. 47. 7.

Ex. 31. 43.

ch. 11. 13.

2 Sam. 6. 18.

Luke 24. 50.

^g ch. 17. 6.^h Num. 31. 27.

1 Sam. 30.

14.

ⁱ Num. 32. 1.

26. 21.

^j Lev. 17. 8.

Deut. 13. 12.

Judg. 20. 2.

CHAP. XXII. 1-9.—JOSHUA DISMISSES THE TWO TRIBES AND A HALF WITH A BLESSING.

1. Then Joshua called the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh. The general war of invasion being ended, and the enemy being in so dispirited and isolated a condition that each tribe, by its own resources, or with the aid of its neighbouring tribe, was able to repress any renewed hostilities, the auxiliary Israelites from the eastern side of the Jordan were now discharged from service. Joshua dismissed them with high commendations of their fidelity, and earnest admonitions to cultivate perpetual piety in life. The redundancy of the language is remarkable, and shows how important, in the judgment of the venerable leader, a steadfast observance of the Divine law was to personal happiness as well as national prosperity. 3. Ye have not left your brethren these many days—for the space of seven years. 4. get you unto your tents—i. e., home; for their families had been left in fortified towns (Num. xxxii. 17).

8. much riches—in cattle, clothes, and precious metals. divide the spoil of your enemies with your brethren—(see on Num. xxxi. 25-39.)

10.—THEY BUILD THE ALTAR OF TESTIMONY ON THEIR JOURNEY.

10. when they came unto the borders of Jordan, that are in the land of Canaan. This altar was probably an immense pile of stones and earth. The generality of our commentators suppose that it was reared on the banks of the Jordan, within the limits of Canaan proper. But a little closer examination seems to make the conclusion irresistible that its position was on the eastern side of the river; for these two reasons—first, because it is said (v. 11) to have been built "over against," or in the sight of, the land of Canaan—not within it; and secondly, because the declared motive of the trans-Jordanic Israelites in erecting it was to prevent their brethren in Canaan ever saying, "in time to come, What have ye to do with the Lord God of Israel? For the Lord hath made Jordan a barrier between us and you," &c. Such a taunt would be obviously prevented or confuted by the two tribes and a half having on the eastern side of Jordan, within their own land, a fac-simile of the altar at Shiloh, as a witness that they acknowledged the same God and practised the same rites of worship as the brethren in Canaan.

11-29.—CONTENTION THEREUPON.

11. And the children of Israel heard say. Fame speedily spread intelligence of what the trans-Jordanic tribes had done. The act being

and the children of Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, have built an altar over against the land of Cauaan, in the borders of Jordan, at the 12 passage of the children of Israel. And when the children of Israel heard of it, ^kthe whole congregation of the children of Israel gathered themselves together at Shiloh, to go up to war against them. And the children of Israel ^lsent unto the children of Reuben, and to the children of Gad, and to the half tribe of Manasseh, into the land of Gilead, ^mPhinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, and with him ten princes, of each ⁿchief house a prince throughout all the tribes of Israel; and ^oeach one was an head of the house of their fathers among the thousands of Israel.

15 And they came unto the children of Reuben, and to the children of Gad, and to the half tribe of Manasseh, unto the land of Gilead, and they spake with them, saying, Thus saith the whole congregation of the LORD, What trespass *is* this that ye have committed against the God of Israel, to turn away this day from following the LORD, in that ye have builded you an altar, ^pthat ye might rebel this day against the LORD?

17 *Is* the iniquity ^qof Peor too little for us, from which we are not cleansed until this day, although there was a plague in the congregation of the LORD, but that ye must turn away this day from following the LORD? and it will be, ^rseeing ye rebel to-day against the LORD, that to-morrow ^she will be wroth with the whole congregation of Israel. Notwithstanding, if the land of your possession *be* unclean, *then* pass ye over unto the land of the possession of the LORD, wherein ^tthe LORD's tabernacle dwelleth, and take possession among us; but rebel not against the LORD, nor rebel against us, in building you an altar besides the altar of the LORD our God. Did ^unot Achan the son of Zerah commit a trespass in the accursed thing, and wrath fell on all the congregation of Israel? and that man perished not alone in his iniquity.

21 Then ^vthe children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, answered and said unto the heads of the thousands of Israel, The LORD ^wGod of gods, the LORD God of gods, he ^xknoweth, and Israel he shall know; if *it be* in rebellion, or if in transgression against the LORD, (save us not this day,) that we have built us an altar to turn from following the LORD, or if to offer thereon burnt offering or meat offering, or if to offer peace offerings thereon, let the LORD himself ^yre-quire *it*; and if we have not *rather* done it for fear of *this* thing, saying, ^zIn time to come your children might speak unto our children, saying,

25 What have ye to do with the LORD God of Israel? For the LORD hath made Jordan a border between us and you, ye children of Reuben and children of Gad; ye have no part in the LORD: so shall your children 26 make our children cease from fearing the LORD. Therefore we said, Let

B. C. 1444.
^k Judg 20. 1.
^l Deut. 13. 14
 Judg 20. 12.
^m Ex. 6. 25.
 Num. 25. 7.
ⁿ house of the father.
^o Ex. 18. 25.
 Num. 1. 4.
^p Lev. 17. 8, 9.
 Deut. 12. 13, 14.
 1 Sam. 15. 23.
^q Num. 25. 3, 4.
 Deut. 4. 3.
^r Num. 16. 22, ch. 7. 1, 11, 12
 2 Sam. 24. 1, 17.
^s Lev. 17. 8, 9, ch. 18. 1.
^t ch 7. 1, 5.
 1 Chr 2. 6, 7.
^u Pro. 15. 1.
 Pro. 16. 1.
 1 ro. 15. 13.
 Pro. 24. 2.
 Pro. 25. 12.
 Jas. 1. 19.
 1 Pet. 3. 15.
^v Ex. 15. 11
 Deut. 10. 17.
 Ps. 52. 1.
 Ps. 86. 8.
 Ps. 135. 2.
^w 1 Ki. 8. 39.
 Job 10. 7.
 Job 23. 10.
 Ps. 44. 21.
 Ps. 150. 1, 2.
 Jer. 12. 3.
 2 Cor. 11. 11, 31.
^x Deut 18. 17.
 1 Sam. 29. 16.
 Ps. 7. 3, 5.
 1 s 10. 13, 14.
 2 To-
 morrow

suspected of some idolatrous design, "the whole congregation"—i. e., not the whole nation, but only the representatives—repair to the tabernacle at Shiloh, resolved to declare war against the two tribes and a half as apostates from God. On calmer and more mature considerations, however, they determined, in the first instance, to send a deputation, consisting of the son of the high priest and ten eminent persons from each tribe, to make enquiry into this rumoured rebellion against God (Deut. xiii. 13-15). The quality of the deputies evinced the deep solicitude that was felt on the occasion to maintain the purity of the Divine worship throughout Israel. In the presumptive belief that the two tribes and a half had really built an altar, the deputies expressed astonishment at their so soon falling into such a heinous crime as that of violating the unity of Divine worship (Exod. xx. 24; Lev. xvii. 8, 9; Deut. xii.

5-13), reminded their eastern brethren of the disastrous consequences that were entailed on the nation at large by the apostasy at Peor, and by the sin of Achan, and finally exhorted them, if they felt the want of the tabernacle and altar, and repented of their rash choice in preferring worldly advantages to religious privileges, to remove to the western side of the Jordan, where the whole tribes would form a united and obedient community of worshippers.

21. Then the children of Reuben, &c. . . answered—repudiating in the strongest terms the alleged crime, and deposing that, so far from entertaining the intention imputed to them, their only object was to perpetuate the memory of their alliance with Israel, and their adherence to the worship of Israel's God. 25. For the Lord hath made Jordan a border between us and you, &c. The country west of Jordan was, strictly speaking,

- us now prepare to build us an altar, not for burnt offering, nor for sacrifice: but *that it may be* ^a a witness between us and you, and our generations after us, that we might ^d do the service of the LORD before him with our burnt offerings, and with our sacrifices, and with our peace offerings; that your children may not say to our children in time to come, Ye have no part in the LORD. Therefore said we, that it shall be, when they should *so* say to us or to our generations in time to come, that we may say *again*, Behold the pattern of the altar of the LORD, which our fathers made, not for burnt offerings, nor for sacrifices; but *it is* a witness between us and you. God forbid that we should rebel against the LORD, and turn this day from following the LORD, ^e to build an altar for burnt offerings, for meat offerings, or for sacrifices, besides the altar of the LORD our God that *is* before his tabernacle.
- 30 And when Phinehas the priest, and the princes of the congregation, and heads of the thousands of Israel which *were* with him, heard the words that the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, and the children of Manasseh spake, ^g it pleased them. And Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest said unto the children of Reuben, and to the children of Gad, and to the children of Manasseh, This day we perceive that the LORD *is* ^a among us, because ye have not committed this trespass against the LORD: ^h now ye have delivered the children of Israel out of the hand of the LORD.
- 32 And Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, and the princes, returned from the children of Reuben, and from the children of Gad, out of the land of Gilead, unto the land of Canaan, to the children of Israel, and brought them word again. And the thing pleased the children of Israel; and the children of Israel ^b blessed God, and did not intend to go up against them in battle, to destroy the land wherein the children of Reuben and Gad dwelt.
- 34 And the children of Reuben and the children of Gad called the altar ⁱ *Ed*: for it *shall be* a witness between us that the LORD *is* God.
- 23 AND it came to pass, a long time after that the LORD ^h had given rest unto Israel from all their enemies round about, that Joshua ^b waxed old and ¹ stricken in age. And Joshua ^c called for all Israel, and for their elders, and for their heads, and for their judges, and for their officers, and said unto them, I am old and stricken in age: and ye have seen all that the LORD your God hath done unto all these nations because of you: 4 for the LORD your God *is* he that hath fought for you. Behold, I have divided unto you by lot these nations that remain, to be an inheritance

B C. 1414.

^a Gen 31. 5-6.

ch 21. 27.

1 Sam. 7. 12.

^y Deut. 12. 5.

6, 11, 12, 17.

1^r, 2^r, 27.^e Deut. 12. 13.

11.

2 Ki. 1. 11-

14. 18.

2 Chr 32. 12

^g it was good

in their

eyes.

Gen 28. 8.

1 Sam. 23. 6.

2 Chr. 10. 4.

Esh. 1. 21.

^a Ex 23. 8.

Ex. 23. 45.

Lev. 26. 11,

12.

Num. 14. 41,

43.

1 Ki 23. 13.

2 Chr. 15. 2.

Ps. 63. 7.

Isa 12. 6.

Zech. 8. 21.

Matt. 1. 23.

1 Cor 14. 2^r.

Rev. 21. 3.

⁴ then.

1 Chr 21. 22.

Neh. 8. 6.

Dan. 2. 13.

Luke 2. 23.

⁵ That is, A

witness,

ch. 21. 27.

CHAP. 23

^a ch 21. 41.

ch. 22. 4.

^b ch. 13. 1.¹ come into

days.

^g Deut 31. 23.

ch. 21. 1.

1 Chr 21. 1.

the promised inheritance, the holy land. And, accordingly, a remarkable difference was created in the feelings, as well as the language, of the Hebrews in regard to the country which lay east, and that which was situated on the west of the Jordan. The latter was always considered more sacred even by the eastern tribes themselves.

30-34.—THE DEPUTIES SATISFIED.

30. *it pleased them.* The explanation not only gave perfect satisfaction to the deputies, but elicited from them expressions of unbounded joy and thankfulness. "This day we perceive that the Lord is among us"—i. e., by His gracious presence and preventing goodness, which has kept you from falling into the suspected sin, and rescued the nation from the calamity of a fratricidal war or providential judgments. This episode reflects honour upon all parties, and shows that piety and zeal for the honour and worship of God animated the people that entered Canaan to an extent far beyond what was exemplified in many other periods of the history of Israel.

CHAP. XXIII. 1-2.—JOSHUA'S EXHORTATION BEFORE HIS DEATH.

1. a long time after that the Lord had given rest unto Israel—about fourteen years after the conquest of Canaan, and seven after the distribution of that country among the tribes. 2. called for all Israel. The clause which follows seems to restrict this general expression, as applicable only to the officers and representatives of the people. 'Judges are here specified in the description of the national council. But they are frequently omitted, because, being chosen from the body of the eldership, they were included in that enumeration.' The place of assembly was most probably Shiloh. The occasion of convening it was the extreme age and approaching death of the venerable leader; and the purport of this solemn address was to animate the chosen people and their posterity to a faithful and unswerving continuance in the faith and worship of the God of Israel.

3.—BY FORMER BENEFITS.

3. ye have seen all that the Lord your God hath done . . . for you. The modesty and

- for your tribes, from Jordan, with all the nations that I have cut off, even unto the great sea ²westward.
- 5 And the LORD your God, ⁴he shall expel them from before you, and drive them from out of your sight; and ye shall possess their land, ⁶as the LORD your God hath promised unto you. Be ye therefore very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, ⁷that ye turn not aside therefrom *to the right hand or to the left*; that ye ⁸come not among these nations, these that remain among you; neither make ⁹mention of the name of their gods, nor cause to swear *by them*, neither serve them, nor bow yourselves unto them: ³but cleave unto the LORD your God, as ye have done unto this day. ⁴For the LORD hath driven out from before you great nations and strong: but *as for you*, ¹no man hath been able to stand before you unto this day.
- 10 One ¹man of you shall chase a thousand: for the LORD your God, he *it is* that fighteth for you, as he hath promised you.
- 11 Take good heed therefore unto ⁵yourselves, that ye love the LORD your God. Else if ye do in any wise ⁶go back, and cleave unto the remnant of these nations, *even* these that remain among you, and shall make marriages with them, and go in unto them, and they to you: ⁷know for a certainty that ¹the LORD your God will no more drive out *any of these nations from before you*; ²but they shall be snares and traps unto you, and scourges in your sides, and thorns in your eyes, until ye perish from off this good land which the LORD your God hath given you.
- 14 And, behold, this day ¹I *am* going the way of all the earth: and ye know in all your hearts, and in all your souls, that ²not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the LORD your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, *and* not one thing hath failed thereof. Therefore ³it shall come to pass, *that* as all good things are come upon you, which the LORD your God promised you; so shall the LORD bring upon you ⁴all evil things, until he have destroyed you from off this good land which the LORD your God hath given you. When ye have transgressed the covenant of the LORD your God, which he commanded you, and have gone and served other gods, and bowed yourselves to them; then shall the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and ye shall perish quickly from off the good land which he hath given unto you.
- 24 AND Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to ^aShechem, and

B. C. 1472.

² at the sunset.^d Ex. 23. 33.

Ex. 33. 2.

Ex. 31. 11.

Deut. 1. 23.

^e Num. 33. 63.

/ Deut. 5. 32.

Deut. 28. 14.

^f Ex. 23. 31.

Deut. 7. 2.

3.

/ Fro. 4. 14.

Eph. 5. 11.

^h Ex. 21. 13.

Num. 52. 33.

Ps. 16. 4.

Jer. 5. 7.

Zeph. 1. 5.

ⁱ Or. For if

ye will

cleave.

^k Or. Then

the LORD

will drive.

^l ch. 1. 5.^j Judg. 3. 31.

Judg. 16. 15.

² Sam. 3. 8.⁵ your souls.² Heb. 10. 33.

2 Pet. 2. 20.

¹ Judg. 2. 3.^m 1 Ki. 11. 4.ⁿ Eccl. 12. 3-7.

Heb. 9. 27.

Heb. 11. 13.

^o Luke 21. 33.^p Deut. 23. 63.^q Lev. 26. 16.

Deut. 28. 15.

16.

Judg. 3. 8.

12.

Luke 21. 22-21.

CHAP. 24.

^a Gen. 35. 4.

humility of Joshua are remarkably displayed at the commencement of this address. Sinking all thoughts of his personal services, he ascribed the subjugation and occupation of Canaan entirely to the favouring presence and aid of God; and in doing so, he spoke not more piously than truly. This had been promised (Deut. i. 30; iii. 22); and the reality of the Divine aid was seen in the rapid overthrow of the Canaanites, which had already led to the division of the whole land amongst the tribes.

5-11.—BY PROMISES.

5. the Lord your God, he shall expel them from before you, &c. The actual possessions which God had given were a pledge of the complete fulfilment of His promise in giving them the parts of the country still unconquered. But the accomplishment of the Divine promise depended on their inviolable fidelity to God's law—on their keeping resolutely aloof from all familiar intercourse and intimate connections with the Canaanites, or in any way partaking of their idolatrous sins. In the event of their continuing in steadfast adherence to the cause of God, as happily distinguished the nation at that time, His blessing

would secure them a course of brilliant and easy victories (Lev. xxvi. 7; Deut. xxviii. 17; xxxiii. 30).

11. Take good heed therefore . . . that ye love the Lord your God. The sum of his exhortation is comprised in the love of God, which is the end or fulfilment of the law (Deut. vi. 5; xi. 13; Matt. xxii. 37).

12.—BY THREATENINGS IN CASE OF DISOBEDIENCE.

12. Else if ye do in any wise go back, and cleave unto the remnant of these nations. By 'going back' is meant transgression of the divine law; and as marriage connections with the idolatrous Canaanites would present many and strong temptations to transgress it, these were strictly prohibited (Exod. xxxiv. 12-16; Deut. vii. 3). With his eye, as it were, upon those prohibitions, Joshua threatens them with the certain withdrawal of the Divine aid in the further expulsion of the Canaanites—a threat founded on Exod. xxiii. 33; Num. xxxiii. 55; Deut. vii. 16.

CHAP. XXIV. 1.—JOSHUA ASSEMBLING THE TRIBES.

1. Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to

^b called for the elders of Israel, and for their heads, and for their judges, and for their officers; and they ^c presented themselves before God.

2 And Joshua said unto all the people, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, ^d Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, *even* Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nahor: and they ^e served other gods. And ^f I took your father Abraham from the other side of the flood, and led him throughout all the land of Canaan, and ^g multiplied his seed, and ^h gave him Isaac. And I gave unto Isaac Jacob and Esau: and I gave unto ⁱ Esau mount Seir, to possess it; but Jacob and his children went down into Egypt. I ^j sent Moses also and Aaron, and ^k I plagued Egypt, according to that which I did among them: and ^l afterward I brought you out. And I ^m brought your fathers out of Egypt: and ye came unto the sea; ⁿ and the Egyptians pursued after ^o your fathers with chariots and horsemen unto the Red sea. And when they cried unto the LORD, he put darkness between you and the Egyptians, and brought the sea upon them, and covered them; and your eyes have seen what I have done in Egypt: and ye dwelt in the wilderness a ^p long season. And I brought you into the land of the Amorites, which dwelt on the other side Jordan; ^q and they fought with you: and I gave them into your hand, that ye might possess their land; and I destroyed ^r them from before you. Then ^s Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, arose, and warred against Israel, and ^t sent and called Balaam the son of Beor to curse you: but ^u I would not hearken unto Balaam; therefore ^v he blessed you still: so I delivered you out of his hand. And ye went over Jordan, and came unto Jericho: and the men of Jericho fought against you, the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Girgashites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites; and I ^w delivered them into your hand. And ^x I sent the hornet before you, which drave them out from before you, *even* the two kings of the Amorites; *but* not ^y with thy sword, nor with thy bow. And I have given you a land for which ye did not labour, and ^z cities which ye built not, and ye dwell in them; of the vineyards and oliveyards which ye planted not

B. C. 1427.
^b Ex. 18. 25, 26.
^c ch. 23. 2.
^d 1 Sam. 10. 19.
^e Acts 10. 33.
^f Gen. 11. 26.
^g Deut. 26. 5.
^h Isa. 51. 2.
ⁱ Eze. 16. 3.
^j Gen. 31. 53.
^k Acts 7. 2, 3.
^l Ps. 127. 3.
^m Gen. 31. 8.
ⁿ Deut. 2. 5.
^o Acts 17. 26.
^p Ex. 3. 10.
^q Ex. 7. 1.
^r Ex. 8. 1.
^s Ex. 9. 1.
^t Ex. 10. 1.
^u Ex. 12. 1.
^v Ex. 12. 37, 51.
^w Mic. 6. 4.
^x Ex. 14. 9.
^y Neh. 9. 11.
^z Ps. 78. 13.
^{aa} Isa. 63. 12.
^{ab} Num. 21. 21, : 3.
^{ac} Deut. 2. 32.
^{ad} Deut. 3. 1.
^{ae} Judg. 11. 25.
^{af} Num. 22. 5.
^{ag} Deut. 23. 5.
^{ah} Num. 31. 1.
^{ai} Ex. 21. 23.
^{aj} Deut. 7. 20.
^{ak} Ps. 44. 3, 6.
^{al} Deut. 6. 10, 11.
^{am} ch. 11. 13.

Shechem. Another and final opportunity of dissuading the people against idolatry is here described as taken by the aged leader, whose solicitude on this account arose from his knowledge of the extreme readiness of the people to conform to the manners of the surrounding nations. This address was made to the representatives of the people convened at Shechem, and which had already been the scene of a solemn renewal of the covenant (ch. viii. 30, 35). The transaction now to be entered upon being in principle and object the same, it was desirable to give it all the solemn impressiveness which might be derived from the memory of the former ceremonial, as well as from other sacred associations of the place (Gen. xii. 6, 7; xxxiii. 18-20; xxxv. 2-4). they presented themselves before God. It is generally assumed that the ark of the covenant had been transferred on this occasion to Shechem, as on extraordinary emergencies it was for a time removed (Judg. xx. 1-18; 1 Sam. iv. 3; 2 Sam. xv. 24). But the statement, not necessarily implying this, may be viewed as expressing only the religious character of the ceremony (*Hengstenberg*).

2-13.—RELATES GOD'S BENEFITS.

2. Joshua said unto all the people. His address briefly recapitulated the principal proofs of the Divine goodness to Israel from the call of Abraham to their happy establishment in the land of promise, and showed them that they were indebted for their national existence, as well as their

peculiar privileges, not to any merits of their own, but to the free grace of God. on the other side of the flood—the Euphrates, viz., at Ur. Terah, the father of Abraham . . . and Nahor—(see on Gen. xi. 27.) Though Terah had three sons, Nahor only is mentioned with Abraham, as the Israelites were descended from him on the mother's side, through Rebekah and her nieces, Leah and Rachel. served other gods—conjoining, like Laban, the traditional knowledge of the true God with the domestic use of material images (Gen. xxxi. 19, 34). 3. took your father Abraham. It was an irresistible impulse of Divine grace which led the patriarch to leave his country and relatives, to migrate to Canaan, and live a "stranger and pilgrim" in that land. 4. gave unto Esau mount Seir (see on Gen. xxxvi. 8, 9)—in order that he might be no obstacle to Jacob and his posterity being the exclusive heirs of Canaan. 11. Girgashites. The mention of this Canaanite tribe occurs only once (ch. iii. 10), while the other six nations are constantly enumerated as carrying on the war; and hence the insertion of their name in this passage seems merely a recapitulation of the nations, whose land God delivered into the hand of the Jews, according to His promise (Deut. vii. 1; *Graves*, ii., p. 44). 12. sent the hornet—a particular species of wasp which swarms in warm countries, and sometimes assumes the scourging character of a plague (*Kirby's* 'Bridgewater Treatise,' ii., pp. 336, 337; also 'Tent and Khan,'

- 14 do ye eat. Now ^utherefore fear the LORD, and serve him in ^vsincerity and in truth: and put ^waway the gods which your fathers served on the
- 15 other side of the flood, and in ^xEgypt; and serve ye the LORD. And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served, that *were* on the other side of the flood, or ^ythe gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: ^zbut as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.
- 16 And the people answered and said, God forbid that we should forsake
- 17 the LORD, to serve other gods; for the LORD our God, he *it is* that brought us up and our fathers out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and which did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way wherein we went, and among all the people through
- 18 whom we passed: and the LORD drave out from before us all the people, even the Amorites which dwelt in the land: *therefore* will we also serve the LORD; for he *is* our God.
- 19 And Joshua said unto the people, ^aYe cannot serve the LORD: for he *is* an ^bholy God; he *is* a jealous God; ^che will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins. If ^dye forsake the LORD, and serve strange gods, ^ethen he will turn and do you hurt, and consume you, after that he hath done you good.
- 21 And the people said unto Joshua, Nay, but we will serve the LORD.
- 22 And Joshua said unto the people, Ye *are* witnesses against yourselves that ^fye have chosen you the LORD, to serve him. And they said, *We are* witnesses.
- 23 Now therefore ^gput away, *said he*, the strange gods which *are* among
- 24 you, and incline your heart unto the LORD God of Israel. And the people said unto Joshua, The LORD our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey.
- 25 So Joshua ^hmade a covenant with the people that day, and set them a
- 26 statute and an ordinance in Shechem. And Joshua ⁱwrote these words in the book of the law of God, and took ^ja great stone, and ^kset it up
- 27 there under an oak that *was* by the sanctuary of the LORD. And Joshua said unto all the people, Behold, this stone shall be ^la witness unto us; for ^mit hath heard all the words of the LORD which he spake unto us;
- 28 it shall be therefore a witness unto you, lest ye deny your God. So Joshua let the people depart, every man unto his inheritance.
- 29 And it came to pass after these things, that Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, *being* an hundred and ten years old.

B. C. 1127.
^u Deut. 10. 12.
^v 1 Sam. 12. 24.
^w Job 1. 1.
^x Acts 9. 31.
^y Gen. 17. 1.
^z Gen. 20. 5.
^a Deut. 18. 13.
^b Ps. 119. 1.
^c Luke 8. 15.
^d 2 Cor. 1. 12.
^e Eph. 6. 21.
^f Lev. 17. 7.
^g Eze. 23. 7.
^h Ex. 23. 24.
ⁱ Deut. 13. 7.
^j Judg. 6. 10
^k Gen. 18. 19.
^l Ruth 1. 15.
^m Matt. 6. 24.
ⁿ Luke 14. 25-33.
^o Lev. 19. 2.
^p 1 Sam. 6. 20.
^q Ps. 99. 5, 9.
^r Isa. 5. 16.
^s Ex. 23. 21.
^t Isa. 27. 11.
^u 2 Chr. 15. 2.
^v Ezra 8. 22.
^w Isa. 1. 23.
^x Jer. 17. 13.
^y Heb. 10. 26, 27, 28.
^z Isa. 63. 10.
^a Acts 7. 42.
^b Ps. 119. 173.
^c Gen. 31. 2.
^d 1 Sam. 7. 3.
^e 1 Cor. 6. 16.
^f Ex. 15. 25.
^g 2 Ki. 11. 17.
^h Deut. 31. 21.
ⁱ Judg. 9. 6.
^j Gen. 28. 18. ch. 4. 3.
^k Gen. 31. 48.
^l Deut. 31. 19.
^m Deut. 32. 1.

p. 390); or, as many think, it is a figurative expression for uncontrollable terror (Exod. xxiii. 27, 28; Deut. vii. 20). 14. Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in truth. After having enumerated so many grounds for national gratitude, Joshua calls on them to declare, in a public and solemn manner, whether they will be faithful and obedient to the God of Israel. He avowed this to be his own unalterable resolution, and urges them, if they were sincere in making a similar avowal, 'to put away the strange gods that were among them'—a requirement which seems to imply that some were suspected of a strong hankering for, or concealed practice of, idolatry, whether in the form of Zabaism, the fire-worship of their Chaldean ancestors, the scarabæi of Egypt, or the grosser superstitious of the Canaanites.

25. So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day—he induced them solemnly and voluntarily to renew the national covenant (cf. Neh. x. 1). 26. Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God—registered the engagements of that solemn covenant in the book of sacred his-

tory. took a great stone—according to the usage of ancient times to erect stone pillars as monuments of public transactions. set it up . . . under an oak—Hebrew, *the oak*, or *terebinth*; in all likelihood the same as that where Abraham had worshipped (Gen. xii. 6), and at the root of which Jacob buried the idols and charms found in his family (Gen. xxxv. 4: cf. ch. xii. 4, Allon-moreh, oak of Moreh or Shechem). that was by the sanctuary of the Lord—either the spot where the ark had stood, or else the place around, so called from Joshua's religious meeting, as Jacob named Beth-el, the house of God. It is probable that this monolith lies buried on the spot where it was reared, and that the purpose of its erection was to perpetuate the knowledge of the law; that the Decalogue, with this view, was engraven upon it in deep and lasting characters. Could that be found and read, what important information might it afford. Accordingly search for it is specified amongst the objects enumerated in the prospectus issued by the Council of the Palestine Exploration Society.

29, 30.—HIS AGE AND DEATH.

29. Joshua . . . died. Lightfoot computes that

- 30 And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in ¹Timnath-serah, which *is* in mount Ephraim, on the north side of the hill of Gaash.
- 31 And ^oIsrael served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that ¹overlived Joshua, and which had known all the works of the LORD, that he had done for Israel.
- 32 And ^pthe bones of Joseph, which the children of Israel brought up out of Egypt, buried they in Shechem, in a parcel of ground ^qwhich Jacob bought of the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem, for an hundred ²pieces of silver: and it became the inheritance of the children of Joseph.
- 33 And Eleazar the son of Aaron died; and they buried him in a hill *that pertained to* Phinehas his son, which was given him in mount Ephraim.

B C. 142*.

^a ch 19. 50.
 Judg 2. 9.
^o Judg. 2. 7.
 Judg 10. 19.
 1 Sam. 7. 4.
 2 Chr. 21. 2,
 17, 18.
¹ prolonged
 their days
 after
 Joshua.
^p Gen. 50. 25.
 Ex. 13. 19.
 Acts 7. 16.
^q Gen. 33. 19.
² Or, lambs.

he lived seventeen, others twenty-seven years after the entrance into Canaan. He was buried, according to the Jewish practice, within the limits of his own inheritance. The eminent public services he had long rendered to Israel, and the great amount of domestic comfort and national prosperity he had been instrumental in diffusing among the several tribes, were deeply felt—were universally acknowledged; and a testimonial in the form of a statue or obelisk would have been immediately raised to his honour in all parts of the land, had such been the fashion of the times. The brief but noble epitaph by the historian is, Joshua, "the servant of the Lord." 30. in Timnath-serah, which is in mount Ephraim—*i. e.*, portion remaining, or reserved for Joshua after the land was distributed. It is called, Judg. ii. 9, Timnath-heres, the portion of the sun. 'A Rabbinical tradition supposes it to be called Heres, from an image of the sun to commemorate the battle of Beth-horon. But it is probably only the transposition of the letters of *Serah* (Stanley's 'Lectures on the Jewish Church,' p. 279). It is situated at the village of Tibneh, a little west of the main north road at Jifneh, a few miles above Jerusalem, where the tomb of Joshua may yet be found. "The hill of Gaash" (*i. e.*, a shaking has not been ascertained. The Septuagint makes the following addition to this verse, 'There they put with him into the sepulchre in which they buried him the knives of flint with which he circumcised the children of Israel in Gilgal, when he brought them up out of Egypt, as the Lord commanded them, and they are there unto this day.'

31. Israel served the Lord all the days of

Joshua. The high and commanding character of this eminent leader had given so decided a tone to the sentiments and manners of his contemporaries, and the memory of his fervent piety and many virtues continued so vividly impressed on the memories of the people, that the sacred historian has recorded it to his immortal honour, "Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that overlived Joshua."

32. the bones of Joseph. They had carried these venerable relics with them in all their migrations through the desert, and deferred the burial, according to the dying charge of Joseph himself, till they arrived at the promised land. The sarcophagus in which his mummied body had been put was brought hither by the Israelites, and probably buried when the tribe of Ephraim had obtained their settlement, or at the solemn convocation described in this chapter. in a parcel of ground which Jacob bought . . . for an hundred pieces of silver. *Kesitah*, translated 'piece of silver,' is supposed to mean a lamb, the weights being in the form of lambs or kids, which were in all probability the earliest standard of value among pastoral people. The tomb that now covers the spot is a Mohammedan *Wely*; but there is no reason to doubt that the precious deposit of Joseph's remains may be concealed there at the present time.

33. Eleazar . . . died, and they buried him in . . . mount Ephraim. The sepulchre is at the modern village Awertah, which, according to Jewish travellers, contains the graves also of Ithamar, the brother of Phinehas, the son of Eleazar (*Van de Velde*).

THE
BOOK OF JUDGES.

- 1** NOW after the death of Joshua it came to pass, that the children of Israel asked "the LORD, saying, Who shall go up for us against the Canaanites first, to fight against them? And the LORD said, 'Judah shall go up: behold, I have delivered the land into his hand.
- 2** And Judah said unto Simeon his brother, Come up with me into my lot, that we may fight against the Canaanites; and I likewise will go with thee into thy lot. 'So Simeon went with him. And Judah went up; and 'the LORD delivered the Canaanites and the Perizzites into their hand: and they slew of them in Bezek ten thousand men. And they found Adoni-bezek in Bezek; and they fought against him, and they slew the Canaanites and the Perizzites. But Adoni-bezek fled; and they pursued after him, and caught him, and cut off his thumbs and his great toes. And Adoni-bezek said, Threescore and ten kings, having ¹ their thumbs and their great toes cut off, ² gathered *their meat* under my table: 'as I have done, so God hath required me. And they brought him to Jerusalem, and there he died.
- 8** Now ³ the children of Judah had fought against Jerusalem, and had taken it, and smitten it with the edge of the sword, and set the city on

B C. 1425.
CHAP. I.
^a Ex. 28. 50.
Num. 27. 21.
ch. 20. 18.
1 Sam. 23. 9.
^b Gen. 49. 8.
^c Eccl. 4. 9.
Mark 6. 7.
1 Cor. 12. 26.
Gal. 6. 2.
^d Deut. 9. 1.
Ps. 44. 2.
¹ the thumbs of their hands and of their feet.
² Cr. gleaned.
³ Lev. 24. 19.
^f Josh. 15. 63.

CHAP. I. 1-3.—THE ACTS OF JUDAH AND SIMÉON.

1. Now after the death of Joshua—probably not a long period; for the Canaanites seem to have taken advantage of the demise of the Hebrew leader to attempt recovering their lost position, and the Israelites were obliged to renew the war. **the children of Israel asked the Lord.** The Divine counsel on this, as on other occasions, was sought by Urim and Thummim, by applying to the high priest, who, according to *Josephus*, was Phinehas. **saying, Who shall go up for us against the Canaanites first?** The elders, who exercised the government in their respective tribes, judged rightly, that in entering upon an important expedition, they should have a leader nominated by Divine appointment; and in consulting the oracle, they adopted a prudent course, whether the object of their enquiry related to the choice of an individual commander or to the honour of precedence among the tribes. **2. the Lord said, Judah shall go up.** The predicted pre-eminence (Gen. xlix. 8) was thus conferred upon Judah by Divine direction; and its appointment to take the lead in the ensuing hostilities was of great importance, as the measure of success by which its arms were crowned would animate the other tribes to make similar attempts against the Canaanites within their respective territories. **I have delivered the land into his hand**—not the whole country, but the district assigned for his inheritance.

3. Judah said unto Simeon . . . Come up with me. Being conterminous tribes (Josh. xix. 1, 2), they had a common interest, and were naturally associated in this enterprise.

4.—ADONI-BEZEK JUSTLY REQUIRED.

4. Bezek. This place lay within the allotted domain of Judah. According to *Eusebius* and *Jerome* ('Onomast.'), it was near Beth-shan, as was another town of the same name (1 Sam. xi. 8). **5. they found** [פָּרְצָה], they found, came upon] Adoni-bezek—i. e., lord of Bezek; i. e., they sur-

prised and routed him [Septuagint, κατέλαβον] in a pitched battle, whence he fled; but being taken prisoner, he was treated with a severity unusual among the Israelites, for they "cut off his thumbs and his great toes." Barbarities of various kinds were commonly practised on prisoners of war in ancient times; and the object of this particular mutilation of the hands and feet was to disable them for military service ever after. The infliction of such a horrid cruelty on this Canaanite chief would have been a foul stain on the character of the Israelites, if there were not reason for believing it was done by them as an act of retributive justice; and as such it was regarded by Adoni-bezek himself, whose conscience read his atrocious crimes in their punishment. **7. Threescore and ten kings.** So great a number will not appear strange, when it is considered that, anciently, every ruler of a city or large town was called a king. It is not improbable that, in the large region of Canaan called the Negeb, or "south country," there might in earlier times have been many rulers, till a turbulent chief like Adoni-bezek devoured them in his insatiable ambition. **they brought him to Jerusalem, and there he died.** They brought Adoni-bezek thither in order, probably, that his fate being rendered so public might inspire terror far and wide.

8. Now the children of Judah had fought against Jerusalem, and had taken it. The capture of the important city Jerusalem, which ranks among the early incidents of the war of invasion (Josh. xv. 63), is here noticed to account for its being in the possession of the Judahites. It appears, however, that it was only the southern part of the city that the men of Judah succeeded in taking. The fortress, as well as the northern part, remained in the possession of the Jebusites (v. 21; cf. 2 Sam. v. 6). The sequel of this chapter, together with the whole of the next, is occupied with a general review of the proceedings subsequent to the invasion, so as to be a suitable introduction to the ensuing history. **9. the chil-**

- 9 fire. And ⁹ afterward the children of Judah went down to fight against the Canaanites, that dwelt in the mountain, and in the south, and in the ³ valley. And Judah went against the Canaanites that dwelt in Hebron: (now the name of Hebron before was ^h Kirjath-arba:) and they ¹¹ slew Sheshai, and Ahiman, and Talmi. And ⁴ from thence he went against the inhabitants of Debir: (and the name of Debir before was Kirjath-sepher.)
- 12 And Caleb said, He that smiteth Kirjath-sepher, and taketh it, to him ¹³ will I give Achsah my daughter to wife. And Othniel the son of Kenaz, ^j Caleb's younger brother, took it: and he gave him Achsah his daughter ¹⁴ to wife. And ^k it came to pass, when she came to him, that she moved him to ask of her father a field: and she lighted from off her ass; and ¹⁵ Caleb said unto her, What wilt thou? And she said unto him, Give me a ⁴ blessing: for thou hast given me a south land; give me also springs of water. And Caleb gave her the upper springs and the nether springs.
- 16 And ^m the children of the Kenite, Moses' father-in-law, went up out ⁿ of the city of palm trees with the children of Judah into the wilderness of Judah, which *lieth* in the south of ^o Arad; ^p and they went and dwelt among the people.
- 17 And Judah went with Simeon his brother, and they slew the Canaanites that inhabited Zephath, and utterly destroyed it. And the name

B C 142.

⁹ Josh. 10. 12, 36,
 Josh 11. 21.
³ Or, low country.
^h Josh. 14. 16.
ⁱ Josh. 15. 15.
^j ch. 3 9.
^k Josh. 15. 18.
^l Gen. 33. 11.
¹ Sam. 15. 18, 27.
² Cor. 9. 5.
 Heb. 6. 7.
⁴ Or, present.
^m Num. 10. 29-32.
 Num. 24. 21, 12.
 ch. 4. 11.
¹ Sam. 15. 6.
¹ Chr. 2. 55.
 Jer. 35. 2.
ⁿ Deut. 34. 3.
² Chr. 28. 15.
^o Num. 21. 1.
^p Num. 10. 32.

dren of Judah went down to fight against the Canaanites, that dwelt, &c.—(see on Josh. xv. 21.)

10. Judah went against the Canaanites that dwelt in Hebron. [The Septuagint adds the following clause:—*καὶ ἐξῆλθε Χεβρών ἐξ ἐναντίας*, 'and Hebron came out to oppose them'; intimating that a pitched battle was fought, which ended in the total defeat of the inhabitants.] Kirjath-arba—*i. e.*, city of Arba (see on Josh. xv. 13, 14). [Septuagint, *Καριαθαρβοκσεφέρ*.] 11. Debir. Its Canaanitish name was Kirjath-sannah—*i. e.*, 'city of palm' (Josh. xv. 49); and Kirjath-sepher—*i. e.*, 'city of book.' [Septuagint, *πολις γραμμάτων*.] Its site is not certainly known. The story of the acquisition of this place is here repeated (see Josh. xv. 16-19), with a few important variations.

13. Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother. [The Septuagint has *Ἰοθουήλ υἱὸς Κενὲξ ἀδελφῶν Χάλεβ ὁ νεώτερος*, the younger son of Kenaz, Caleb's brother.] 14. when she came to him [Septuagint, *ἐν τῇ εἰσόδῳ*]—at her entrance, viz., into his tent; or, as she was about to start for his tent, she moved him to ask of her father a field [Septuagint, *ἐπέσειεν αὐτὴν Ἰοθουήλ*, Othniel urged her to ask]: and she lighted from off her ass. [The Septuagint has *ἐγόγγυζε καὶ ἔκραζεν ἀπὸ τοῦ ὑποζυγίου*, she murmured and cried from the ass.] 15. give me also springs of water [*ἤρῃ*, bubbling fountains; Septuagint, *λύτρωσι ὕδατος*, a free flow of water]. And Caleb gave her the upper springs and the nether springs. [The Septuagint reads *καὶ ἔδωκεν αὐτῇ Χαλεβ κατὰ τὴν καρδίαν αὐτῆς λύτρωσι μετεώρων καὶ λύτρωσι ταπειῶν*, and Caleb gave her, according to the wish of her heart, the copious current of the higher and lower springs.]

16. the children of the Kenite, Moses' father-in-law [*קנזי*],—and the children of a Kenite; viz., Moses' father-in-law: called the *or* a Kenite, as probably descended from the people of that name (Num. xxiv. 21, 22). If he might not himself, his posterity *did*, accept the invitation of Moses (Num. xvi. 32) to accompany the Israelites to Canaan. Their first encampment was in "the city of palm trees"—not Jericho, of course, which

was utterly destroyed, but a place in the surrounding district, perhaps En-gedi, in early times called Hazezon-tamar (Gen. xiv. 7), from the palm grove which sheltered it (*Lightfoot*, ii., 7). Thence they removed, from some unknown cause, and, associating themselves with Judah, joined in an expedition against Arad, in the southern part of Canaan (Num. xxi. 1). On the conquest of that district some of the pastoral Kenites pitched their tents there, while others migrated to the north (ch. iv. 17). It may be added, that some curious information respecting the Kenites was communicated to the meeting of the British Association at Cambridge (1862), by Rev. George Williams, in an account of a tribe of Arabs inhabiting a portion of the Arabian desert east of the Ghor—*i. e.*, a part of the ancient land of Midian. These people are described as being much superior to the ordinary Bedouins, and in several respects very different from them. They profess the Israelitish religion, and declare themselves to be Ishmaelites, descended from the Rechabites, "the children of the Kenite, Moses' father-in-law," affirming that they reside in the original country of their forefathers. A peculiarity of the account was that these Bedouins are said to claim to be both Ishmaelites and Midianites (ch. viii. 2-24; Gen. xxv. 18) (*Dr. Beke*, 'A Few Words with Bishop Colenso,' pp. 11, 12).

17. Judah went with Simeon his brother. The course of the narrative is here resumed from v. 9, and an account given of Judah returning the service of Simeon (v. 3), by aiding in the prosecution of the war within the neighbouring tribes, and they slew the Canaanites that inhabited Zephath—or Zephathah (2 Chr. xiv. 10), lying in the southern portion of Canaan. And the name of the city was called Hormah. This name was not now given for the first time. On their early journey towards Canaan the Israelites had attempted to penetrate the mountainous region where Zephath was situated, and they were repulsed (Num. xiv.); but on arriving at Kadesh they overthrew it, and called the place Hormah. On their departure from that neighbourhood the native tribes resumed possession of it; and al-

- 18 of the city was called ²Hormah. Also Judah took ⁷Gaza with the coast thereof, and Askelon with the coast thereof, and Ekron with the coast thereof. And ³the LORD was with Judah; and ⁵he drave out *the inhabitants* of the mountain; but could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley, because they had ⁴chariots of iron. And ⁶they gave Hebron unto Caleb, as Moses said: and he expelled thence the three sons of Anak.
- 21 And ⁸the children of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites that inhabited Jerusalem; but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Benjamin in Jerusalem unto this day.
- 22 And the house of Joseph, they also went up against Beth-el: and the LORD was with them. And the house of Joseph ⁹sent to descry Beth-el:
- 24 (now the name of the city before was ¹⁰Luz.) And the spies saw a man come forth out of the city, and they said unto him, Show us, we pray thee, the entrance into the city, and ¹¹we will show thee mercy.
- 25 And when he showed them the entrance into the city, they smote the city with the edge of the sword; but they let go the man and all his family. And the man went into the land of the Hittites, and built a city, and called the name thereof Luz: which *is* the name thereof unto this day.
- 27 Neither ¹²did Manasseh drive out *the inhabitants* of Beth-shean and her towns, nor ¹³Taanach and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Dor and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Iblaim and her towns, nor the inhabi-

B. C. 1425.

² Num. 21. 3.
 Josh. 19. 4.
⁷ Josh. 11. 21.
 Josh. 13. 3.
 ch. 16. 1, 2, 21.
⁴ 2 Ki. 13. 7.
⁵ Or, he possessed the mountain.
⁸ Josh. 17. 16.
⁹ Num. 14. 21.
 Deut. 1. 36.
 Josh. 14. 9, 1.
 Josh. 15. 13, 11.
¹⁰ Josh. 15. 63.
 Josh. 18. 28.
 2 Sam. 5. 6.
¹¹ Josh. 2. 1.
 Josh. 7. 2.
 ch. 18. 2.
¹² Gen. 23. 19.
¹³ Josh. 2. 17.
 1 Sam. 30. 15.
¹⁴ Josh. 17. 11.
¹⁵ Josh. 21. 25.

though Joshua made an effective attack upon the king (Josh. x. 40-42; xii. 14), its final subjugation was not accomplished till after his death, by the confederate arms of Judah and Simeon, who, in pursuance of the Israelite vow to doom it to destruction, sank the old name Zephath in the thenceforth permanent appellation Hormah. 18. Also Judah took Gaza with the coast thereof. The confederate tribes, pursuing their incursions in that quarter, came successively to Gaza, Askelon, and Ekron, which they took. But the Philistines seem soon to have regained possession of these cities. 19. the Lord was with Judah; and he drave out the inhabitants of the mountain. The war was of the Lord, whose omnipotent power would have ensured their success in every encounter, whether on the mountains or the plains, with foot soldiers or cavalry. It was distrust—the want of a simple and firm reliance on the promise of God—that made them afraid of the iron chariots (see on Josh. xi. 4-9). It has been alleged from this passage, by many sceptical writers, that the Israelites regarded the God of Israel as a local deity, who was superior to the gods of their enemies in some, but not in all, instances. The allegation is groundless; for the proper antecedent to “he drave” is not “the Lord” (Jehovah), but Judah. And thus there is no absurdity in the statement; for, although “the Lord” did greatly aid the arms of Judah, He might be pleased, in perfect consistency, to withhold that aid in cases where they showed a want or weakness of faith. chariots of iron. The Canaanite war chariots were probably, like the Assyrian, made of wood, largely tipped with iron (‘Nineveh and its Remains,’ ii., p. 349, note).

21. the children of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites that inhabited Jerusalem. Judah had expelled the people from their part of Jerusalem (v. 8). The border of the two tribes ran through the city. Israelites and natives must have been closely intermingled.

22-26.—SOME CANAANITES LEFT.

22. the house of Joseph—the tribe of Ephraim, as distinguished from Manasseh (v. 27).

24. the spies . . . said . . . Show us . . . the entrance into the city—i. e., the avenues to the city, and the weakest part of the walls. we will show thee mercy. The Israelites might employ these means of getting possession of a place which was divinely appropriated to them: they might promise life and rewards to this man, though he and all the Canaanites were doomed to destruction (Josh. ii. 12-14); but we may assume that the promise was suspended on his embracing the true religion, or quitting the country, as he did. If they had seen him to be firmly opposed to either of these alternatives, they would not have constrained him, by promises any more than by threats, to betray his countrymen. But if they found him disposed to be serviceable, and to aid the invaders in executing the will of God, they might promise to spare him. Luz—(see on Gen. xii. 8; xxix. 19.)

27. Neither did Manasseh drive out, &c. The same course of subjugation was carried on in the other tribes to a partial extent, and with varying success. Many of the natives, no doubt, during the progress of this exterminating war, saved themselves by flight, and became, it is thought, the first colonists in Greece, Italy, and other countries. But a large portion made a stout resistance, and retained possession of their old abodes in Canaan. In other cases, when the natives were vanquished, avarice led the Israelites to spare the idolaters, contrary to the express command of God; and their disobedience to His orders in this matter involved them in many troubles which this book describes. the inhabitants of Beth-shean and her towns—*lit.*, ‘her daughters.’ Beth-shean or Beth-shau (1 Sam. xxxi. 10, 12; 2 Sam. xxi. 12) belonged to the allotment of Manasseh (cf. 1 Chr. vii. 29), though within the boundaries of Issachar (Josh. xvii. 11), amongst whose towns, however, it is not ranked. Taanach—also belonged to Manasseh, though it was within the limits of Issachar (Josh. xvii. 11). Dor—a maritime town on the western border of Manasseh, and north of Dan, near Carmel, now Tantoura. Ibleam—belonged

- tants of Megiddo and her towns: but the ^b Canaanites would dwell in
 28 that land. And it came to pass, when Israel was strong, that they put
 the Canaanites to tribute, and ^c did not utterly drive them out.
- 29 Neither ^c did Ephraim drive out the Canaanites that dwelt in Gezer;
 but the Canaanites dwelt in Gezer among them.
- 30 Neither did Zebulun drive out the inhabitants of Kitron, nor the
^a inhabitants of Nahalol; but the Canaanites dwelt among them, and
 became tributaries.
- 31 Neither ^c did Asher drive out the inhabitants of Accho, nor the
 inhabitants of Zidon, nor of Ahlab, nor of Achzib, nor of Helbab, nor of
 32 Aphik, nor of Rehob: but the Asherites ^d dwelt among the Canaanites,
 the inhabitants of the land; for they did not drive them out.
- 33 Neither ^d did Naphtali drive out the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh, nor
 the inhabitants of Beth-anath; but he dwelt among the Canaanites, the
 inhabitants of the land: nevertheless the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh
 and of Beth-anath became tributaries unto them.
- 34 And the Amorites forced the children of Dan into the mountain: for
 35 they would not suffer them to come down to the valley: but the
 Amorites would dwell in mount Heres ^e in Aijalon, and in Shaalvim:
 yet the hand of the house of Joseph ^f prevailed, so that they became
 36 tributaries. And the coast of the Amorites ^g was from ^h the going up to
 Akrabbim, from the rock, and upward.

B. C. 1 25.

^b Ex. 24. 23.

Deut. 7. 2.

1 Sam. 15. 9.

Jer. 48. 10.

^c driving he

drove

them not

out.

^d Josh. 16. 10.

1 Ki. 9. 16.

^e Josh. 19. 15.^f Josh. 19. 21-

20.

^g ch. 3. 5, 6.

Ps. 106. 31.

31.

^h Josh. 19. 32,

38.

ⁱ Josh. 10. 12.

Josh. 19. 42,

ch. 12. 12.

^j was

heavy

^k Num. 34. 4.

Josh. 15. 3.

^l Or,

Maaleh-

akrabbim.

to Manasseh, though it also was situated within the limits of Issachar. It was near Jenin. Megiddo—on the southern border of the great plain of Esdraelon, and commanding an important pass from the north into the highlands of Judea. 28. when Israel was strong . . . they put the Canaanites to tribute, and did not utterly drive them out. *Josephus* ('Antiquities,' b. v., ch. vii.) gives a full commentary on this passage. 'Contenting themselves with the tributes which were paid to them, the Israelites grew effeminate, as to fighting any more against their enemies; but applied themselves to the cultivation of their lands, which producing them great plenty and riches, they neglected the regular disposition of their settlement, and indulged themselves in luxuries and pleasures.'

29. Neither did Ephraim drive out the Canaanites that dwelt in Gezer—a town and petty kingdom (Josh. xii. 12) situated in the southern border of Ephraim, westward (1 Chr. vii. 25) between the lower Beth-horon and the Mediterranean (Josh. xvi. 3).

30. Neither did Zebulun drive out the inhabitants of Kitron = Katta [Septuagint, Κέτρον], as may be inferred from its association with Nahalol here and Josh. xix. 15. It is supposed to be identified with Sepphoris, now Sefirieh. nor the inhabitants of Nahalol [Septuagint, Δουανά]—unknown.

31. Neither did Asher drive out the inhabitants of Accho. The name Accho was for a time superseded by the Greek form of Ptolemais, which is now forgotten, and the place goes by the name of Akka. Ahlab [Septuagint, Δαλάφ]—supposed (*Reland*, 'Palestina,' pp. 813-817) to be Gushe Halab, the Greek Giscala, which has been identified by *Robinson* with el-Jish, near Safed, in the mountainous region north-west of the sea of Galilee ('Biblical Researches,' iii., p. 368). Achzib [Septuagint, Ἀρχαζίς]—afterwards Ecdippa (*Josephus*, 'Jewish Wars,' b. i., ch. xiii., sec. 4), now Es-zib, a small hamlet situated on a rising ground close to the sea side (*Porter*, 'Handbook,' p. 359). Helbah [Septuagint, Χελβήδ]—probably situated on the plain of Phœnicia; but not yet ascertained.

Aphik = Aphek [Septuagint, Ναί, or Ναφεκ], It must not be confounded with Aphik, now Tik, east of Jordan. Rehob. From its connection with Aphik, it is probably that referred to in Josh. xix. 30. As it is here imputed to the Asherites as a fault that they did not expel the Canaanite population of the maritime towns specified, there cannot be a clearer refutation than this passage furnishes of *Michaelis's* theory, formerly adverted to, that the border of Israel was not to extend to the coast, but that Phœnicia was to remain untouched in the possession of its commercial occupiers. He himself acknowledges this statement to be fatal to his views, and yet he labours to support them by alleging the words "inhabitants of Zidon" to be an interpolation. But for this conjecture there is no warrant whatever.

33. Neither did Naphtali drive out the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh (see on Josh. xix. 33), nor the inhabitants of Beth-anath—called by *Eusebius* and *Jerome*, Batanœa, fifteen miles east of Cæsarea, and famous for medicinal springs.

35. the hand of the house of Joseph prevailed, so that they became tributaries. 'Midway between the open rich vales of Manasseh and Ephraim, and the garden recesses and pasture-grounds in the neighbourhood of Hebron, about Beth-el and Jebus, the highland territory was comparatively poor and bare; and the occupation of it was not grudged by the Hebrews to the tribes whom they displaced from their richer settlements. There, accordingly, we find the Canaanites, whom they weakly permitted to continue in the land, or in that part of the land actually possessed by them. It must be borne in mind that the provinces of Zebulun, Asher, Naphtali, and Dan, mentioned *vv.* 30-34, were then only theoretically assigned to these tribes, who did not enter into actual possession of their estates until long after, and then only partially. The remaining Canaanites were driven by Joshua to the bare mountain heights in the country actually conquered and possessed (*vv.* 21, 22) (*Drew's* 'Scripture Lauds,' p. 104; also Appendix D).

- 2 AND ^a an ¹ angel of the LORD came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said, I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you unto the land which I swore unto your fathers; and ^b I said, I will never break my covenant with you. And ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land; ye shall throw down their altars: but ye have not obeyed my voice: why have ye done this? Wherefore I also said, I will not drive them out from before you; but they shall be ^c as thorns in your sides, and ^d their gods shall be a snare unto you.
- 4 And it came to pass, when the angel of the LORD spake these words unto all the children of Israel, that the people lifted up their voice, and wept. And they called the name of that place ² Bochim: and they sacrificed there unto the LORD.
- 6 And when Joshua had let the people go, the children of Israel went every man unto his inheritance to possess the land.
- 7 And the people served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that ³ outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the LORD that he did for Israel.
- 8 And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, *being* an hundred and ten years old. And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Timnath-heres, in the mount of Ephraim, on the north side of the hill Gaash. And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers.
- And there arose another generation after them, which knew ^e not the LORD, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel. And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served Baalim: and they

B. C. 1426.
 CHAP. 2.
^a Gen. 16. 7.
 Gen. 22. 11.
 Ex. 3. 1-6.
 John 1. 1.
 John 7. 5-9.
¹ Or, messenger.
^b Gen. 17. 7.
 Ex. 6. 4.
 Ps. 105. 6-11.
 Luke 1. 54.
 55, 72-75.
^c Num. 33. 55.
 Josh 24. 13.
 Eze. 25. 24.
^d Ex. 23. 33.
 ch. 3. 6.
² That is, Weepers.
³ prolonged days after Joshua.
^e Ex. 6. 2.
 1 Sam. 2. 12.
 1 Chr. 28. 9.
 Jer. 9. 3.
 Jer. 22. 16.
 Gal. 4. 8.
 2 Thes. 1. 8.
 Tit. 1. 16.

CHAP. II. 1-9.—AN ANGEL SENT TO REBUKE THE PEOPLE AT BOCHIM.

1. an angel of the Lord came up from Gilgal to Bochim. Jewish commentators generally have supposed the reference is to a prophet or commissioned messenger, whom they conceive to have been Phinehas the high priest. We are inclined to think, from the authoritative tone of his language, that he was "the Angel of the Covenant" (Exod. xxiii. 20; Josh. v. 14); the same who appeared in human form and announced himself captain of the Lord's host. His coming from Gilgal had a peculiar significance, for there the Israelites made a solemn dedication of themselves to God on their entrance into the promised land; and the memory of that religious engagement, which the angel's arrival from Gilgal awakened, gave emphatic force to his rebuke of their apostasy. Bochim, 'the weeping,' was a name bestowed, evidently in allusion to this incident and the profound emotions of the people, on the place, which was at or near Shiloh. I said, I will never break my covenant with you. 2. but ye have not obeyed my voice. The burden of the angel's remonstrance was, that God would inviolably keep His promise; but they, by their flagrant and repeated breaches of their covenant with Him, had forfeited all claim to the stipulated benefits. Having disobeyed the will of God by voluntarily courting the society of idolaters, and placing themselves in the way of temptation, He left them to suffer the punishment of their misdeeds.

4. the people lifted up their voice, and wept. The angel's expostulation made a deep and painful impression, and they engaged in a solemn act of worship by offering sacrifices, which, though forbidden except at the appointed place of the sanctuary, were in not a few extraordinary instances presented elsewhere without any reprehension (cf. 1 Sam. vii. 17; ix. 12; 1 Ki. xviii. 19, 32). Besides, this sacrificing might possibly have

been at Shiloh. But the reformation was but temporary, and the gratifying promise of a revival which this scene of emotion held out was ere long blasted by speedy and deeper relapses into the guilt of defection and idolatry. This is the *hist. præter. cum cau consec.*, which does not intimate the sequence of time between this verse and the preceding context. For Joshua had been dead and buried for about twenty-five years.

6. And when Joshua had let the people go. This passage is a repetition of Joshua xxiv. 39-31, and it was inserted here to put the reader in possession of the reasons which called forth so strong and severe a rebuke from the angel of the Lord. During the lifetime of the first occupiers, who retained a vivid recollection of all the miracles and judgments which they had witnessed in Egypt and the desert, the national character stood high for faith and piety. But in course of time a new race arose, who were strangers to all the hallowed and solemnizing experience of their fathers—"knew not the Lord, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel"—*i. e.*, considered not, at least acted as if they had never heard of the marvellous interpositions of Jehovah in behalf of their nation, and too readily yielded to the corrupting influences of the idolatry that surrounded them.

11-19.—WICKEDNESS OF THE NEW GENERATION AFTER JOSHUA.

11. the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord. This chapter, together with the first eight verses of the next, contains a brief but comprehensive summary of the principles developed in the following history; and an attentive consideration of them, therefore, is of the greatest importance to a right understanding of the strange and varying phases of Israelitish history from the death of Joshua till the establishment of the monarchy, served Baalim. The plural is used, to include all the gods of the country, the Phœnician idolatry being the prevalent superstition of

- ^f forsook the LORD God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed ^g other gods, of the gods of the people that *were* round about them, and ^k bowed themselves unto them, and provoked the LORD to anger. And they forsook the LORD, and served Baal and Ashtaroth.
- 14 And ⁱ the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, and he ^j delivered them into the hands of spoilers that spoiled them, and he ^k sold them into the hands of their enemies round about, so that they ^l could not any longer stand before their enemies. Whithersoever they went out, the hand of the LORD was against them for evil, as the LORD had said, and ^m as the LORD had sworn unto them: and they were greatly distressed.
- 16 Nevertheless ⁿ the LORD raised up judges, which ^o delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them. And yet they would not hearken unto their judges, but they ^p went awhoring after other gods, and bowed themselves unto them: they turned quickly out of the way which their fathers walked in, obeying the commandments of the LORD; *but* they did not so. And when the LORD raised them up judges, then ^q the LORD was with the judge, and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge: ^r for it repented the LORD because of their groanings by reason of them that oppressed them and vexed them.
- 19 And it came to pass, when the judge was dead, *that* they returned, and ^s corrupted *themselves* more than their fathers, in following other gods to serve them, and to bow down unto them; they ^t ceased not from their own doings, nor from their stubborn way.
- 20 And the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel; and he said, Because that this people hath ^u transgressed my covenant which I commanded their fathers, and have not hearkened unto my voice, I also will not henceforth drive out any from before them of the nations which Joshua left when he died: that through them I may ^v prove Israel,

B. C. 1426.

^f Deut. 13. 5.
Deut. 31. 16.
Josh. 21. 20.
ch. 10. 6, 13.
1 Chr. 23. 9.
^g Deut. 6. 14.
Jer. 2. 11-13.
^h Ex. 20. 5.
ⁱ ch. 3. 8.
^l 1 s. 106. 40.
^j 2 Ki. 17. 21.
^k 2 Chr. 15. 5.
^l ch. 3. 8.
^m Isa. 50. 1.
ⁿ Lev. 26. 37.
Josh. 7. 12.
^o Lev. 26. 1.
Deut. 28. 1.
^p ch. 3. 9.
^q 1 Sam. 12. 11.
Acts 13. 20.
^r saved.
^s Ex. 34. 15, 16.
Lev. 17. 7.
^t Ex. 3. 12.
Josh. 1. 5.
^u Deut. 32. 39.
Ps. 106. 44
^v Or, were corrupt.
^w they let nothing fall of their.
^x Josh. 23 14.
^y Deut. 8. 2.
Deut. 13. 3.

Syria. 13. **Ashtaroth**—also a plural word, denoting all the female divinities, especially Astartè, the Syrian Venus, whose rites were celebrated by the most gross and revolting impurities. 'In every case where the Israelites acted thus, God revoked His promise. The covenant for the time was in abeyance. Wherever it is said that the people did evil in the sight of the Lord, by worshipping strange gods, then also it is declared how God took from them the dominion of Palestine, and sold them into the hands of their enemies' ('Israel after the Flesh,' p. 25). In fact, they were mere children in religious knowledge and moral feeling; hence the special dispensation of Providence exercised toward Israel at this period was adapted to a people infantine or childish in character and conduct.

14. **the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel**—adversities in close and rapid succession befell them. But all these calamities were designed only as chastisements, a course of correctional discipline by which God brought His people to see and repent of their errors; for, as they returned to faith and allegiance, he "raised up judges" (v. 16) [שופטים, rulers, chiefs] from Joshua to Samuel.

16. **which delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them.** The judges who governed Israel were strictly God's vicegerents in the government of the people, He being the supreme ruler. Those who were thus elevated retained the dignity, at first apparently during the public crisis only, but afterwards so long as

they lived; but there was no regular, unbroken succession of judges till the days of Samuel, who had transmitted the judicial office as hereditary to his sons. Individuals, prompted by the inward irresistible impulse of God's Spirit, when they witnessed the depressed state of their country, were roused to achieve its deliverance. It was usually accompanied by a special call; and the people, seeing them endowed with extraordinary courage or strength, accepted them as delegates of heaven, and submitted to their sway. Frequently they were appointed only for a particular district, and their authority extended no farther than over the people whose interests they were commissioned to protect. They were without pomp, equipage, or emoluments attached to the office. They had no power to make laws, for these were given by God; nor to explain them, for that was the province of the priests; but they were officially upholders of the law, defenders of religion, avengers of all crimes, particularly of idolatry and its attendant vices. The name *Shophetim* was probably borrowed from their Canaanitish or Phœnician neighbours. The Carthaginians called such rulers *Suffetes*.

20. **the Lord . . . said, Because, &c.** It is not said through what prophet this announcement was made. Being apparently the same in substance as that at the beginning, spoken by the angel, it is probably to be regarded as a recapitulation by the historian, who, having rehearsed the prophecy, stated its fulfilment in the last verse.

whether they will keep the way of the LORD to walk therein, as their fathers did keep it, or not. Therefore the LORD left those nations, without driving them out hastily; neither delivered he them into the hand of Joshua.

3 NOW these are the nations which the LORD left, to prove Israel by them; even as many of Israel as had not known all the wars of Canaan; **2** only that the generations of the children of Israel might know to teach them war, at the least such as before knew nothing thereof; namely, five lords of the Philistines, and all the Canaanites, and the Sidonians, and the Hivites that dwelt in mount Lebanon, from mount Baal-hermon unto the entering in of Hamath. And they were to prove Israel by them, to know whether they would hearken unto the commandments of the LORD, which he commanded their fathers by the hand of Moses.

And the children of Israel dwelt among the Canaanites, Hittites, and Amorites, and Perizzites, and Hivites, and Jebusites: and they took their daughters to be their wives, and gave their daughters to their sons, and served their gods. And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and forgot the LORD their God, and served Baalim and the groves. Therefore the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, and he sold them into the hand of Chushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia: and the children of Israel served Chushan-rishathaim eight years.

And when the children of Israel cried unto the LORD, the LORD raised up a deliverer to the children of Israel, who delivered them, even Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother. And the Spirit of the LORD came upon him, and he judged Israel, and went out

B C. 1428.

7 Or, suffered.

CHAP. 3.

Gen. 22. 1.

Deut. 13. 3.

John 2. 24.

1 Cor. 11. 19.

b Josh. 13. 3.

c Ps. 101. 15.

d Ex. 31. 16.

Deut. 7. 3.

e ch. 2. 11.

f Ex. 24. 13.

Deut. 16. 21.

ch. 6. 25.

g Hab. 3. 7.

1 Aram-

naharaim.

h ch. 6. 7.

ch. 10. 10.

1 Sam. 12.

10.

Neh. 9. 27.

Ps. 22. 5.

Is. 103. 44.

i ch. 2. 16.

2 saviour.

j ch. 1. 13.

k Num. 27. 18.

1 Sam. 11. 6.

3 was.

CHAP. III. 1-4.—NATIONS LEFT TO PROVE ISRAEL.

1. these are the nations which the Lord left, to prove Israel. This was the special design of these nations being left, and it evinces the direct influence of the Theocracy under which the Israelites were placed. These nations were left for a double purpose; in the first instance, to be instrumental, by their irruptions, in promoting the moral and spiritual discipline of the Israelites, and also to subserve the design of making them acquainted with war, in order that the young, more especially, who were total strangers to it, might learn the use of weapons and the art of wielding them. Thus, as Graves has well remarked, 'the Providence of God observed in this, as in every other supernatural dispensation, a due analogy to the regular course of nature and the moral agency of man. An effect of leaving some remnants of the Canaanites, perfectly analogous to the course of nature, is here distinctly assigned as a reason why God permitted it' ('Lectures on the Pentateuch,' ii., p. 131).

5-7.—BY COMMUNION WITH THESE, THE ISRAELITES COMMIT IDOLATRY.

5. the children of Israel dwelt among the Canaanites. The two classes by degrees came to be on habits of intercourse: reciprocal alliances were formed by marriage, till the Israelites, relaxing the austerity of their principles, showed a growing conformity to the manners and worship of their idolatrous neighbours. **7.** the groves [אֲשֵׁרִים, the asherim]—pillars, images of Ashtoreth; not as our translators render it, after the Septuagint [αλση], groves.

8-11.—OTHNIEL DELIVERS ISRAEL.

8. sold them—i. e., delivered them into the hand of Chushan-rishathaim; i. e., of 'doubled wickedness' (*Gesenius*), or simply Cushan (Hab. iii. 7). This name had been probably given him from his cruel and impious character. But the import of the name is doubtful, as it was probably a foreign,

not a Hebrew word, and analogous to other Oriental titles of royalty. king of Mesopotamia [אֲרָם, אֲרָם, Aram of the two rivers]—i. e., Mesopotamia, as situated between the Euphrates and the Khabour. An ancient seal exists in which Astacadas, an Assyrian monarch at a period long posterior, is styled 'king of the two rivers.' An energetic, skilful prince would, at the early time of the settlement, have easily subjugated the numerous petty states of western Asia, and Chushan-rishathaim did so in a military expedition similar to that described, Gen. xiv. But it would be impossible in his circumstances to consolidate into an imperial kingdom such incongruous materials; and accordingly, Israel, with some perhaps of the bordering countries which were tributary to the Mesopotamian oppressor, threw off his yoke, after a brief subjection of eight years. It may be added, that the Septuagint translators did not consider the seat of his dominion to have been in Mesopotamia; for they have rendered Aram-naharaim by Συρία ποταμων, in the region near Damascus. (See this subject discussed, Gen. xxiv.) served Chushan-rishathaim eight years—by the payment of a stipulated tribute yearly; the raising of which must have caused a great amount of labour and privation.

9. when the children of Israel cried unto the Lord. In their distress they had recourse to earnest prayer, accompanied by humble and penitent confession of their errors. Othniel—(see on Josh. xv. 17; ch. i. 13.) His military experience qualified him for the work, while the gallant exploits he was known to have performed gained him the full confidence of his countrymen in his ability as a leader. **10.** the Spirit of the Lord came upon him. The consciousness of a divine impulse was not confined to those who were commissioned to announce the will of God; it animated those also who, in public and official stations, were roused in critical emergencies to achieve deeds of valour and patriotism in the

to war: and the LORD delivered Chushan-rishathaim king of ⁴ Mesopotamia into his hand; and his hand prevailed against Chushan-rishathaim. And the land had rest forty years. And Othniel the son of Kenaz died.

11 And ⁵ the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the LORD: and the LORD strengthened ⁶ Eglon the king of Moab against Israel, because they had done evil in the sight of the LORD. And he gathered unto him the children of Ammon and ⁷ Amalek, and went and smote Israel, and possessed ⁸ the city of palm trees. So the children of Israel ⁹ served Eglon the king of Moab eighteen years.

12 But when the children of Israel ¹⁰ cried unto the LORD, the LORD raised them up a deliverer, Ehud the son of Gera, ¹¹ a Benjamite, a man ¹² left-handed: and by him the children of Israel sent a present unto Eglon the king of Moab. But Ehud made him a dagger which had two edges, of a cubit length; and he did gird it under his raiment upon his right thigh.

13 And he brought the present unto Eglon king of Moab: and Eglon was a very fat man. And when he had made an end to offer the present, he sent away the people that bare the present. But he himself turned again ¹⁴ from the ¹⁵ quarries that were by Gilgal, and said, I have a secret errand unto thee, O king: who said, Keep silence. And all that stood by him went out from him. And Ehud came unto him; and he was sitting in ¹⁶ a summer parlour, which he had for himself alone. And Ehud said, I have a message from God unto thee. And he arose out of ¹⁷ his seat. And Ehud put forth his left hand, and took the dagger from ¹⁸ his right thigh, and thrust it into his belly: and the haft also went in after the blade; and the fat closed upon the blade, so that he could not ¹⁹ draw the dagger out of his belly; and ²⁰ the dirt came out. Then Ehud went forth through the porch, and shut the doors of the parlour upon

B. C. 1194.

⁴ Aram.
⁵ ch. 2. 19.
 Hos. 6. 4.
 Jer 16 12.
 Matt 23.32.
⁶ 1 Sam. 12. 9.
⁷ ch. 5. 14.
⁸ Deut. 34. 3.
 ch. 1. 16.
 Ps. 83. 7.
⁹ Lev. 26. 22-25.
 Deut 23.40.
¹⁰ 1 s. 50. 11.
 Ps. 73. 34.
 Ps. 10. 15.
 Jer. 29. 12. 13.
 Jer. 33. 3.
 Dan 9. 3.
¹¹ Or, The son of Gemini.
¹² slant of his right hand.
 ch. 10. 16.
¹³ Josh. 4. 20.
¹⁴ Or, grave images.
¹⁵ a parlour of cooling
 Amos 3. 15.
¹⁶ Or, it came out at the fundament.

cause of God and His chosen people. he judged Israel, and went out to war. Impelled by a supernatural influence, he undertook the difficult task of government at this national crisis, addressing himself to promote a general reformation of manners, the abolition of idolatry, the revival of pure religion, and then, after these preliminary measures, he collected a body of choice warriors to expel the foreign oppressors. The Lord delivered . . . his hand prevailed against Chushan. No details are given of this war, which, considering the resources of so potent a monarch, must have been a determined struggle. But the Israelitish arms were crowned, through the blessing of God, with victory, and Canaan regained its freedom and independence. 11. Othniel . . . died. 'How powerful the influence of one good man is, in church or state, is best found in his loss' (Bishop Hall).

12-30.—EHUD DELIVERETH THEM FROM EGLON. 12, the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord. The Israelites, deprived of the moral and political influence of Othniel, were not long in following their native bias to idolatry, and the consequence was, that they were again involved in national troubles. The Lord strengthened Eglon the king of Moab. The reigning monarch's ambition was to recover that extensive portion of his ancient territory possessed by the Israelites. In conjunction with his neighbours (the Ammonites and Amalekites, sworn enemies of Israel), he first subjected the eastern tribes, then, crossing the Jordan, made a sudden incursion on western Canaan, and in virtue of his conquests erected fortifications in the territory adjoining Jericho (Josephus), to secure the frontier, and fixed a garrison there.

15. Ehud the son of Gera—i. e., descended from

Gera, one of Benjamin's sons (Gen. xlv. 21). left-handed [יְמִינִי אֵפֶס, bound or impeded as to the right hand]—one who cannot use the right hand freely, and consequently left-handed. This peculiarity distinguished many in the Benjamite tribe (ch. xx. 16). But the original word is rendered in the Septuagint [*ἀμφοτερόχειον*] 'both-handed,' a view countenanced by 1 Chr. xii. 2. by him the children of Israel sent a present unto Eglon—that is, the yearly tribute, which, according to Eastern fashion, would be borne with ostentatious ceremony, and offered (v. 18) by special messengers. 16. did gird it under . . . his right thigh. The sword was usually worn on the left side; so that Ehud's was the more likely to escape detection under his wide-flowing cloak. 19. quarries. There are no remains of quarries in that neighbourhood. The Hebrew word is [עַמֻּדִים] pillars, piles of stone, carved images (Deut. vii. 25; Jer. viii. 19; li. 52); statues of Moabite idols, the sight of which kindled the patriotic zeal of Ehud to avenge this public insult to Israel on its author. They had probably been set up as landmarks, determining the boundaries of the Hebrew territory from the Moabite acquisition on the west of the Jordan; for boundary stones were commonly, as the Roman lapides, sacred and inviolate. I have a secret errand to thee, O king: who said, Keep silence—'privacy': a signal for all to withdraw. 20. a summer parlour—Hebrew, 'chamber of cooling': one of those retired edifices which Oriental grandees usually have in their gardens, built close to the walls of the outer court, or over the gate, and accessible by private stairs, and in which they repose during the heat of the day. 23. Ehud went forth. The whole circumstances of this daring act,—the death of Eglon without a

24 him, and locked them. When he was gone out, his servants came; and when they saw that, behold, the doors of the parlour *were* locked, they
 25 said, Surely he ¹⁰covereth his feet in his summer chamber. And they tarried till they were ashamed; and, behold, he opened not the doors of the parlour: therefore they took a key, and opened *them*: and, behold,
 26 their lord *was* fallen down dead on the earth. And Ehud escaped while they tarried, and passed beyond the quarries, and escaped unto Seirath.
 27 And it came to pass, when he was come, that ⁶he blew a trumpet in 'the mountain of Ephraim, and the children of Israel went down with him
 28 from the mount, and he before them. And he said unto them, Follow after me: for ¹⁰the LORD hath delivered your enemies the Moabites into your hand. And they went down after him, and took ⁷the fords of
 29 Jordan toward Moab, and suffered not a man to pass over. And they slew of Moab at that time about ten thousand men, all ¹¹lusty, and all
 30 men of valour; and there escaped not a man. So Moab was subdued that day under the hand of Israel. And the land had rest fourscore years.
 31 And after him was ¹⁰Shamgar the son of Anath, which slew of the Philistines six hundred men ¹⁰with an ox-goad: ⁹and he also delivered Israel.

4 AND ¹⁰the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the LORD, 2 when Ehud was dead. And the LORD sold them into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan, that reigned ⁶in Hazor; the captain of whose host ⁷was

B. C. 1333.

¹⁰ Or, easeth

nature.

1 Sam. 24. 3.

⁹ ch. 5. 14.

ch. 6. 34.

1 Sam. 13. 3.

⁶ Josh. 17. 15.

ch. 7. 24.

ch. 10. 1.

ch. 17. 1.

ch. 19. 1.

¹⁰ ch. 4. 14.

15.

ch. 7. 9. 15.

1 Sam. 17.

47.

2 Chr. 16. 8.

⁹ Josh. 2. 7.

ch. 12. 5.

11 fat.

¹⁰ ch. 5. 6.¹⁰ 1 Sam. 17.

47, 50

⁹ ch. 2. 16.

7

CHAP. 4.

¹⁰ ch. 2. 19.⁶ Josh. 11. 1.⁶ 1 Sam. 12. 9.

Ps. 83. 9.

shriek or noise, the locking of the doors, the carrying off the key, the calm, unburied deportment of Ehud,—show the strength of his confidence that he was doing God service. But the sacred history simply relates what he did, without any comment; so that there is no foundation for the charge which infidels have raised against the Bible as, in the record of this and similar deeds of blood, encouraging assassination. 26. and escaped unto Seirath [שֵׁירָתָהּ], with the prefix of the definite article, and the particle of motion, to, at the end! The place was in the Ephraim mountain; and from its name Seir, or Seirath, which signifies shaggy wood, it seems to have lain amongst the line of hills which extended to Judah (Josh. xv. 10). 27. he blew a trumpet in the mountain of Ephraim [בְּרֹאשׁוֹ], a horn, either animal or metallic, commonly the former; Septuagint, ἐσάλπισεν ἐν κερατίνῃ—summoned to arms the people of that mountainous region, which, adjoining the territory of Benjamin, had probably suffered most from the grievous oppression of the Moabites. 28. the Lord hath delivered your enemies the Moabites into your hand. They were enemies, not at that time only, but they almost invariably acted the part of an enemy to Israel; sometimes at open war with them, at other times tyrannizing over them, till at last, by these hostile courses, they drew upon themselves national extermination (2 Sam. viii. 2). took the fords (see on Josh. ii. 7)—with the view of preventing all escape to the Moabite coast, and by the slaughter of 10,000 men, rescued his country from a state of ignominious vassalage.

31. after him was Shamgar. No notice is given of the tribe or family of this judge; and from the Philistines being the enemy that roused him into public service, the suffering seems to have been local—confined to some of the western tribes slew . . . six hundred men with an ox-goad [שֵׁשׁ מֵאוֹת אִישׁ בְּרֹאשׁוֹ], from שֵׁשׁ, to beat with a rod, to strike, also to teach, to train (cf. Hos. x. 11); Septuagint, ἐν τῷ ἀροτροπόδι τῶν βοῶν, a ploughshare]. This imple-

ment is eight feet long, and at the larger end about six inches in circumference. It is armed at the lesser end with a sharp prong for driving the cattle, and on the other with a small iron paddle for removing the clay which encumbers the plough in working. Buckingham describes it thus, as he saw it used in his journey from Soor (Tyre) to Acre,—‘Oxen were yoked in pairs, and the plough was small and of a simple construction, so that it seemed necessary for two to follow each other in the same furrow, as they invariably did. The husbandman holding the plough with one hand, by a handle like that of a walking crutch, bore in the other a goad of seven or eight feet in length, armed with a sharp point of iron at one end, and at the other with a plate of the same metal, shaped like a caulking chisel. One attendant only was necessary for each plough, as he who guided it with one hand spurred the oxen with the point of the goad, and cleansed the earth from the ploughshare by its spaded heel with the other.’ Such an instrument, wielded by a strong arm, would do no mean execution. We may suppose, however, for the notice is very fragmentary, that Shamgar was only the leader of a band of peasants, who, by means of such implements of labour as they could lay hold of at the moment, achieved this heroic exploit recorded.

CHAP. IV. 1-17.—DEBORAH AND BARAK DELIVER ISRAEL FROM JABIN AND SISERA.

1. when Ehud was dead. The removal of this zealous judge left his infatuated countrymen again without the restraint of religion; for while the southern tribes were enjoying unmolested peace and rest during a protracted period of fourscore years (ch. iii. 30), the northern districts of the country were grievously oppressed by the residue of the old Canaanites, whom the Israelites had with culpable indifference and sloth permitted to retain their settlements. 2. Jabin king of Canaan—Jabin was a dynastic title (Josh. xi. 1). Although the number of petty chiefs who were leagued with this northern sovereign (cf. Josh. xi. 1-4) is inconsistent with the statement, that the

3 Sisera, which dwelt in Harosheth of the Gentiles. And the children of Israel cried unto the LORD; for he had nine hundred ^achariots of iron: and twenty years ^ehe mightily oppressed the children of Israel.

4 And ^fDeborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, she judged Israel at 5 that time. And ^gshe dwelt under the palm tree of Deborah between Ramah and Beth-el in mount Ephraim: and the children of Israel came 6 up to her for judgment. And she sent and called ^hBarak the son of Abinoam out ⁱof Kedesh-naphtali, and said unto him, Hath not the LORD God of Israel commanded, *saying*, Go and draw toward mount Tabor, and take with thee ten thousand men of the children of Naphtali and of the 7 children of Zebulun? And ^jI will draw unto thee, to the ^kriver Kishon,

B. C. 1316.
^a Josh. 17. 16.
 ch. 1. 19.
^c ch. 5. 8.
 Ps. 103. 42.
^f 1 Cor. 1. 27.
^g Gen. 55. 8.
^h Heb. 11. 32.
ⁱ Josh. 19. 37.
^j Ex. 11. 4.
 Josh. 11. 20.
^k ch. 5. 21.
 1 Ki. 1^o. 40.
 Ps. 81. 9, 10.

various tribes of Canaan were, at the period of the Israelite invasion, consolidated under one monarchy (as *Suidas* supposes Canaan), there does seem to have been a sort of confederacy, or united states, which looked to Jabin as their suzerain or head. Hence he is designated "king of Canaan." The second Jabin had built a new capital on the ruins of the old (see on Josh. xi. 10, 11). In addition to what was formerly said in regard to Hazor, the opinion of *Porter* ('Handbook of Syria and Palestine,' p. 442) is here subjoined. Hazor stood at the eastern base of the mountains near, or in the plain of, Hüleh. On the right bank of a little stream, Nahr Henda, high up among the hills, half an hour from the road, is a ruined town called Kasyûn, which deserves a visit, since it is at least as likely as any other place yet known to be the site of the long-lost Hazor. It must be sought for along the western or south-western border of the basin of el-Hüleh. *Josephus* says that Hazor lay over the lake Samochonitis ('Antiquities,' b. v., ch. v., sec. 1), and two passages of Scripture seem to imply that it lay southward of Kedesh. The northern Canaanites had recovered from the effects of their disasters overthrow in the time of Joshua, and triumphed in their turn over Galilee and the whole region on both sides of the Jordan, as far south as the middle division of the land. Jabin had established, by the aid of Sisera, a military despotism, which was the severest oppression to which Israel had been subjected. But it fell heaviest on the tribes in the north; and it was not till after a grinding servitude of twenty years they were awakened to view it as the punishment of their sins, and to seek deliverance from God. Sisera, which dwelt in Harosheth of the Gentiles. He is the only general of whom we read in these very ancient times, the kings themselves commonly leading their armies. The residence of Sisera was at a distance from Hazor, in a fortress called Harosheth, which, judging from the tenor of the sacred history, must have stood on the western side of the lake of Merom (Bahr el-Hüleh). *Dr. Thomson* ('The Land and the Book,' i., p. 144) thinks he has discovered its site farther west, in a tell called Harothieh, 'situated just below the point where the Kishon, in one of its turns, beats against the rocky base of Carmel.' It was called Harosheth of the Gentiles, from its mixed population, as Galilee was in later times 'the wood-cutting or quarry,' as the word signifies, of the mixed heathen population on the outskirts of Lebanon (*Stanley*, 'Jewish Lectures,' p. 320).

4. Deborah—*i. e.*, a bee (see *Josephus*, 'Antiquities,' b. v., ch. v., sec. 2) [Septuagint, Δεββώρα], a prophetess [נביאָה]. This term, with its corresponding masculine form, was in early times applied to describe those who were recipients of divine revelation or inspiration, but did not themselves predict future events (see on Gen. xx. 7; Exod.

vii. 1; xv. 20; Num. xi. 25-29). Deborah uttered a remarkable prophecy; but there is no evidence that she was a seer. She was a woman of extraordinary wisdom and piety, instructed in divine knowledge by the Spirit, and accustomed to interpret the will of God. She acquired an extensive influence, and was held in universal respect, inasmuch that she became the animating mind of the government, and discharged all the special duties of a judge, except that of a military leader. The title 'judge,' however, is specially applied to Barak (Heb. xi. 32). the wife of Lapidoth—rendered by some 'a woman of splendour, torches, or lights,' alluding to her prophetic office; by others, 'a woman of Lapidoth,' some unknown place. But the Septuagint and other versions concur in considering Lapidoth the name of her husband. she judged Israel at that time—*i. e.*, the northern tribes of Israel; viz., Zebulun, Naphtali, and Issachar. 5. she dwelt under the palm tree—or, collectively, a palm grove. *Stanley* ('Sinai and Palestine,' p. 145) takes it to have been 'a well-known and solitary landmark,' and from the distinct specification of the locality, 'probably the same spot as that called Baal-tamar (Judg. xx. 33), the 'sanctuary of the palm.' It is common in the present day in the East to administer justice in the open air, or under the canopy of an umbrageous tree. The traditional spot which Deborah frequented is still pointed out; and it is remarkable that a great meeting or fair is statedly held at the place, as it has been uninterruptedly since her time, at which, amongst other matters of business, disputes are settled and quarrels adjusted between rival tribes. [The palm was rare in Palestine. But frequent notices of it do occur; and its contemporaneous existence with the vine has been used as an argument to prove that the mean temperature of that country has not changed since the days of Moses ('Edinburgh Journal of Science,' 1828; 'New Philosophical Journal,' April, 1862; also 'Plants of the Bible, Trees and Shrubs,' by *Professor Balfour*.)] 6. she sent and called Barak—*i. e.*, lightning, as Hamlicar, a famous Carthaginian general, was styled Barca. Deborah summoned him, *i. e.*, Barak, by virtue of her official authority as judge. Kedesh-naphtali—situated on an eminence, not far from Hazor, a little north of the sea of Galilee, and so called to distinguish it from another Kedesh in Issachar. It is now Kades. It was twenty Roman miles from Tyre, and not far from Paneas (*Robinson*, 'Biblical Researches,' iii., p. 354; *Stanley*, 'Sinai and Palestine,' p. 331; also 'Lectures on the Jewish Church,' p. 319). Hath not the Lord God of Israel commanded—a Hebrew form of making an emphatic communication. Go and draw toward mount Tabor—now Jebel et-Tûr, an isolated mountain of Galilee, at the north-east corner of the plain of Esdraelon. It was a convenient, because a central, place of rendezvous for the northern tribes; and

- Sisera, the captain of Jabin's army, with his chariots, and his multitude ;
 8 and I will deliver him into thine hand. And Barak said unto her, If thou wilt go with me, then I will go; but if thou wilt not go with me,
 9 then I will not go. And she said, I will surely go with thee: notwithstanding the journey that thou takest shall not be for thine honour; for the LORD shall 'sell Sisera into the hand of a woman. And Deborah
 10 arose, and went with Barak to Kedesh. And Barak called ^mZebulun and Naphtali to Kedesh; and he went up with ten thousand men ⁿat his feet: and Deborah went up with him.
 11 Now Heber ^othe Kenite, *which was* of the children of ^pHobab, the father-in-law of Moses, had severed himself from ^qthe Kenites, and pitched his tent unto the plain of Zaanaim, which *is* by Kedesh.
 12 And they showed Sisera that Barak the son of Abinoam was gone up
 13 to mount Tabor. And Sisera ¹gathered together all his chariots, *even* nine hundred chariots of iron, and all the people that *were* with him, from Harosheth of the Gentiles unto the river of Kishon.

B. C. 1266.
 ch. 2. 14.
 ch. 3. 8.
 1's. 41. 12.
 Isa. 50. 1.
 " ch. 5. 18.
 " Ex. 11. 8.
 1 Sam. 25.
 27.
 1 Ki 10. 10.
 ° Num. 24. 2.
 ch. 1. 16.
 ? Ex. 2. 18.
 Ex. 3. 1.
 Ex. 18. 1.
 Num 10. 29.
 ? Num. 21. 21.
 1 gathered
 by cry. or.
 proclamation

the contingent of troops which Barak mustered is not to be considered as limited strictly to 10,000. There were some additional volunteers from Benjamin and Ephraim. But still they formed a force quite inadequate to encounter the army of Sisera on the plain; and therefore they encamped on the mount. Barak's army, consisting of 10,000 foot soldiers "of the children of Naphtali and of the children of Zebulun," could not have been living in Galilee at this time; for this would imply an actual possession of the land assigned to them in the northern provinces, which is contradicted by this part of the history in every page of it. Only a few scattered members of the tribes had settled themselves here and there on their estates, and the object of the battle, which, as appears from v. 7, was plainly aggressive, was to put the whole of them into actual possession (see on ch. v. 16, 17, 23) [*Drew's* 'Scripture Lands,' p. 107]. 8. Barak said unto her, *If thou wilt go with me, then I will go.* This somewhat singular request of Barak to be accompanied by Deborah was not altogether the result of weakness. The Orientals always take what they account dearest to the battle-field along with them, under the belief that the presence of the beloved object animates their courage. The presence of women of rank in the camp of the Orientals is not uncommon. Every classical scholar will remember the generous conduct of Alexander in the tent of Darius, when the ladies of the Persian court became his captives; and the beautiful episode of Panthea is universally known (see further on ch. v. 30). The policy of Barak, then, to secure the presence of the prophetess is perfectly intelligible, as it would no less stimulate the valour of the troops than sanction, in the eyes of Israel, the uprising against an oppressor so powerful as Jabin. [The Septuagint explains the motives of Barak in a superadded clause, ὅτι οὐκ οἶδα τὴν ἡμέραν ἐν ἣ εὐδοκῆ κύριος τὸν ἀγγέλου μετ' ἐμοῦ, because I know not the day on which the Lord may send his messenger with me and prosper me.] 9. *The Lord shall sell Sisera into the hand of a woman.* This was a prediction which Barak could not understand at the time; but the strain of it conveyed a rebuke for his unmanly fears. *Deborah arose, and went with Barak.* She became *de facto* the commander-in-chief (see her speech, *Josephus*, 'Antiquities,' b. v., ch. v., sec. 3). 10. Barak called Zebulun and Naphtali to Kedesh—by the blast of silver trumpets (see on Num. x. 9). The oppressed tribes were naturally expected to bear the brunt of the war.

11. Now Heber the Kenite [Septuagint, Χαβερ] . . . had severed himself from the Kenites (*i. e.*, who were established in the south of Palestine: see on ch. i. 16), and pitched . . . unto the plain of Zaanaim. It was a sort of debatable land (*Stanley*, 'Sinai and Palestine,' p. 332), this powerful nomadic chief having secured the quiet enjoyment of the pastures there by the adoption of a neutral position. (In addition to what is said in the passage referred to, see an account of the *Yehud Chebr*, the Arab descendants of Heber the Kenite, in *Schwarz's* 'Descriptive Geography and Brief Historical Sketch of Palestine,' 1850). It is not unusual, even in the present day, for pastoral tribes to feed their flocks on the extensive commons that lie in the heart of inhabited countries in the East (see on ch. i. 16). "The plain of Zaanaim," or Zaanauim (see on Josh. xix. 11) [יְרֵאֵיִם, at the oak or terebinth of Zaanaim; Septuagint, εἰς ὄρους πλεινεκτουπῶν, as far as the oak of the overreaching; *Stanley*, 'the oaks of the wanderers']. The site of the encampment was under a grove of oaks or terebinths in the upland valley of Kedesh.

12. *they showed Sisera*—viz., the Kenites; for it seems that they were the parties who communicated intelligence of the formidable insurrection of the Israelite tribes, as well as of the actual muster of the rebel forces under Barak at Tabor. 13. *Sisera gathered together . . . from Harosheth of the Gentiles*—(see on v. 2.) Several allied kings brought their respective troops also (see ch. v. 3, 19). Sisera, believing that with his immense host he could easily surround the mount Tabor, and force the rebels to surrender, marched out into the plain of Esdraelon, unto the river of Kishon [כִּישׁוֹן, a torrent, apparently from the deep gully or ravine through which it flows; Septuagint, εἰς τὸν χιμαρρόν, the wintry torrent; כִּישׁוֹן—*i. e.*, curved, winding (from שִׁב, a bow); and this is the character of the stream, which, as flowing through a level plain, pursues a very meandering course.] 'We still find the same river a considerable stream, under the name of el-Mukütta, flowing along the base of Carmel into the bay of Akka. A principal source of the Kishon is in the vicinity of mount Tabor; although probably the branch fed from the southern arm of the plain and the southern hills is in general not less important. During the rains much water must necessarily come from the wadies north-west of Tabor, and

14 And Deborah said unto Barak, Up; for this *is* the day in which the LORD hath delivered Sisera into thine hand: ¹ is not the LORD gone out before thee? So Barak went down from mount Tabor, and ten thousand men after him. And ² the LORD discomfited Sisera, and all *his* chariots, and all *his* host, with the edge of the sword before Barak; so that Sisera lighted down off *his* chariot, and fled away on his feet. But Barak pursued after the chariots, and after the host, unto Harosheth of the Gentiles: and all the host of Sisera fell upon the edge of the sword; and there was not ^{2a} a man left.

B C. 1296.

Deut. 9. 3
2 Sam. 5. 24.
Ps. 68. 7.
Ps. 77. 17.
18.
Isa. 52. 12.
Josh. 10. 10.
2 Ki. 7. 6.
Ps. 83. 9, 10.
2 unto one.

there form what *Burckhardt* calls the river of Debûrieh, upon the great plain near that village. But the Kishon of the plain is not now a permanent stream: it usually flows only during the season of rain, and for a short time afterwards. Yet the river, as it enters the sea at the foot of Carmel, never becomes dry; and we must therefore seek for its perennial sources along the base of that mountain. Whether the brook at Lejjûn (Megiddo) reaches the bed of the Kishon during the summer we are not informed; but the main sources appear to be lower down in the valley by which the channel issues from the plain of Esdraelon (*Robinson*, 'Biblical Researches,' iii., p. 228, 229; also 'Physical Geography,' p. 171; *Stanley*, 'Sinai and Palestine,' p. 331). That plain is said to be about fifteen miles square. While Deborah and Barak stationed their bands of devoted followers on the broad summit of Tabor, 'the host of Sisera, with its nine hundred iron chariots, naturally took up its position on the level plain of Megiddo, on its south-western extremity by the banks of the Kishon, and near the Canaanite town Taanach (*v.* 19) (*i. e.*, sandy soil), now Taännâk, a village on the slope of the hills skirting the plain on the south.'

14. Deborah said unto Barak, Up; for this is the day in which the Lord hath delivered Sisera into thine hand. From the commanding position the Israelites had taken up, she must have seen the hostile cavalcade advancing across the plain, and finally encamping at Taanach, on a long spur of the mount. The plain on the bank of the Kishon was chosen as the battle-field by Sisera himself, who was unconsciously drawn thither for the ruin of his army. It is just at this point that the traveller catches the first distinct view of the arched summit of Tabor. From that summit Deborah must have watched the gradual drawing of the enemy towards the spot of her predicted triumph. She raised the cry, which twice over occurs in the story of the battle, "Arise, Barak" (*cf.* *v.* 12). She gave with unhesitating confidence to the doubting troops the augury which Barak had asked before the insurrection began—"This (this, and no other) is the day in which the Lord hath delivered Sisera into thine hand" (*cf.* *v.* 8, Septuagint version). From Tabor to Taanach is a march of about thirteen miles, and therefore the approach must have been long foreseen by the Canaanitish forces (*Stanley*, 'Lectures on the Jewish Church,' p. 321). We are rather inclined to think that the camp of Sisera was surprised by an unexpected attack from the mountains *very early in the morning*. On receiving the signal from Deborah, Barak ordered his troops forthwith to march. It is a striking proof of the full confidence Barak and his troops reposed in Deborah's assurance of victory, that they relinquished their advantageous position on the hill, and rushed into the plain in face of the iron chariots they so much dreaded. They were at first agitated by fear (*Josephus*, 'Antiquities,' b. v., ch. v., sec. 3); besides, they were ill-accounted, or but rudely

armed (*v.* 8); for Jabin had practised the same policy as the Philistines afterwards did (1 Sam. xiii. 19-22). 'Rapidly they descend the mountain, cross over by Nain into the valley of Jezreel, then incline to the left, to avoid the low and marshy ground, and by the first faint light of the morning they are upon the sleeping host of the Canaanites. This assault, wholly unexpected, threw them into instant and irrevocable confusion. But half awake, the whole army fled in dismay down the plain, hotly pursued by the victorious Barak. No time was allowed them to recover from their panic. God also fought against them (*v.* 14, middle clause; also *v.* 4). *Josephus* ('Antiquities,' b. v., ch. v., sec. 4) adds that a storm from the east beat furiously in the faces of the Canaanites, but only on the backs of the Hebrews' ('The Land and the Book,' i., p. 142). The fight became indiscriminate, multitudes were massacred by the plain of Endor, between Tabor and the little Hermon (Ps. lxxxiii. 10), and still they ran westward, probably in the hope of finding refuge in the Canaanite fortress of Megiddo; but the numerous rivulets which issue from the hills of Megiddo having been swollen by the rain, had converted the adjacent fields into an impassable morass (*v.* 19), and prevented them continuing that line of retreat. The victorious enemy was behind them; on their left were the hills of Samaria, in the hands of their enemies; on their right was the swollen river and the marshes of Thora; they had no alternative but to make for the narrow pass which led to Haroshieth. The space, however, becomes more and more narrow, until within the pass it is only a few rods wide. There horses, chariots, and men became mixed in horrible confusion, jostling and treading down one another; and the river, here swifter and deeper than above, runs zigzag from side to side of the vale, until, just before it reaches the castle of Harosheth (Harothieh), it dashes sheer up against the perpendicular base of Carmel. There is no longer any possibility of avoiding it. Rank upon rank of the flying host plunge madly in, those behind crushing those before deeper and deeper in the tenacious mud. They stick fast—are overwhelmed—are swept away by thousands ('The Land and the Book,' i., p. 143). 15. The Lord discomfited Sisera—Hebrew, threw his army into confusion. The disorder was produced by a supernatural panic (see on *v.* 20), so that Sisera lighted down off his chariot, and fled away on his feet. *Sauve qui peut*—'Every man look to himself'—became the order of the day. Sisera's chariot, being probably distinguished by its superior size and elegance, would betray the rank of its rider, who saw, consequently, that his only chance of escape was on foot. His flight was in a different direction from that of his army. 16. But Barak pursued after the chariots, and after the host, unto Harosheth of the Gentiles. Broken and routed, the main body of Sisera's army fled northwards; others were forced into the western branch of Kishon (the Megiddo) and drowned (see on *v.* 21).

- 17 Howbeit Sisera fled away on his feet to the tent of Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite: for *there was* peace between Jabin the king of Hazor and the house of Heber the Kenite. And Jael went out to meet Sisera, and said unto him, Turn in, my lord, turn in to me; fear not. And when he had turned in unto her into the tent, she covered him with a mantle. And he said unto her, Give me, I pray thee, a little water to drink; for I am thirsty. And she opened a bottle of milk, and gave him drink, and covered him. Again he said unto her, Stand in the door of the tent; and it shall be, when any man doth come and enquire of thee, and say, Is there any man here? that thou shalt say, No. Then Jael, Heber's wife, took a nail of the tent, and took an hammer in her hand, and went softly unto him, and smote the nail into his temples, and fastened it into the ground: for he was fast asleep and weary: so he died.
- 22 And, behold, as Barak pursued Sisera, Jael came out to meet him, and said unto him, Come, and I will show thee the man whom thou seekest. And when he came into her tent, behold, Sisera lay dead, and the nail was in his temples.
- 23 So God subdued on that day Jabin the king of Canaan before the children of Israel. And the hand of the children of Israel prospered, and prevailed against Jabin the king of Canaan, until they had destroyed Jabin king of Canaan.
- 5 THEN sang Deborah and Barak the son of Abinoam on that day, saying,

B. C. 1296.

Job 12. 21,
24.
Job 13. 7-12.
Job 40. 11,
12.
Ps. 18. 11,
Ps. 37. 35,
Ps. 42. 3.
Ps. 107. 40.
Pro. 29. 23.
Amos 5. 19,
21.
Or rug, or
blanket.
ch. 5. 25.
Josh. 2. 3, 5,
ch. 3. 21.
ch. 5. 25,
ch. 15. 15,
16.
2 Sam. 17.
23.
put.
1 Chr. 22. 19.
Neh. 9. 24.
Ps. 18. 47.
going,
went, and
was hard

17. Sisera fled . . . to the tent of Jael—*i. e.* (roe, Prov. v. 19, English version), wild goat, gazelle [Septuagint, *λαίλα*]. According to the usages of nomadic people, the duty of receiving the stranger in the sheikh's absence devolves on his wife; and the moment the stranger is admitted into the tent, his claim to be defended or concealed from his pursuers is established. But how came the tent of Heber to be pitched in the neighbourhood of Carmel, when it was stated that his residence was at "the plain of Zaanaim, which is by Kedesh"? (*v.* 11.) "An incident which happened to myself," says *Dr. Thomson* ("The Land and the Book," i. p. 145), "will explain why Heber was found at the bottom of the plain at the time of the battle. With a guide from Nazareth, I once crossed the lower part of Esdraelon in the winter. It was then full of Arab tents. The home of those nomads was in the mountains north of Nazareth, toward Safet; and they came down here only to pass the cold months of winter. This was the very thing that Heber did; and if any one should object, that if Heber lived near Kedesh, why not descend to the Huleh immediately below for the winter, rather than migrate to this distant place? for the simple reason, I answer, that this place was under the government of his ally, Jabin, and the other was not." 19. she opened a bottle of milk, and gave him drink [נָאֵר קֵהָלֵם]—a skin or leather bag, so called from being shaken, in order to make the milk into butter. [Septuagint, *σπείξε την ασκόν του γάλακτος.*] *Josephus* says ("Antiquities," b. v., sec. 4) it was sour milk, or what the Arabs call *leben*; a favourite and refreshing beverage. and covered him. Sisera reckoned on this as a pledge of his safety, especially in the tent of a friendly sheikh. This pledge was the strongest that could be sought or obtained, after he had partaken of refreshments, and been introduced into the inner or wife's apartment—a sanctuary inviolable by the intrusion even of her nearest relations, unless by her express permission. Encouraged by all these circumstances, Sisera surrendered himself to sleep,

after a day of exhausting fatigue. *Josephus* ascribes his profound slumbers to the copious draught of sour milk he had taken. 21. Then Jael . . . took a nail of the tent—a wooden or iron pin—most probably one of the pins, about a foot long and sharp at one end, with which the tent ropes are fastened to the ground. Escape was almost impossible for Sisera. But the taking of his life by the hand of Jael was deliberate murder. It was a direct violation of all the notions of honour and friendship that are usually held sacred among pastoral people, and for which it is impossible to conceive a woman in Jael's circumstances to have had any motive, except that of gaining favour with the victors. Though predicted by Deborah, the act was the result of Divine foreknowledge, not of Divine appointment or sanction; and though it is praised in the song contained in the following chapter, the eulogy must be considered as pronounced, not on the moral character of the woman and her deed, but on the public benefits which, in the overruling providence of God, would flow from it. 22. as Barak pursued Sisera, Jael came out to meet him. Having completed the rout of the Canaanitish host, Barak was probably on his return home to Kedesh, when he was surprised by the intelligence of the awful tragedy that had been enacted within the tent of the Kenite, and subsequently by the ghastly spectacle of the corpse of Sisera, which Jael exhibited to him. This last scene closed the proceedings of that eventful day, as with it also ends the narrative of the national triumph of Israel over the last general confederacy of the Canaanites.

CHAP. V. 1-31.—DEBORAH AND BARAK'S SONG OF THANKSGIVING.

1. Then sang Deborah and Barak . . . on that day. Nothing is said respecting the authorship of this noble triumphal ode; but modern criticism has established it, by a chain of strong circumstantial evidence, to be beyond a doubt an effusion of the patriotic and pious mind of Deborah herself. The freshness of feeling that pervades

- 2 Praise ye the LORD for the avenging of Israel,
When the people willingly offered themselves.
- 3 Hear, O ye kings;—give ear, O ye princes;
I, *even* I, will sing unto the LORD;
I will sing *praise* to the LORD God of Israel.
- 4 LORD, ²when thou wentest out of Seir,
When thou marchedst out of the field of Edom,
^bThe earth trembled, and the heavens dropped,
The clouds also dropped water.
- 5 The ^cmountains ¹melted from before the LORD,
Even that Sinai from before the LORD God of Israel.
- 6 In the days of ^aShamgar the son of Anath,—in the days of Jael,
^cThe highways were unoccupied,
And the ²travellers walked through ³by-ways.
- 7 *The inhabitants* of the villages ceased, they ceased in Israel,
Until that I Deborah arose, that I arose ^fa mother in Israel.

B. C. 1296.
CHAP. 5.
^a Deut. 33. 2.
Ps. 68. 7. 8.
Hab. 3. 2-6.
^b Isa. 64. 3.
Hab. 3. 3.
^c Deut. 4. 11.
¹ flowed.
^d ch. 3. 31.
^e Lev. 26. 12.
Isa. 33. 8.
Lam. 1. 4.
Lam. 4. 18.
² walkers of paths.
³ crooked ways.
^f ch. 4. 4-6.
Isa. 49. 23.
Rom. 16. 13.

the entire composition—the strong hate evinced towards the enemy, as of one smarting under his insults and oppression—the details given respecting the severity and extent of his tyrannical exactions, and the reign of terror existing in the country—the names and number of the confederate tribes that obeyed the war-summons of Barak—the ascent of the Canaanite hosts, with their defeat, and the course of their disastrous flight—the description given of the different situations of Jael and of Sisera's mother,—indicate the intense interest and accurate knowledge of a contemporary. Further, the selection of topics that form the burden of the song—the slight notice of the contest, contrasted with the manifest delight shown in describing the rout of the enemy—the praise lavished upon Jael and her deed, with the graphic picture of the rapidly varying emotions of Sisera's mother,—afford unmistakable proof that the author of this beautiful poem was a woman, who appears, from the use of the first person (v. 7), to have been the prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth. "How much art a song of the early times before David may possess in the midst of its simplicity is shown by this noble song of victory, which unites a really grand design with a regularly beautiful execution, and is a model of a genuine song of victory of nearly eight centuries before Pindar' (*Ewald*). The mode in which it was sung was most probably that adopted by Hebrew women in celebrating public deliverances. (Exod. xv. 20; 1 Sam. xviii. 6), Deborah, as leader, giving forth the tuneful utterances, echoed by a chorus of female singers, in presence of Barak and his victorious troops on their return from the triumphant pursuit.

2. for the avenging of Israel בָּרַעַת פְּקֻדוֹת [בָּרַעַת]—in the freeing of Israel from bondage (*Robinson*), or in the leading on of the leaders in Israel (*Gesenius*) [בָּרַעַתָּם עִם] in the people showing themselves willing—*i. e.*, that the princes of Israel put themselves at the head of the people, who came with alacrity as a volunteer force, praise is due to the Lord. Septuagint, εν τω αρχασθαι αρχηγους εν Ισραηλ εν προαιρεσει λαου ενλογησθε τον κυριον,]

4. Lord, when thou wentest out of Seir, &c. In this highly figurative style, which is borrowed from the magnificent song of Moses (Deut. xxxii. 2), and was afterwards adopted also, with a slight variation, by the Psalmist (Ps. lxxviii. 7, 8), allusion is made to God's interposition on behalf of His people. Seir and the field of Edom represent

the mountain range and the plain, extending along the south from the Dead Sea to the Elanitic Gulf. "Thou wentest out" indicates the particular form in which Jehovah appeared on this occasion for the deliverance of Israel—*viz.*, in a violent tempest which, as may be gathered from this description, blew from the south or south-west.

6. In the days of Shamgar . . . in the days of Jael. Shamgar [Septuagint, Σαμεγαρά] is mentioned, ch. iii. 31, as a judge, who by one feat of bravery effected a deliverance for Israel. According to *Josephus* ('Antiquities,' b. v., ch. iv., sec. 3), his official rule continued only one year, and extended exclusively over those tribes which bordered on the Philistine territory. The association of Jael with Shamgar suggests the idea that reference is made to some unrecorded judge of that name, probably the successor of Shamgar, and whose public authority might be of equally brief duration. The presumption that this is the true interpretation, rather than that the reference is to the wife of Heber the Kenite, is strengthened by the fact that the name of this person is introduced by the formula "in the days of," which is commonly applied to men invested with public authority (cf. ch. viii. 28; 1 Sam. xvii. 12; 2 Sam. xxi. 2). [קָדְלוֹ אֶרְוֹתָי], the public roads rested, *viz.*, from the noise of chariots, and the tread of feet; *i. e.*, were not travelled.] and the travellers [הֹלְכֵי נְתִיבוֹת]—those who used to walk in beaten (trodden) paths. אֶרְוֹתָי עֲקָלְלוֹת, winding, crooked ways; *i. e.*, go through devious and unfrequented by-ways (cf. Ps. cxxv. 5). The Septuagint renders the whole clause thus: ἐξέλιπον ὁδοὺς καὶ ἐπορεύθησαν ἀτραπούς, ἐπορεύθησαν ὁδοὺς διεστραμμένους]. 7. The inhabitants of the villages ceased [קָדְלוֹ פְּקֻדוֹת]—rule; *i. e.*, (concrete for) rulers ceased in Israel. And so the Septuagint renders it [ἐξέλιπον ὀντατοί]. But the Hebrew word does not necessarily mean that the Shophetim were not in Israel, for they had left the country, but that they no longer exercised their public functions, and through loss of heart let anarchy universally prevail. until that I . . . arose a mother in Israel. [אֲנִי] is used here in the same sense as אָב, father, frequently is, for paternal ruler—doing good and providing for the interests of others (cf. Job xxix. 16; Ps. lxxviii. 6; Isa. xxii. 21).] And so Deborah assumed the office of ruler and counsellor, not for the gratification of her personal ambition, but for the good of the

- 8 They chose new gods;—then was war in the gates :
 Was there a shield or spear seen among forty thousand in Israel ?
 9 My heart is toward the governors of Israel,
 That offered themselves willingly among the people.
 Bless ye the LORD.
 10 Speak, ye that ride on white asses,
 Ye that sit in judgment,—and walk by the way.
 11 They that are delivered from the noise of archers in the places of drawing
 water,
 There shall they rehearse the righteous acts of the LORD,

B. C. 1293.
Deut. 32. 14.
ch. 2. 12.
1 Sam. 13.
19. 2.
ch. 4. 3.
Or. Medit- tate.
Ps. 145. 5.
ch. 12. 14.
6 righteous- nesses of the LORD.

people, over whom she watched with the lively interest and solicitude of a mother over her children. These verses describe the sad condition of the country, the oppression of the people, the disorderly state of the country, and the origin of all the national distress in the people's apostasy from God. Idolatry was the cause of foreign invasion, and internal inability arising from sloth or cowardice to resist it. (As to the highways in ancient Palestine, see *Reland*, 'Palestina,' illustrated, vol. i., b. ii., chs. iii., iv.) 8. They chose new gods. This clause has been variously rendered. But we shall notice only two. [יָרִישׁוּ אֱלֹהִים תְּרַשְׁמוּ] Some, as the Peshito version and the Vulgate, taking the middle word for the nominative, translate 'God chose new things'—viz., the government and agency of a woman. But the generality of ancient versions and of modern scholars view the passage in the same light as our translators, and consider 'Israel' (understood, though not expressed) to be the proper subject. [Thus the Septuagint, ἐξείλεξαν το θεός καινούς, they chose new gods; viz., Baal and Ashtaroth—Syrian or Phœnician idols, different from those of Egypt (see on Dent. xxxii. 17). The Alexandrine version (as in *Tischendorf's* notes, ηρετισαν θεους κενους ως αρτον κριθων, as barley bread.) then was war in the gates [שָׁן, theu]—from that time, or therefore, viz., on account of that idolatry [לָקַחְוּ מִצָּרַיִם], was siege of the gates; i. e., their cities were besieged. The word "gates" is used in a sense to denote doors of a house or temple, the entrance into a camp, the approaches of a city, or the passes into a country through which an enemy can invade the interior. This latter signification is the most apposite here, as descriptive of the insidious assaults, and grinding oppression of the Canaanites. [The Septuagint has ποτε ἐπολέμησαν πόλεις ἀρχόντων, then the cities of the rulers made war. This is an erroneous translation; for the rulers were universally inactive till Deborah roused them.] was there a shield or spear seen among forty thousand in Israel? [מָה דִּיפָּרַדוּ] differed from אָרֶב (1 Ki. x. 16, 17; 2 Chr. ix. 16) in that it was a short small buckler, intended solely for defence, and of great service in the warfare of ancient times; רָמָה, a lance or spear, used by heavy-armed troops (Num. xxv. 7; Neh. iv. 7). It is commonly coupled with *tsinna*, the long shield (1 Chr. xii. 8, 24; 2 Chr. xi. 12; xiv. 7; xxv. 5). The particle אֵין, though an interrogative, is frequently used to express a strong negation; so that this sentence, "was there a shield or spear?" is virtually a strong affirmation that 'there was not a shield or spear'—an affirmation which, though perhaps not intended to be taken in its literal strictness, yet implies that the Israelites were sadly deficient in military weapons, and were for the most part totally unprepared for war.]

The number 40,000 is used according to Oriental usage—a definite for an indefinite number (Gen. vii. 17; Jon. iii. 4).
 9. My heart is toward the governors of Israel. In this verse gratitude is expressed to the respective leaders of the tribes, who with so much alacrity took part in the contest; but above all, to God, who inspired the patriotic disposition, as well as the strength to fight. 10. Speak, ye that ride on white asses—i. e., join in this song of praise. [וְהַנְּהוֹרִים צִדְדוֹן, bright shining she-asses (cf. ch. x. 4: *Bovet*, 'Voyage en Terre Sainte,' p. 311).] Those which are dappled are most highly prized; but being rare, and therefore costly, are possessed only by the wealthy and great. 'Some are of considerable size, and when fancifully dyed with henna, their tails and ears bright red, and their bodies spotted, like an heraldic talbot, with the same colour, they bear the chief priests and the men of the law, as they appear to have done from the earliest times' (*Layard*, 'Nineveh and Babylon,' p. 472, note). [The Septuagint has επιβεβηκότες ἐπι ονου θηλειας μεσημβριας, riding upon a female ass from the south, viz., Arabia, or some adjoining region.] ye that sit in judgment—or on the tribunal of justice [deriving the word from דָן, justice. But others, more correctly, viewing דָן as an Aramaic form of דָרַם, plural of דָר, a garment, a carpet, render the clause, 'ye that sit on carpets.'] This interpretation accords well with the habit of Oriental grandees, who, whether riding or resting, sit on carpets. 'Ye that walk by the way,' describes the commonalty or the poorer classes, whose circumstances oblige them to use their legs in travelling. All classes, high and low, were thus called upon to join in offering this tribute of thanksgiving. 11. They that are delivered, &c. [בְּקוֹל מִתְפַּצְּצִים]—from the shouting either of archers [as the Targums render it, from אָרֶב, an arrow] or of those dividing [viz., the booty, from אָרֶב, to divide]. in the places of drawing water [מִשְׁאֲבֵי מַיִם]—between or amongst the water-trougls. 'Near the wells and fountains the robber and assassin commonly took his station; and in time of war the enemy placed their ambush there, because the flocks and herds, in which the wealth of the country chiefly consisted, were twice every day collected to those places, and might be seized with less danger when the shepherds were busily engaged in drawing water. This circumstance is alluded to by Deborah. A perfect comment on her words is furnished by a historian of the crusades, who complains that, during the siege of Jerusalem by the Christian armies, numbers of their men were daily cut off, and their cattle driven away by the Saracens, who lay in ambush for this purpose near all the fountains and watering-places' (*Pacton's* 'Illustrations of Scripture,' vol. i., p. 52.) there shall they rehearse

B. C. 1296.

- Even* the righteous acts *toward* the inhabitants of his villages in Israel:
 Then shall the people of the LORD go down to the gates.
- 12 Awake, awake, Deborah;—awake, awake; utter a song:
 Arise, Barak,—and lead thy captivity captive, thou son of Abinoam.
- 13 Then he made him that remaineth have dominion over the nobles
 among the people:
 The LORD made me have dominion over the mighty.
- 14 Out ¹of Ephraim *was there* a root of them against Amalek;
 After thee, Benjamin, among thy people:
 Out of ²Machir came down governors,
 And out of Zebulun they that ³handle the pen of the writer.
- 15 And the princes of Issachar *were* with Deborah;
 Even Issachar, and also Barak:—he was sent on ⁷foot into the valley.
⁸For the divisions of Reuben—*there were* great ⁹thoughts of heart.
- 16 Why abodest thou ⁴among the sheepfolds,
 To hear the bleatings of the flocks?
¹⁰For the divisions of Reuben—*there were* great searchings of heart.
- 17 Gilead ⁵abode beyond Jordan:—and why did Dan remain in ships?
⁶Asher continued on the sea—¹¹shore,—and abode in his ¹²breaches.
- 18 Zebulun ⁶and Naphtali *were* a people *that* ¹³jeoparded their lives unto
 the death
 In the high places of the field.
- 19 The kings came *and* fought,—then fought the kings of Canaan
 In Taanach by the waters of Megiddo;—⁷they took no gain of money.
- 20 They ⁸fought from heaven;
⁹The stars in their ¹⁴courses fought against Sisera.

1 ch. 3. 27.
 ch. 4. 5, 6.
 2 Num. 32. 39,
 40
 3 draw with
 the pen,
 etc.
 Gen 49. 21.
 4 his feet.
 5 Or, In the
 divisions,
 etc.,
 Acts 15. 39,
 37.
 6 Impres-
 sions.
 1ro 22. 13.
 2 Cor. 11. 2.
 1 Num. 31. 1.
 Phil. 2. 21.
 10 Or, In.
 11 Josh. 13. 25.
 12 Josh. 19. 9.
 11 Or, port.
 12 Or, creeks.
 13 ch 4. 10,
 13 exposed
 to re-
 prosch.
 14 ch. 4. 16.
 Ps. 44. 12.
 15 Josh. 10. 11.
 16 ch. 4. 15.
 17 paths.

the righteous acts of the Lord [עָשָׂה לְיְהוָה בְּיָמָיו]—the righteous acts of His rule in Israel; viz., in the discomfiture of Jabin, and the restoration of Israel's freedom. then shall the people of the Lord go down to the gates—i. e., return to their cities in tranquillity and joy. The wells, which are at a little distance from towns in the East, are, in unsettled times, places of danger. But in peace they are scenes of pleasant and joyous resort. The poetess anticipates that this song may be sung, and “the righteous acts of the Lord” rehearsed, at these now tranquil “places of drawing water.” Deborah, now rousing herself to describe, in terms suitable to the occasion, the preparation and the contest, calls, in a burst of poetic enthusiasm, on Barak to parade his prisoners in triumphal procession. Then follows a eulogistic enumeration of the tribes which raised the commanded levy, or volunteered their services,—the soldiers of Ephraim, who dwell near the mount of the Amalekites, the small quota of Benjamin; the “governors,” valiant leaders “out of Machir,” the western Manasseh; and out of Zebulun.

13. The rod of the numberers—those who made up and kept the muster-rolls; and the princes who, with impetuous alacrity, rushed on with Barak to the charge in the plain.

15. he was sent on foot into the valley. The verb being in Pual, the sense is, ‘he’ (i. e., Barak) ‘sent himself,’ i. e., rushed down, on foot into the plain. Then comes a reproachful notice of the tribes which did not obey the summons to take the field against the common enemy of Israel. By the “divisions,”—i. e., the water-courses which descended from the eastern hills unto the Jordan and Dead Sea. The next clause may be rendered:

by the streams of Reuben great were their resolves. This tribe felt the patriotic impulse, and determined at first to join the ranks of their western brethren; but resiled from their purpose,

preferring their peaceful shepherd songs to the trumpet sound of war. 16. Why abodest thou among the sheepfolds? [בְּתֵּי הַבָּרִים], folds, enclosures for sheep, open above, often made of hurdles, in which, during the summer months, the flocks are kept by night (cf. Gen. xlix. 4.) The Hebrews seem to have used the dual form on account of folds of this kind being divided into two parts for the accommodation of different kinds of flocks (*Gesenius*). The statement is reiterated as it were with an ill-suppressed sneer of scorn and pity, that upon the banks of their mountain streams the members of the tribe of Reuben cherished strong aspirations for liberty, and formed high resolves to hasten to the aid of their oppressed brethren. But with a characteristic instability (Gen. xlix. 4) they were satisfied with having resolved, and did not carry their resolutions into action. 17. Gilead abode beyond Jordan—i. e., both Gad and the eastern half of Manasseh chose to dwell at ease in their Havoth-jair, or villages of tents, while Dan and Asher, both maritime tribes, continued with their ships and in their ‘breaches’ (havens, creeks), prosecuting their trade of fishery. The mention of these craven tribes is concluded (v. 18) with a fresh burst of commendation on Zebulun and Naphtali, which two tribes bore the chief burden, and drew the highest glory of the day.

19. The kings came and fought. This describes the scene of battle, and the issue. It would seem (v. 19) that Jabin was reinforced by the troops of other Canaanite princes. The battle-field was near Taanach (now Ta’anuk), on a tell or mound in the level plain of Megiddo (now Lejjūn), on its south-western extremity, by the left bank of the Kishon. they took no gain of money—they obtained no plunder. 20. the stars in their courses fought—a fearful tempest burst upon them, and threw them into disorder. The stars

- 21 The ^ariver of Kishon swept them away,
That ancient river, the river Kishon.
O my soul, thou hast trodden down strength.
- 22 There were the horse-hoofs broken
By the means of the ¹⁵prancings, the prancings of their mighty ones.
- 23 Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the LORD,
Curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof;
'Because they came not to the help of the LORD,
'To the help ^vof the LORD against the mighty.
- 24 Blessed above women—shall Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite be;
^vBlessed shall she be above women in the tent.
- 25 He asked water, *and* she gave *him* milk;
She brought forth butter in a lordly dish.
- 26 She put her hand to the nail,
And her right hand to the workmen's hammer;
And ¹⁶with the hammer she smote Sisera, she smote off his head,
When she had pierced and stricken through his temples.
- 27 ¹⁷At her feet he bowed, he fell, he lay down:
At her feet he bowed, he fell:
Where he bowed, there he fell down ¹⁸dead.
- 28 The mother of Sisera looked out at a window,
And cried through the lattice,
Why is his chariot *so long* in coming?
Why tarry the wheels of his chariots?

E. C. 1296.

ch. 4. 7, 13.
1 Ki. 18. 40.
Ps. 68. 9,
10.
¹⁶ Or, tramp-
lings, or,
plungings.
¹⁷ ch. 21. 9,
10.
Neh. 3. 5.
¹⁸ 1 Sam. 17.
47.
1 Sam. 13.
17.
1 Sam. 25.
28.
Rom. 15. 18.
1 Cor. 3. 9.
2 Cor. 6. 1.
^v Gen. 14. 19
ch. 4. 17.
Fro. 31. 31.
Luke 1. 2'.
42.
¹⁶ she ham-
mered.
¹⁷ Between.
¹⁸ destroyed.
Ps. 62. 7.
Matt. 7. 2.
Jas 2. 13.

that betokened the time of rain are here connected with the sudden swelling and overflow of the river (cf. v. 4: *Josephus*, 'Antiquities,' b. v., ch. v., sec. 4). 21. The river of Kishon swept them away. The enemy was defeated near "the waters of Megiddo," the sources and side streams of the Kishon: they that fled had to cross the deep and marshy bed of the torrent, but the Lord had sent a heavy rain—the waters suddenly rose—the warriors fell into the quicksands, and, sinking deep into them, were drowned or washed into the sea (*Van de Velde*, i., p. 187-189; *Robinson*, 'Biblical Researches,' iii., p. 230, note, 384; *Stanley*, 'Sinai and Palestine,' p. 381: cf. *Josephus*, 'Antiquities,' b. v., ch. v., sec. 4). 22. horse-hoofs. Anciently, as in many parts of the East still, horses were not shod. The breaking of the hoofs denotes the hot haste and heavy irregular tramp of the routed foe.

23. Curse ye Meroz—a village on the confines of Issachar and Naphtali, which lay in the course of the fugitives; but the inhabitants declined to aid in their destruction. The ground of this anathema was, that the whole body of Israelites, holding the tenure of their lands on condition of military service, were bound when called upon to appear on the field as the national militia in defence or furtherance of the public interests.

24. Blessed above women shall Jael . . . be. A high eulogy is pronounced on her devoted loyalty to Israel, and the important service she rendered by her deed of extraordinary daring. In these verses is a most graphic picture of the treatment of Sisera in the tent of Jael. 25. butter [חֵמָה] curdled milk; Septuagint, *βουτυρον*: a favourite beverage in the East]. *Josephus* calls it sour milk, which, diluted with water, is called *leban*, and is a common, because a refreshing, beverage in Palestine. in a lordly dish [כְּבִישׁ אַדְמִי]—in a princely, i. e., precious, bowl.

28-30. In these verses a sudden transition is made to the mother of the Canaanite general, and a striking picture is drawn of a mind agitated

between hope and fear—impatience of delay, yet anticipating the news of victory, and the rewards of rich booty. 28. The mother of Sisera looked out at a window, and cried through the lattice. The window in an Eastern house is made of wood in the latticed form, to serve as a folding door, and is large, extending from the ceiling to the floor, for the purpose of being fully opened, not only for the admission of light, but for the circulation of air. Windows commonly look into the quadrangular court, while the side of the house next the street is a dead, bare wall. But there were anciently, as there still are, exceptions to this general rule (2 Ki. ix. 30; Prov. vii. 9). The windows which front the street in the modern East are high in the wall and narrow, so that although, when opened, the inmates are enabled to see whatever is going on without, it is impossible for any passenger to distinguish any object in the interior of the dwelling. Doubtless the latticed window out of which Sisera's mother looked was in the same style; and as she probably chose it as commanding a view along the spacious plain of Jezreel (Esdraelon), her thoughts were naturally engrossed with one subject of intense and hourly-increasing anxiety, as she strained her eyes to catch the first glimpse of the general and his troops returning, as she doubted not they would do, flushed with victory and laden with booty. (*Byron's* 'Giaour' has a fine passage, in which Hassan, having been slain by a sudden onslaught of his foe, the Giaour, the mother of Hassan is represented as awaiting his return, and wondering at his delay.

'His mother looked from her lattice high.
'Tis twilight,—sure his train is nigh.
She would not rest in the garden bow,
But gazed through the grate of the steepest tower.
Why comes he not?—his steeds are fleet;
Nor shrink they from the summer heat,' &c.

This spirited description is evidently a modern adaptation of the concluding passage in the beautiful dithyrambic of Deborah.) why tarry the wheels

- 29 Her wise ladies answered her,—yea, she returned ¹⁹answer to herself,
 30 Have ^wthey not sped? have they *not* divided the prey;
²⁰To every man a damsel or two;
 To Sisera a prey of divers colours,
 A prey of divers colours of needle-work,
 Of divers colours of needle-work on both sides,
 Meet for the necks of *them that take the spoil*!
- 31 So ^xlet all thine enemies perish, O LORD:
 But *let* them that love him *be* ^yas the sun ^zwhen he goeth forth in his
 might.
 And the land had rest forty years.
- 6 AND ^athe children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD: and
 2 the LORD delivered them into the hand ^bof Midian seven years. And
 the hand of Midian ¹prevailed against Israel: *and* because of the
 Midianites the children of Israel made them ^cthe dens which *are* in
 3 the mountains, and caves, and strong holds. And *so* it was, when Israel

B. C. 1290.

¹⁹ Her words.^w Ex. 15. 9.

Job 20. 5.

²⁰ to the

head of a

man.

^x 1 s. 58. 11.

Fs. 53. 9.

Rev. 6. 10.

^y 2 Sam. 23. 4.

Fs. 37. 6.

Matt. 13. 43.

^z Fs. 19. 6.

CHAP. 6.

^a Lev. 26. 14.

ch 2. 19.

^b Hab. 3. 7.¹ was strong.^c 1 Sam. 13. 6.

of his chariots? [צָרָפָה]—the paces of his chariots.

29. Her wise ladies answered her. In her impatient anxiety she is represented as seeking comfort from her maids of honour, who, from their experience or by their adroitness in practising the arts of courtiers, suggested many probable causes of the delay, without including the possibility either of discomfiture or of death. *yea, she returned answer to herself.* *J. D. Michaelis* suggests that the reading should be, 'and she (viz., the mother of Sisera) replied to her (viz., the wise lady) who was comforting her.' 'There is,' he remarks, 'in the following a truly exquisite imitation of female conversation, the mother of Sisera, a proud, light-minded woman, always expressing a hope of better tidings than her attendants promised, and drawing a bright picture from her excited imagination. 30. Have they not sped? The conversation is thus arranged by the writer abovenamed:—The wise ladies—'Will they not have got?' Sisera's mother, interrupting—'They will be dividing the prey. That must be the cause of the delay.' The wise ladies—'A maiden to every man' (*lit.*, to the head of a man). Sisera's mother—'Two maidens' (viz., to every man). They—'To Sisera a prey of divers colours' (*i. e.*, a garment, not made of coloured patches sewed together, but woven with threads previously dyed) (see on Exod. xxxv. 25; cf. *Wilkinson's* 'Ancient Egypt,' iii., 125). She, dilating, adds—'A garment of divers colours of needle-work, of divers colours of needle-work' (*i. e.*, the word being dual, embroidered on both sides) (*Rosenmüller*, 'Scholia,' h. l.; *J. D. Michaelis*, ed. of *Louth's* 'Lectures on Hebrew Poetry,' p. 259); or, two embroidered cloaks (*Bertheau*, 'Commentary,' h. l.) for the necks [צָרָפָה for צָרָפָה] of a warrior. Sisera's mother attributed the delay in his return to the great number of captives (female captives) taken from the enemy—females of the Israelite soldiers taken prisoners in their camp, equally with seizures made in the villages and towns through which the conquerors passed (see *Xenophon*, 'Cyrus,' i. iv.; *Herodotus*, 'Polhymnia,' cap. xxxix.; *Homer*, 'Iliad,' b. i., capture of Briseis). With regard to sumptuous dress, gorgeous and party-coloured cloaks are worn by military officers of high rank in the East, and these are made like what are used amongst ourselves, to fit closely to the neck. The devices of embroidery are bestowed chiefly on those portions of the robe which are close to the neck, and which frequently display both ingenuity and taste. Such cloaks are much valued, being worn, not by the

women only, but by men, even by stern warriors; and as a rule in ancient warfare, a richly embroidered cloak, when discovered amongst the booty, was reserved after a victory as a prize for the general or commander of the victorious party. Hence Sisera's mother, in the fondness of her maternal anticipations, allotted an elaborate and gaily decorated cloak to her son as the reward of his gallant conduct.

31. So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord, &c. The ode concludes with a wish in unison with the pious and patriotic character of the prophetess. The author of the song seems at the close to cast a retrospective glance on the issues of that eventful battle; and after expressing a hope that the enemies of the Lord might all share the fate of Sisera and his army, then uttered a fervent prayer that Israel, as the true people of God, might henceforth run a course of national prosperity as brilliant and beneficial as the summer's sun.

CHAP. VI. 1-6.—THE ISRAELITES, FOR THEIR SINS, OPPRESSED BY MIDIAN.

1. the Lord delivered them into the hand of Midian. Untaught by their former experiences, the Israelites again apostatized, and new sins were followed by fresh judgments. Midian had sustained a severe blow in the time of Moses (Num. xxxi. 1-18). They were then greatly reduced in numbers, and their country desolated, that those who had saved themselves by flight might not be attracted to return. But in the course of 200 years they had increased in population as well as in power, and the memory of that disaster no doubt inflamed their resentment against the Israelites, whom they attacked on the north and east so successfully that they overcame the inhabitants of those parts in Palestine, and kept them in a state of painful subjection for seven years. 2. because of the Midianites the children of Israel made them the dens which are in the mountains, &c. Palestine is a mountainous country, and, from the limestone character of its rocks, abounds in caverns, natural and artificial. Of the former, instances occur frequently in the sacred history (Gen. xix. 30; xxiii. 9; xxv. 9; Josh. x. 16; 1 Sam. xxii. 1; xxiv. 4); and of the latter, profane historians and travellers have given ample details (*Josephus*, 'Antiquities,' b. xiv., ch. xv.; 'Jewish Wars,' b. i., ch. xvi.; *Strabo*, b. xvi.; *Tavernier*, 'Voyage de Perse,' part ii., ch. iv.; 'Maundrell,' p. 118). Many of these caves are very large, capable of holding 4,000 people. And there is reason to conclude that they were formed for the use of the living, and not of the dead.

had sown, that the Midianites came up, and the Amalekites, ^a and the 4 children of the east, even they came up against them; and they encamped against them, ^c and destroyed the increase of the earth, till thou come unto Gaza, and left no sustenance for Israel, neither ² sheep, nor ox, 5 nor ass. For they came up with their cattle and their tents, and they came as grasshoppers for multitude; for both they and their camels were 6 without number: and they entered into the land to destroy it. And Israel was greatly impoverished because of the Midianites; and the children of Israel ^d cried unto the LORD.

7 And it came to pass, when the children of Israel cried unto the LORD 8 because of the Midianites, that the LORD sent ³ a prophet unto the children of Israel, which said unto them, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I brought you up from Egypt, and brought you forth out of the 9 house of bondage; and I delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of all that oppressed you, and drave them out from 10 before you, and gave you their land; and I said unto you, I *am* the LORD your God; ^e fear not the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but ye have not obeyed my voice.

11 And there came an angel of the LORD, and sat under an oak which was in Ophrah, that pertained unto Joash ^h the Abi-ezrite: and his son Gideon threshed wheat by the wine-press, ⁴ to hide it from the Midian- 12 ites. And the ¹ angel of the LORD appeared unto him, and said unto 13 him, The LORD is with thee, thou mighty man of valour. And Gideon said unto him, Oh my Lord, if the LORD be with us, why then is all this

B. C. 1256.

^a Gen. 21. 1.
ch 7. 13.
ch. 8. 10.
¹ Ki 4. 30.
Job 1. 3.
² Lev 26. 16.
Deut. 25. 31, 33.
Job 31. 7, 8.
Jer. 5. 17.
Jer. 12. 12, 13.
Mic. 6. 15.
³ Or, goat.
⁴ Ps. 50. 15.
Ps. 78. 31.
Hos 5. 15.
⁵ a man a prophet.
⁶ 2 Ki. 17. 35, 39.
Jer. 10. 2.
⁷ Josh. 17. 2.
ch. 8. 2.
⁸ to cause it to flee.
⁹ Gen. 16. 7-13.
Luke 1. 11, 23.
ch. 13. 3.

The Horites on mount Seir were Troglodytes; and mention is made in the Koran (chs. xv., xxvi.) of the Arabian tribe of Thamud, 'who hewed houses out of the mountains to secure themselves.' At the period of their national history to which this chapter refers, the Israelites appear greatly to have increased the number of these mountain grottoes, and to have become, at least in the eastern parts of Judea, to so great an extent a Troglodyte people, that the remembrance of this means of safety was never forgotten; and in times of public panic they resorted to their subterranean hiding-places (1 Sam. xiii. 6). 3. the Midianites came up, and the Amalekites, and the children of the east [בְּנֵי יִקְוֹן]—Arab tribes, Ishmaelites, called "children of the east," from their occupying the territory east of the Red Sea, contiguous to Moab. Amalekites (see on Gen. xiv. 7; Exod. xvii. 8). These nomads were on this occasion joined in alliance with the Midianites. The destructive ravages they are described as at this time committing in the land of Israel are similar to those of the Bedouin Arabs, who harass the peaceful cultivators of the soil, and unless a composition is made with them, return annually at a certain season, when they carry off the grain, seize the cattle and other property, and even life itself is in jeopardy from the attacks of those prowling marauders. So unchanged are the habitudes and relations of Oriental nations, the description in this chapter of the wandering tribes who live by plunder applies accurately in the present day (see instances of Arab raids in *Rogers's* 'Domestic Life in Palestine,' pp. 177, 178). But the vast horde of Midianites that overran Canaan made them the greatest scourge which had ever afflicted the Israelites. 5. they came as grasshoppers for multitude [כַּמְּחַרְבֵּי לֶבֶת], according to the abundance of the locust for multitude; Septuagint, καθὼς ἀκρίαι εἰς πλῆθος].

7-10.—A PROPHET REBUKES THEM.

8. the Lord sent a prophet. This prophet exer-

cised the pastoral office only. Like the man of God commissioned to reprove Eli (1 Sam. xi. 27-29), he was the bearer of a specific message, but not the utterer of prophetic sayings. His function was to rouse the Israelites to a sense of their sin in apostatizing from God. The national calamity is authoritatively traced to their infidelity as the cause.

11-16.—AN ANGEL SENDS GIDEON TO DELIVER THEM.

11. there came an angel of the Lord. The Vulgate renders it, the Lord (himself). He appeared in the character and equipments of a traveller (*v.* 21), who sat down in the shade to enjoy a little refreshment and repose, and, entering into conversation on the engrossing topic of the times—the grievous oppression of the Midianites—began urging Gideon to exert his well-known prowess on behalf of his country. Gideon, in replying, addresses him at first in a style equivalent (in Hebrew) to 'sir,' but afterwards gives to him the name usually applied to God. an oak—Hebrew, *the oak*, as famous in after-times. Ophrah—a city in the tribe of Manasseh, about sixteen miles north of Jericho, in the district belonging to the family of Abiezer (Josh. xvii. 2). his son Gideon threshed wheat by the wine-press. This incident tells emphatically the tale of public distress. The small quantity of grain he was thrashing, indicated by his using a flail instead of the customary treading of cattle—the unusual place, near a wine-press, under a tree, and on the bare ground, not a wooden floor, for the prevention of noise—all these circumstances reveal the extreme dread in which the people were living. 'So now, as the Bedouins come from beyond Jordan every year, just after the winter rains are over, when the grain is springing up, the people in Palestine do not venture to cultivate more land than they hope to be able to protect.' (*Rogers's* 'Domestic Life in Palestine,' p. 177). 13. if the Lord be with us. Gideon's language betrays want of reflection, for the very chastisements God had brought on His

befallen us? and ^jwhere *be* all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt? but now the LORD hath ^kforsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites.

14 And the LORD looked upon him, and said, ^lGo in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have ^mnot I sent thee? And he said unto him, Oh my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, ⁿmy family *is* poor in Manasseh, and I *am* the least in my father's house. And the LORD said unto him, ^oSurely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man. And he said unto him, If now I have found grace in thy sight, then ^pshow me a sign that thou talkest with me. Depart ^qnot hence, I pray thee, until I come unto thee, and bring forth my ^rpresent, and set *it* before thee. And he said, I will tarry until thou come again.

19 And Gideon went in, and made ready ^sa kid, and unleavened cakes of an ephah of flour: the flesh he put in a basket, and he put the broth in a pot, and brought *it* out unto him under the oak, and presented *it*.

20 And the angel of God said unto him, Take the flesh and the unleavened cakes, and ^tlay *them* upon this rock, and ^upour out the broth. And he did so. Then the angel of the LORD put forth the end of the staff that *was* in his hand, and touched the flesh and the unleavened cakes; and ^vthere rose up fire out of the rock, and consumed the flesh and the unleavened cakes. Then the angel of the LORD departed out of his sight.

22 And when Gideon perceived that he *was* an angel of the LORD, Gideon said, Alas, O Lord GOD! ^wfor because I have seen an angel of the LORD face to face. And the LORD said unto him, ^xPeace *be* unto thee; fear not: thou shalt not die.

24 Then Gideon built an altar there unto the LORD, and called it ^yJehovah-shalom: unto this day it *is* yet ^zin Ophrah of the Abi-ezrites.

25 And it came to pass the same night, that the LORD said unto him, Take thy father's young bullock, ^{aa}even the second bullock of seven years old, and throw down the altar of Baal that thy father hath, and cut ^{ab}down the grove that *is* by it: and build an altar unto the LORD thy God upon the top of this ^{ac}rock, ^{ad}in the ordered place, and take the second

B. C. 1249.

^j Ps. 44. 1.
 Pa. 89. 49.
 Isa. 69. 1.
^k 2 Chr. 15. 2.
 Jer. 23. 33.
 39.
 Hos 9 12.
^l 1 Sam. 12.
 11.
^m Josh. 1 9.
 5 my thousand is the meanest.
 1 Sam. 9 21.
ⁿ Ex 3. 12.
 Josh. 1. 5.
^o Ex. 4. 1.
^p Gen. 15. 3.
^q Or, meat offering.
^r a kid of the goats.
^s ch 13. 19.
^t 1 Ki. 18. 33.
^u Lev. 9. 24.
^v 2 Chr. 7. 1.
^w Gen. 15. 13.
^x Ex. 31. 21.
^y Dan. 10. 19.
^z That is, The LORD send peace.
^{aa} ch. 8. 31.
^{ab} Or and.
^{ac} Ex. 31. 13.
 Deut. 7. 5.
^{ad} strong place.
^{ae} Or, in an orderly manner.

people showed His presence with, and His interest in, them. 14. Go in this thy might . . . have not I sent thee? The command and the promise made Gideon aware of the real character of his visitor; and yet, like Moses, from a sense of humility, or a shrinking at the magnitude of the undertaking, he excused himself from entering on the enterprise. And even though assured that, with the Divine aid, he would overcome the Midianites as easily as if they were but one man, he still hesitates, and wishes to be better assured that the mission was really from God. He resembles Moses also in the desire for a sign; and in both cases it was the rarity of revelations in such periods of general corruption that made them so desirous of having the fullest conviction of being addressed by a heavenly messenger. The request was reasonable, and it was graciously granted.

18-23.—GIDEON'S PRESENT CONSUMED BY FIRE.

18. until I . . . bring . . . my present—Hebrew, my *mincha*, or meat offering; and his idea probably was to prove, by his visitor's partaking of the entertainment, whether or not he was more than man.

19. the flesh he put in a basket, and he put the broth in a pot—(see on Gen. xviii.) The flesh seems to have been roasted, which is done by cutting it into *kobab*—i. e., into small pieces, fixed on a skewer, and put before the fire. The broth was for immediate use; the other, brought in a hand-basket, was intended to be a future supply

to the traveller. The miraculous fire that consumed it, and the vanishing of the stranger, not by walking, but as a spirit in the fire, filled Gideon with awe. A consciousness of demerit fills the heart of every fallen man at the thought of God, with fear of His wrath; and this feeling was increased by a belief prevalent in ancient times, that whoever saw an angel would forthwith die. The acceptance of Gideon's sacrifice betokened the acceptance of his person; but it required an express assurance of the Divine blessing, given in some unknown manner, to restore his comfort and peace of mind.

25. And it came to pass the same night, that the Lord said unto him. The transaction in which Gideon is here described as engaged was not entered on till the night after the vision. Take thy father's . . . second bullock. The Midianites had probably reduced the family herd; or, as Gideon's father was addicted to idolatry, the best may have been fattened for the service of Baal; so that the second was the only remaining one fit for sacrifice to God. throw down the altar of Baal that thy father hath—standing upon his ground, though kept for the common use of the townsmen. cut down the grove that is by it—dedicated to Astartoth. With the aid of ten confidential servants he demolished the one altar, and raised on the appointed spot the altar of the Lord; but, for fear of opposition, the work had to be done under cover of night. A violent commo-

bullock, and offer a burnt sacrifice with the wood of the grove which thou shalt cut down. Then Gideon took ten men of his servants, and did as the LORD had said unto him: and so it was, because he feared his father's household, and the men of the city, that he could not do it by day, that he did it by night.

28 And when the men of the city arose early in the morning, behold, the altar of Baal was cast down, and the grove was cut down that was by it, and the second bullock was offered upon the altar that was built. And they said one to another, Who hath done this thing? And when they enquired and asked, they said, Gideon the son of Joash hath done this thing. Then the men of the city said unto Joash, Bring out thy son, that he may die; because he hath cast down the altar of Baal, and because he hath cut down the grove that was by it. And Joash said unto all that stood against him, Will ye plead for Baal? will ye save him? he that will plead for him, let him be put to death whilst it is yet morning: if he be a god, let him plead for himself, because one hath cast down his altar. Therefore on that day he called him Jerubbaal, saying, Let Baal plead against him, because he hath thrown down his altar.

33 Then all the Midianites and the Amalekites and the children of the east were gathered together, and went over, and pitched in the valley of Jezreel. But the Spirit of the LORD came upon Gideon, and he blew a trumpet; and Abi-ezer was gathered after him. And he sent messengers throughout all Manasseh; who also was gathered after him: and he sent messengers unto Asher, and unto Zebulun, and unto Naphtali; and they came up to meet them.

36 And Gideon said unto God, If thou wilt save Israel by mine hand, as thou hast said, behold, I will put a fleece of wool in the floor; and if the dew be on the fleece only, and it be dry upon all the earth beside, then shall I know that thou wilt save Israel by mine hand, as thou hast said. And it was so: for he rose up early on the morrow, and thrust the fleece together, and wringed the dew out of the fleece, a bowl full of water. And Gideon said unto God, Let not thine anger be hot against me, and I will speak but this once: let me prove, I pray thee, but this once with the fleece; let it now be dry only upon the fleece, and upon all the ground let there be dew. And God did so that night: for it was dry upon the fleece only, and there was dew on all the ground.

7 THEN Jerubbaal, who is Gideon, and all the people that were with

tion was excited next day, and vengeance vowed against Gideon as the perpetrator. Joash, his father, quieted the mob in a manner similar to that of the town-clerk of Ephesus. It was not for them to take the matter into their own hands. The one, however, made an appeal to the magistrate; the other to the idolatrous god himself (Chalmers).

32. Therefore . . . he called him—not Joash, but the people, so that it is equivalent to 'he was called.' Jerubbaal—i. e., with whom Baal contends; or Jerubbesheth (2 Sam. xi. 21), i. e., with whom the idol contends [Septuagint, ἐκάλεσεν αὐτὸ Ἱεροβααλ, called it, viz., the altar, Jerubbaal].

33-39.—THE SIGNS.

33. all the Midianites . . . pitched in . . . Jezreel. Jezreel means 'God sows.' The confederated troops of Midian, Amalek, and their neighbours, crossing the Jordan to make a fresh inroad on Canaan, encamped in the extensive and fertile plain of Esdraelon (anciently Jezreel). The southern part of the Ghor lies in a very low level, so that there is a steep and difficult ascent

into Canaan by the southern wadies. Keeping this in view, we see the reason why the Midianite army, from the east of Jordan, entered Canaan by the northern wadies of the Ghor, opposite Jezreel.

34. the Spirit of the Lord came upon Gideon. Called in this sudden emergency into the public service of his country, he was supernaturally endowed with wisdom and energy commensurate with the magnitude of the danger and the difficulties of his position. His war summons was enthusiastically obeyed by all the neighbouring tribes. On the eve of a perilous enterprise he sought to fortify his mind with a fresh assurance of a divine call to the responsible office. The miracle of the fleece was a very remarkable one, especially considering the copious dews that fall in his country. The Divine patience and condescension were wonderfully manifested in reversing the form of the miracle. Gideon himself seems to have been conscious of incurring the displeasure of God by his hesitancy and doubts; but He bears with the infirmities of His people.

CHAP. VII. 1-8.—GIDEON'S ARMY.

1. Jerubbaal—(cf. ch. vi. 32.) This had now

B. C. 1249.

* Ps. 117. 5.

John 3. 1.

† Jer. 26. 11.

John 16. 2.

Acts 26. 9.

12 That is,

Let Baal

plead.

1 Sam. 12.

11.

Or, Jerub-

besheth;

that is

Let shame,

or, con-

fusi-n,

plead

2 Sam. 11.

21.

Jer. 11. 13.

Hos. 9. 10.

* Josh. 17.16.

Josh. 19.18.

1 Ki. 13. 45.

1 Ki. 21. 23.

† ch. 3. 10.

ch. 11. 29.

ch. 13. 25.

ch. 14. 6, 19.

1 Chr. 12. 1.

2 Chr. 24. 10.

1 Cor. 12. 8-

11.

13 clothed.

† Num. 10. 3.

ch. 3. 27.

14 was called

after him.

† Ex. 4. 3, 4,

6, 7.

Deut. 32. 2.

Ps. 72. 6.

Hos. 6. 3, 4.

Hos. 11. 5.

† Gen. 19. 32.

† CHAP. 7.

† ch. 6. 52.

1 Sam. 12.

11.

- him, rose ^bup early, and pitched beside the well of ¹Harod: so that the host of the Midianites were on the north side of them, by the hill of ²Moreh, in the ^cvalley. And the LORD said unto Gideon, The people that *are* with thee *are* too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel ^avaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand ³hath saved me. Now therefore go to, proclaim in the ears of the people, saying, 'Whosoever *is* fearful and afraid, let him return and depart early from mount Gilead. And there returned of the people twenty and two thousand; and there remained ten thousand.
- ⁴ And the LORD said unto Gideon, The people *are* yet too many; bring them down unto the water, and I will ²try them for thee there: and it shall be, *that* of whom I say unto thee, This shall go with thee, the same shall go with thee; and of whomsoever I say unto thee, This shall not ⁵go with thee, the same shall not go. So he brought down the people unto the water: and the LORD said unto Gideon, Every one that lappeth of the water with his tongue, as a dog lappeth, him shalt thou set by himself; likewise every one that boweth down upon his knees to drink. ⁶ And the number of them that lapped, *putting* their hand to their mouth, were three hundred men: but all the rest of the people bowed down upon ⁷their knees to drink water. And the LORD said unto Gideon, 'By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you, and deliver the Midianites into thine hand: and let all the *other* people go every man unto his place. ⁸ So the people took victuals in their hand, and their trumpets: and he sent all *the rest of* Israel every man unto his tent, and retained those three hundred men. And the host of Midian was beneath him in the valley.
- ⁹ And it came to pass the same ⁹night, that the LORD said unto him, Arise, get thee down unto the host; for I have delivered it into thine ¹⁰hand. But if thou fear to go down, go thou with Phurah thy servant ¹¹down to the host: and thou shalt ^hhear what they say; and afterward shall thine hands be strengthened to go down unto the host. Then went he down with Phurah his servant unto the outside of the ³armed men

B. C. 1219.

^b Gen. 2: 3.
 Josh. 3. 1.
 Josh. 6. 12.
 Eccl. 9. 10.
¹ That is,
 trembling
^c Gen. 12. 6.
^d Deut. 8. 17.
 Deut. 9. 4.
 Deut. 32. 27.
 1 Sam. 17.
 47.
 1's. 31. 16-
 18.
 1's. 44. 6, 7.
 1 Ro. 25. 6.
 1-s. 10. 13.
 Zech. 4. 6.
 1 Cor. 1. 2, 2.
 2 Cor. 4. 7.
^e Deut. 20. 8.
 Matt. 13. 21.
 Luke 11 27-
 33.
 Rev. 17. 14.
² separate,
 cr. puri'y.
 1 Sam. 16. 6,
 7.
 Mal. 3. 2, 3.
 1 Sam. 14. 6.
 Isa. 41. 14.
⁹ Gen. 46. 2, 3.
 Job 4. 13.
 Matt. 1. 10.
^h Gen. 21. 14.
 1 Sam. 14. 9,
 10.
³ Or, ranks
 by five.
 Ex. 14. 15.

become Gideon's honourable surname—'the enemy of Baal.' well—rather, 'spring of Harod'—*i. e.*, 'fear, trembling;' probably the same as the fountain in Jezreel (1 Sam. xxix. 1). It was situated not far from Gilboa, on the confines of Manasseh; and the name "Harod" was bestowed on it with evident reference to the panic which seized the majority of Gideon's troops. The host of the Midianites were on the northern side of the valley, seemingly deeper down in the descent towards the Jordan, near a little eminence. ² the Lord said . . . The people . . . are too many. Although the Israelitish army mustered only 32,000—or one-sixth of the Midianitish host—the number was too great; for it was the Lord's purpose to teach Israel a memorable lesson of dependence on Him. ³ Now therefore . . . proclaim . . . Whosoever is fearful . . . let him return. This proclamation was in terms of an established law (Deut. xx. 8).

⁴ too many. Two reductions were ordered; the last by the application of a test which was made known to Gideon alone. bring them down to the water. The wandering people in Asia, when, on a journey or in haste, they come to water, do not stoop down with deliberation on their knees, but only bend forward as much as is necessary to bring their hand in contact with the stream, and throw it up with rapidity, and at the same time such address, that they do not drop a particle. The Israelitish, it seems, were acquainted with the practice; and those who adopted it on

this occasion were selected as fit for a work that required expedition; the rest were dismissed, according to the Divine direction. ⁷ the Lord said . . . By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you. It is scarcely possible to conceive a severer trial than the command to attack the overwhelming forces of the enemy with such a handful of followers. But Gideon's faith in the Divine assurance of victory was steadfast; and it is for this he is so highly commended, Heb. xi. 32. ⁸ he sent all the rest of Israel every man unto his tent. ["The rest" are neither in the Hebrew original nor in the Septuagint; *καὶ τὸν ἄδρα Ἰσραὴλ ἐξάπεστέλει, ἄδρα εἰς σκηνὴν αὐτοῦ*], the host of Midian was beneath him in the valley. Attention to the relative position of the parties is of the greatest importance to an understanding of what follows.

9-15.—HE IS ENCOURAGED BY THE DREAM AND THE INTERPRETATION OF THE BARLEY CAKE.

⁹ Arise, get thee down . . . ¹⁰ go thou with Phurah thy servant. In ancient times it was reckoned no degradation for persons of the highest rank and character to act as spies on an enemy's camp; and so Gideon did on this occasion. But the secret errand was directed by God, who intended that he should hear something which might animate his own and the valour of his troops. ¹¹ the outside of the armed men that were in the host. "Armed" [ἄρμα]; margin, in ranks by five, or embodied—embodied under the five officers established by the ordinary laws and

12 that *were* in the host. And the Midianites and the Amalekites and ⁱall the children of the east lay along in the valley like grasshoppers for multitude; and their camels *were* without number, as the sand by the sea-side for multitude. And when Gideon was come, behold, *there was* a man that told a dream unto his fellow, and said, Behold, I dreamed a dream, and, lo, ^{ja}a cake of barley bread tumbled into the host of Midian, and came unto a tent, and smote it that it fell, and overturned it, that the tent lay along. And ^khis fellow answered and said, This *is* nothing else save the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel: *for* into his hand hath God delivered Midian, and all the host. And it was *so*, when Gideon heard the telling of the dream, and ⁴the interpretation thereof, that he worshipped, and returned into the host of Israel, and said, Arise; for the LORD hath delivered into your hand the host of Midian. And he divided the three hundred men *into* three companies, and he put ^{5a}a trumpet in every man's hand, with empty pitchers, and ⁶lamps within the pitchers. And he said unto them, Look on me, and do likewise: and, behold, when I come to the outside of the camp, it shall be, *that* as I do, so shall ye do. When I blow with a trumpet, I and all that *are* with me, then blow ye the trumpets also on every side of all the camp, and say, *The sword* of the LORD, and of Gideon.

19 So Gideon, and the hundred men that *were* with him, came unto the outside of the camp in the beginning of the ^l'middle watch; and they had but newly set the watch: and they blew the trumpets, and brake the 20 pitchers that *were* in their hands. And the three companies blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers, and held the lamps in their left hands, and the trumpets in their right hands to blow *withal*: and they cried, 21 The sword of the LORD, and of Gideon. And they ^mstood every man in

B. C. 1249.
 ch. 6. 5. 33.
 ch. 8. 10.
 ch. 3. 15, 31.
 ch. 4. 9, 21.
 ch. 6. 15.
 Isa. 41. 14, 15.
 1 Cor. 1. 27.
 k Gen. 40. 8.
 Num. 22. 33.
 Num. 21. 5.
 4 the breaking thereof.
 5 trumpets in the hand of all of them.
 Num. 10. 9.
 Josh. 6. 4.
 2 Chr. 13. 14, 15.
 Amos 3. 6.
 6 Or, firebrands, or, torches.
 l Ex. 14. 24.
 Luke 12. 39.
 Rev. 16. 15.
 m Ex. 14. 13, 14.
 2 Chr. 50. 17.
 Isa. 30. 7.
 15.

usages of encampments (see on Exod. xiii. 18, last clause). The camp seems to have been unprotected by any rampart, since Gideon had no difficulty in reaching and overhearing a conversation that was passing in one of them. 12. lay along in the valley . . . and their camels were without number—a most graphic description of an Arab encampment. They lay wrapt in sleep, or resting from their day's plunder, while their innumerable camels were stretched round about them. 13. I dreamed . . . and, lo, a cake of barley bread tumbled. This was a characteristic and very expressive dream for an Arab in the circumstances. The rolling down the hill, striking against the tents, and overturning them, naturally enough connected it in his mind with the position and meditated attack of the Israelitish leader. The circumstance of the cake, too, was very significant (Bähr's 'Symbolik,' ii., 8, sec. 445). Barley was usually the food of the poor, and of beasts; but most probably, from the wide-spread destruction of the crops by the invaders, multitudes must have been reduced to poor and scanty fare. 14. Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel [גִּדְיוֹן]—a mighty or distinguished man of Israel. 15. when Gideon heard the telling of the dream, and the interpretation . . . he worshipped. The incident originated in the secret overruling providence of God; and Gideon, from his expression of pious gratitude, regarded it as such. On his mind, as well as that of his followers, it produced the intended effect—that of imparting new animation and impulse to their patriotism.

16-23.—HIS STRATAGEM AGAINST MIDIAN.
 16. he divided the three hundred men. The object of dividing his forces was, that they might seem to be surrounding the enemy. he put a trumpet in every man's hand, with empty pitchers, and lamps within the pitchers. The

law prescribed to the Israelites the employment of trumpets in battle with their enemies; and the Lord, on the blast of them, remembered His people (Num. x. 9). Gideon, therefore, provided them, as of indispensable importance, apart from his strategic device. The pitchers were empty, to conceal the torches, and made of earthenware, so as to be easily broken. "Lamps" [לְפָתִיחַי]—rendered in our version sometimes "firebrands," and at other times, as here, "lamps." Large splinters of wood, either of a resinous nature in themselves, or artificially prepared, are made use of in the Levant, instead of flambeaux; and if these are in use now, when great improvements have been made in all the arts of life, it is natural to suppose they were used anciently, particularly by the common people. If the peasants, and those who were abroad at night, as shepherds and travellers, who wanted light, made use of this kind of torches, it can be no wonder that Gideon should be able, with so much ease, to procure 300 of them for 300 men that he retained with him; or that they should continue burning some considerable time in their pitchers.

19. Gideon . . . came . . . in the beginning of the middle watch. In the early period of their history the Israelites divided the night into three watches (Ps. lxxiii. 6; xc. 4), the first watch extending till midnight (Lam. ii. 19), the middle watch from midnight till cock-crowing, and the morning till sunrise (Exod. xiv. 24). they blew the trumpets, &c. The sudden blaze of the held-up lights, the loud echo of the trumpets, and the shouts of Israel—always terrible (Num. xxiii. 21), and now more terrible than ever by the use of such striking words—broke through the stillness of the midnight air; the sleepers started from their rest; not a blow was dealt by the Israelites, but the enemy ran tumultuously, uttering the

his place round about the camp: "and all the host ran, and cried, and
 22 fled. And the three hundred ^oblew the trumpets, and ^pthe LORD set
^qevery man's sword against his fellow, even throughout all the host: and
 the host fled to Beth-shittah ^rin Zererath, and to the ^sborder of Abel-
 meholah, unto Tabbath.

23 And the men of Israel gathered themselves together out of Naphtali,
 and out of Asher, and out of all Manasseh, and pursued after the Midianites.

24 And Gideon sent messengers throughout all ^rmount Ephraim,
 saying, Come down against the Midianites, and take before them the
 waters unto Beth-barah and Jordan. Then all the men of Ephraim
 gathered themselves together, and ^stook the waters unto ^tBeth-barah
 and Jordan.

25 And they took ^utwo princes of the Midianites, Oreb and
 Zeeb; and they slew Oreb upon ^vthe rock Oreb, and Zeeb they slew at
 the wine-press of Zeeb, and pursued Midian, and brought the heads of
 Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon on the ^wother side Jordan.

8 AND ^athe men of Ephraim said unto him, ^bWhy hast thou served us
 thus, that thou calledst us not when thou wentest to fight with the
 2 Midianites? And they did chide with him ^csharply. And he said unto
 them, What have I done now in comparison of you? *Is not the glean-*
 3 *ing of the grapes of Ephraim better than the vintage of Abi-ezer?* God
^dhath delivered into your hands the princes of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb:
 and what was I able to do in comparison of you? Then their ^eanger
 was abated toward him, when he had said that.

4 And Gideon came to Jordan, and passed over, he, and the three
 5 hundred men that *were* with him, faint, yet pursuing *them*. And he
 said unto the men of ^fSuccoth, Give, I pray you, loaves of bread unto
 the people that follow me; for they *be* faint, and I am pursuing after

B. C. 1219.

^a 2 Ki. 7. 7.^b Josh. 6. 4.

16, 10.

^c 2 Cor. 4. 7.^d Ps. 83. 9.

Isa. 9. 4.

^e 1 Sam. 14.

20.

^f 2 Chr. 20. 23.^g Or, toward.^h 1ip.ⁱ ch. 3. 27.^j ch. 3. 23.^k John 1. 23.^l ch. 8. 3.^m Ps. 83. 11.ⁿ Isa. 10. 26.^o ch. 8. 4.

CHAP. 8.

^a ch. 12. 1.

2 Sam. 19.

41.

Job 6. 2.

Ecl. 4. 4.

^b 1 What

thing is

this thou

hast done

unto us?

^c 2 strongly.^d ch. 7. 21.^e Ps. 41. 3.^f 3 Sir. t.^g Gen. 31. 17.

wild, discordant cries peculiar to the Arab race. They fought indiscriminately, not knowing friend from foe. The panic being universal, they soon precipitately fled, directing their flight down to the Jordan, by the foot of the mountains of Ephraim, to places known as the 'house of the acacia,' and 'the meadow of the dance.'

23. the men of Israel gathered themselves together. These were evidently the parties dismissed, who, having lingered at a little distance from the scene of contest, now eagerly joined in the pursuit south-westward through the valley.

24. Gideon sent messengers throughout all mount Ephraim. The Ephraimites lay on the south, and could render reasonable aid. A message, therefore, was sent to inform the people of that large district of the occurrences, and to rouse them to engage in helping forward the common cause of their country's deliverance. Come . . . take before them the waters unto Beth-barah—(see on ch. iii. 28.) These were the northern fords of the Jordan, to the east-north-east of Wady Maleh. 'One of the main entrances into western Palestine from the Jordan has always been up the valley of Jezreel (now Zerin), at the foot of which are the fords of Beth-barah' (cf. John i. 28; *Drew's* 'Scripture Lands,' p. 196; *Retand's* 'Palestina,' ii., 626).

the men of Ephraim gathered themselves together . . . unto Beth-barah. A new conflict ensued, in which two secondary chiefs were seized, and slain on the spots where they were respectively taken. The spots were named after these chiefs, Oreb, 'the Raven,' and Zeeb, 'the Wolf'—appropriate designations of Arab leaders. Those titles are similar to 'the Black Eagle' and 'the Great Serpent' of the Red Indians, and to Hengist and Horsa, the 'Mare' and the 'Stallion' of the Saxons.

CHAP. VIII. 1-9.—THE EPHRAIMITES OFFENDED, BUT PACIFIED.

1. the men of Ephraim said . . . Why hast thou served us thus? Where this complaint was made—whether before or after the crossing of the Jordan—cannot be determined. By the overthrow of the national enemy the Ephraimites were benefited as largely as any of the other neighbouring tribes. But, piqued at not having been sharers in the glory of the victory, their leading men could not repress their wounded pride; and the occasion only served to bring out an old and deeply-seated feeling of jealous rivalry that subsisted between the tribes (Isa. ix. 21). The discontent was groundless, for Gideon acted according to Divine directions; and besides, as their tribe was contiguous with that of Gideon, they might, had they been really fired with the flame of patriotic zeal, have volunteered their services in a movement against the common enemy. 2. he said . . . What have I done now in comparison of you? His mild and truly modest answer breathes the spirit of a great as well as good man, who was calm, collected, and self-possessed in the midst of most exciting scenes. It succeeded in throwing oil on the troubled waters (Prov. xvi. 1); and no wonder, for in the height of generous self-denial it ascribes to his querulous brethren a greater share of merit and glory than belonged to himself (1 Cor. xiii. 4; Phil. ii. 3).

4. Gideon came to Jordan, and passed over—much exhausted, but eager to continue the pursuit till the victory was consummated. 5. he said unto the men of Succoth—*i. e.*, a place of tents or booths. The name seems to have been applied to the whole part of the Jordan valley on the west, as well as the east side of the river, all belonging to the tribe of Gad (cf. Gen. xxxiii. 17, 1 Ki. vii. 46, with Josh. xiii. 27). Being engaged in the common cause of all Israel, he had a right to expect support and encouragement from his coun-

- 6 Zebah and Zalmunna, kings of Midian. And the princes of Succoth said, *Are the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna now in thine hand, that*
- 7 *we should give bread unto thine army?* And Gideon said, Therefore, when the LORD hath delivered Zebah and Zalmunna into mine hand, then I will *tear your flesh with the thorns of the wilderness and with*
- 8 *briers.* And he went up thence *to Penuel, and spake unto them likewise: and the men of Penuel answered him as the men of Succoth had*
- 9 *answered him.* And he spake also unto the men of Penuel, saying, When I *come again in peace, I will break down this tower.*
- 10 Now Zebah and Zalmunna *were* in Karkor, and their hosts with them, about fifteen thousand *men*, all that were left of all *the* hosts of the children of the east: for there fell *an* hundred and twenty thousand
- 11 *men that drew sword.* And Gideon went up by the way of them that dwelt in tents on the east *of Nobah and Jogbehah, and smote the host:*
- 12 *for the host was secure.* And when Zebah and Zalmunna fled, he pursued after them, and *took* the two kings of Midian, Zebah and Zalmunna, and *discomfited* all the host.
- 13 And Gideon the son of Joash returned from battle before the sun *was*
- 14 *up, and caught a young man of the men of Succoth, and enquired of him: and he described unto him the princes of Succoth, and the elders thereof, even threescore and seventeen men.* And he came unto the men of Succoth, and said, Behold Zebah and Zalmunna, with whom ye did upbraid me, saying, *Are the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna now in thine*
- 15 *hand, that we should give bread unto thy men that are weary?* And he took the elders of the city, and thorns of the wilderness and briers, and
- 16 *with them he taught the men of Succoth.* And he beat down the tower of Penuel, and slew the men of the city.
- 17 Then said he unto Zebah and Zalmunna, What manner of men *were*
- 18 *they whom ye slew at Tabor?* And they answered, As thou *art, so were*

B. C. 1219.

- ^a 1 Ki. 20. 11.
^b 1 Sam. 25. 11.
^c thresh.
^d Gen. 3. 33.
^e 1 Ki. 12. 21.
^f 1 Ki. 22. 27.
^g Luke 12. 45.
^h 1 Thes. 5. 2.
ⁱ ch. 7. 12.
^j Or, an hundred and twenty thousand, every one drawing a sword.
^k ch. 20. 2.
^l 2 Ki. 3. 26.
^m Num. 2. 35.
ⁿ j ch. 18. 27.
^o Pro. 17. 18.
^p 1 Thes. 5. 3.
^q Josh. 10. 17-18, 22-25.
^r Ps. 53. 11.
^s Amos 2. 14.
^t Rev. 6. 15, 16.
^u terrified.
^v writ.
^w made to know.
^x 1 Ki. 12. 25.
^y ch. 4. 6.
^z Is. 8. 12.

trymen everywhere. 6. the princes of Succoth said, *Are the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna now in thine hand*—an insolent as well as a time-serving reply. It was insolent, because it implied a bitter taunt that Gideon was counting with confidence on a victory which they believed he would not gain; and it was time-serving, because, living in the near neighbourhood of the Midianite sheikhs, they dreaded the future vengeance of those roving chiefs. This contumelious manner of acting was heartless and disgraceful in people who were of Israelitish blood. 7. *I will tear your flesh with the thorns of the wilderness, and with briers*—a cruel torture, to which captives were often subjected in ancient times, by having thorus and briers placed on their naked bodies, and pressed down by sledges, or heavy implements of husbandry being dragged over them. 8. *he went . . . to Penuel, and spake unto them likewise*—a neighbouring city, situated also in the territory of Gad, near the Jabbok, and honoured with this name by Jacob (Gen. xxxii. 30, 31). 9. *he spake . . . When I come again . . . I will break down this tower.* Intent on the pursuit, and afraid of losing time, he postponed the merited vengeance till his return. His confident anticipation of a triumphant return evinces the strength of his faith, and his specific threat was probably provoked by some proud and presumptuous boast, that in their lofty watch-tower the Penelites would set him at defiance.

10-27.—ZEBAH AND ZALMUNNA TAKEN.

10. Now Zebah and Zalmunna were in Karkor—a town on the eastern confines of Gad. The wreck of the Midianite army halted there. 11. Gideon went up by the way of them that dwell in tents on the east. He tracked the fugitives

across the mountain range of Gilead to the north-east of the Jabbok, and there came upon them unexpectedly, while they were resting secure among their own nomadic tribes. Jogbehah is supposed to be Ramoth-gilead; and therefore the Midianites must have found refuge at or near Abela, 'Abel-cheramim,' the plain of the vineyards. 12. *when Zebah and Zalmunna fled, he pursued after them.* A third conflict took place. He arrived at their last quarters, which was by an unwonted path, took the fugitives by surprise, and the conquest was there completed of the Midianite horde.

13. Gideon . . . returned from battle before the sun was up. He seems to have returned by a nearer route to Succoth; for what is rendered in our version "before the sun was up," means 'the heights of Heres, the sunhills.' 14. *he described*—wrote the names of the seventy princes and elders. (It is curious to find the primitive institution of the eldership in such a place.) It was from them he had received so inhospitable a treatment. 16. *with them he taught the men of Succoth* (וְיָדַעְתֶּם אִתָּם אֵת אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה בְּפָנֵיהֶם), and with them made the men of Succoth know—i. e., punished, probably crushing, them with sledges upon a layer of thorns; Septuagint, *ῥηλοῖσεν*, bruised]. By refusing his soldiers refreshment, they had committed a public crime, as well as an act of inhumanity, and were subjected to a horrible punishment, which the great abundance and remarkable size of the thorn-bushes, together with the thinness of clothing in the East, had probably suggested.

18. Then said he unto Zebah and Zalmunna, What manner of men were they whom ye slew at Tabor? This was one of the countless atrocities which the Midianite chiefs had perpetrated during

19 they; each one ⁹ resembled the children of a king. And he said, They *were* my brethren, *even* the sons of my mother: *as* the Lord liveth, if ye
20 had saved them alive, I would not slay you. And he said unto Jether his first-born, Up, *and* slay them: but the youth drew not his sword; for
21 he feared, because he *was* yet a youth. Then Zebah and Zalmunna said, Rise thou, and fall upon us; for as the man *is*, *so is* his strength. And Gideon arose, and slew ¹⁰ Zebah and Zalmunna, and took away the ¹⁰ ornaments that *were* on their camels' necks.
22 Then the men of Israel said unto Gideon, Rule thou over us, both thou and thy son, and thy son's son also; for thou hast delivered us from the
23 hand of Midian. And Gideon said unto them, I will not rule over you,
24 neither shall my son rule over you: ⁹ the Lord shall rule over you. And Gideon said unto them, I would desire a request of you, that ye would give me every man the earrings of his prey: (for they had golden earrings,
25 ⁹ because they *were* Ishmaelites.) And they answered, We will willingly give *them*. And they spread a garment, and did cast therein every man
26 the earrings of his prey. And the weight of the golden earrings that he requested was a thousand and seven hundred *shekels* of gold; besides ornaments, and ¹¹ collars, and purple raiment that *was* on the kings of Midian,
27 and besides the chains that *were* about their camels' necks. And Gideon ² made an ephod thereof, and put it in his city, *even* ⁷ in Ophrah: and all Israel ⁸ went thither awhoring after it: which thing became 'a snare unto Gideon, and to his house.

B. C. 12. 9.
⁹ according to the form, etc.
¹⁰ Ps. 83, 11.
¹⁰ Or, ornaments like the moon.
⁹ 1 Sam. 8. 7.
1 Sam. 10. 19.
1 Sam. 12. 12.
Isa. 26. 17.
Isa. 33. 22.
Isa. 43. 15.
Hos. 13. 10.
⁹ Gen. 25. 13.
Gen. 37. 25.
¹¹ Or, sweet jewels.
⁹ ch. 17. 5.
ch. 18. 14, 17.
⁷ Deut. 12. 5.
ch. 6. 24.
⁸ Ex. 23. 33.
Ps. 73. 27.
Ps. 106. 37.
Deut. 7. 16.

their seven years' lawless occupancy. It is noticed now for the first time, when their fate was about to be determined. **each one resembled the children of a king**—an orientalism for great beauty, majesty of appearance, uncommon strength, and grandeur of form. 19. **They were my brethren, even the sons of my mother**—that is, uterine brothers; but, in all countries where polygamy prevails, 'the son of my mother' implies a closeness of relationship and a warmth of affection never awakened by the looser term, 'brother.' 20. **he said unto Jether his first-born, Up, and slay them.** The nearest of kin was the Göel—*i. e.*, blood avenger; and Jether, though but little more than a boy, was the Göel of his kin, and as such the protector even of his aged father. He was his father's *first-born*; and that Gideon could not be a Göel is clear from ch. iv. 15, where he says, "I am the least"—*lit.*, the small one, or youngest, in my father's house. But a magistrate might order any one to do the work of the executioner; and the person selected was always of a rank equal or proportioned to that of the party doomed to suffer (1 Ki. ii. 29). Gideon intended, then, by the order to Jether as the proper Göel of the family, to put an honour on his son, by employing him to slay two enemies of his country and murderers of his uncles; and on the youth declining, performed the bloody deed himself.

22. **Rule thou over us . . . 23. the Lord shall rule over you.** Their unbounded admiration and gratitude prompted them, in the enthusiasm of the moment, to raise their deliverer to a throne, and to establish a royal dynasty in his house. But Gideon knew too well, and revered too piously, the principles of the theocracy to entertain the proposal for a moment. Personal and family ambition was cheerfully sacrificed to a sense of duty, and every worldly motive was kept in check by a supreme regard to the Divine honour. He would willingly act as judge; but the Lord alone was King of Israel. He saw, not by their wish to transmit the supreme power to his posterity, but even by their proposal to reserve it to himself

during life, that they had forgotten God's sovereign right of nominating, and also of setting aside one whom he had pleased to employ for a time. Therefore he said, "the Lord shall rule over you." 'I will not even take the name of a ruler. If He who has called me to His service please to continue me as His deputy, I am satisfied. If not, let Him set me aside, and appoint whomsoever He will in my stead' (*Jamieson's Sacred History*, i., p. 311). 24. **Gideon said . . . I would desire a request of you.** This was the contribution of [עָרָב, singular] an earring; for, as the ancient Arabians (Ishmaelites and Midianites being synonymous terms, see on ch. iv. 11; Gen. xxxvii. 25, 28; for, as both people inhabited the same "east" country, the two names would quite naturally have become convertible, just as we speak of Englishmen and Britons—of Frenchmen and Gauls. 'Jewish Chronicle') were gorgeously adorned with barbaric pearl and gold, an immense amount of such valuable booty had fallen into the hands of the Israelitish soldiers. The contribution was liberally made; and the quantity of gold given to him is estimated at £3,113 sterling. 26. **ornaments**—crescent-like plates of gold suspended from the necks, or placed on the breasts, of the camels. **collars**—necklaces of gold or pearl. **purple**—a royal colour. The ancient as well as modern Arabs adorned the necks, breasts, and legs of their riding animals with sumptuous housing. See description of a similar dress in the ancient Persian (*Aemophon*, 'Cyrus', lib. i., c. 3; *Quintus Curtius*, lib. iii., c. 3), and in Assyrian kings (*Layard*, 'Nineveh and its Remains', ii., p. 322). 27. **Gideon made an ephod thereof, and put it in his city . . . Ophrah.** That no idolatrous use was in view, nor any divisive course from Shiloh contemplated, is manifest from v. 33. Gideon proposed with the gold he received to make an ephod for his use *only* as a civil magistrate or ruler, as David did (1 Chr. xv. 27), and a magnificent pectoral or breastplate also. It would seem, from the history, that he was not blameable in making this ephod, &c., as a civil

- 28 Thus was Midian subdued before the children of Israel, so that they
 29 lifted up their heads no more: and the country was in quietness forty
 30 years in the days of Gideon. And Jerubbaal the son of Joash went and
 31 dwelt in his own house. And Gideon had ^u threescore and ten sons ¹² of
 32 his body begotten: for he had many wives. And his concubine that *was*
 33 in Shechem, she also bare him a son, whose name he ¹³ called ¹⁴ Abimelech.
 34 And Gideon the son of Joash died in a good old age, and was buried in
 35 the sepulchre of Joash his father, ^v in Ophrah of the Abi-ezrites.
 36 And it came to pass, ^w as soon as Gideon was dead, that the children
 37 of Israel turned again, and went awhoring after Baalim, ^x and made
 38 ¹⁵ Baal-berith their god. And the children of Israel ^y remembered not
 39 the LORD their God, who had delivered them out of the hands of all
 40 their enemies on every side: neither ^z showed they kindness to the house
 41 of Jerubbaal, *namely*, Gideon, according to all the goodness which he had
 42 showed unto Israel.
 43 AND Abimelech the son of Jerubbaal went to Shechem unto ^a his
 44 mother's brethren, and communed with them, and with all the family of
 45 the house of his mother's father, saying, Speak, I pray you, in the ears
 46 of all the men of Shechem, ¹ Whether *is* better for you, either that all
 47 the sons of Jerubbaal, *which are* ^b threescore and ten persons, reign over
 48 you, or that one reign over you? remember also that I *am* ^c your bone
 49 and your flesh. And his mother's brethren spake of him in the ears of
 50 all the men of Shechem all these words: and their hearts inclined ² to
 51 follow Abimelech; for they said, He *is* ^d our brother. And they gave
 52 him threescore and ten *pieces* of silver out of the house of ^e Baal-berith,
 53 wherewith Abimelech hired ^f vain and light persons, which followed him.
 54 And he went unto his father's house ^g at Ophrah, and ^h slew his brethren
 55 the sons of Jerubbaal, *being* threescore and ten persons, upon one stone:

B C. 1249.

^u ch 9. 2. 6.
ch. 10. 4.¹² going out
of his
thigh.¹⁵ set.¹⁴ That is,
My father
the king.^v ch. 6. 24.^w ch. 2. 19.^x ch. 9. 4.¹⁵ That is,
Idol of the
covenant.^y Ps. 78. 11.^z ch 9. 11.¹⁵ Eccl 9. 14,
15.

CHAP. 9.

^a ch 8. 31.¹ What is
good?
whether,
etc.^b ch. 8. 30.² Gen. 29. 14.² after.^d Gen. 29. 15.^c ch. 8. 33.^f 2 Chr. 13. 7.

Job 30. 8.

^g ch. 6. 24.^h 2 Ki. 11. 1.

Matt 2. 14.

20.

robe or ornament merely, but that it afterwards became an object to which religious ideas were attached; whereby it proved a snare, and consequently an evil, by *perversion*, to Gideon and his house (*Taylor's 'Fragments'*).

23.—MIDIAN SUBDUED.

23. Thus was Midian subdued. This invasion of the Arab hordes into Canaan was as alarming and desolating as the irruption of the Huns into Europe. It was the severest scourge ever inflicted upon Israel; and both it and the deliverance under Gideon lived for centuries in the minds of the people (Ps. lxxiii. 11). 29. Jerubbaal . . . went and dwelt in his own house. *Bochart* conjectures that Gideon is the person meant by Sanchoniathon, the Phœnician historian, under the name of Jerombaal, priest of the god Jao, not only from the close resemblance of this name to that of Jerubbaal, but from the circumstance that, consequent upon the death of Gideon, the Israelites adopted the worship of Baal-berith, which he takes to have been the idol of Berith (Berytus, now Beyroul) where Sanchoniathon resided.

33. the children of Israel . . . made Baal-berith their god—i. e., Baal, or lord of the covenant. It was a marked feature in the political organization of ancient Canaan that several contiguous cities were leagued for their mutual interests in a bond of confederacy, their centre of union being a temple of Baal—called from that circumstance Baal-berith, lord of the league, as *Jupiter Federalis* amongst the Greeks and Romans. This, and not a reference to a particular phrase, was the origin of the name. *Monsieur Jurieu* says ('Hist. des Dogmes,' p. 619) that under this name was worshipped Dea Syra (*Lucian*), the Cybele of the Greeks and Romans, the goddess of the Phœnicians.

CHAP. IX. 1-6.—ABIMELECH IS MADE KING BY THE SHECHEMITES.

1. Abimelech the son of Jerubbaal went to Shechem. The idolatry which had been stealthily creeping into Israel during the latter years of Gideon was now openly professed; Shechem was wholly inhabited by its adherents; at least idolaters had the ascendancy. Abimelech, one of Gideon's numerous sons, was connected with that place, was ambitious of sovereign power, and having plied successfully the arts of a demagogue with his maternal relatives and friends, he acquired both the influence and money by which he raised himself to a throne. communed . . . with all the family of the house of his mother's father. Here is a striking instance of the evils of polygamy,—one son has connections and interests totally alien to those of his brothers. 2. Whether is better for you . . . that all the sons of Jerubbaal . . . or that one reign over you?—a false insinuation, artfully contrived to stir up jealousy and alarm. Gideon had rejected with abhorrence the proposal to make himself or any of his family king; and there is no evidence that any of his other sons coveted the title. 4. the house of Baal-berith—either the temple or the place where this idol was worshipped—Baal-berith, 'god of the covenant,' by invocation of whom the league of the cities was formed. vain and light persons, which followed him—idle, worthless vagabonds, the scum of society, who had nothing to lose, but much to gain, from the success of a revolutionary movement. 5. went unto . . . Ophrah, and slew his brethren . . . upon one stone. This is the first mention of a barbarous atrocity which has, with appalling frequency, been perpetrated in the despotic countries of the East—that of some one son of

notwithstanding yet Jotham the youngest son of Jerubbaal was left; for he hid himself.

6 And all the men of Shechem gathered together, and all the house of Millo, and went and made Abimelech king, ³ by the plain of the pillar that was in Shechem. And when they told it to Jotham, he went and stood in the top of ² mount Gerizim, and lifted up his voice and cried, and said unto them, Hearken unto me, ye men of Shechem, that God may hearken unto you. The ¹ trees went forth on a time to anoint a king over them; and they said unto the olive tree, ⁴ Reign thou over us. 9 But the olive tree said unto them, Should I leave my fatness, ⁴ wherewith by me they honour God and man, and ⁴ go to be promoted over the trees? 10 And the trees said to the fig tree, Come thou, and reign over us. But 11 the fig tree said unto them, Should I forsake my sweetness, and my good 12 fruit, and go to be promoted over the trees? Then said the trees unto 13 the vine, Come thou, and reign over us. And the vine said unto them, Should I leave my wine, which cheereth God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees? Then said all the trees unto the ⁵ bramble, Come 14 thou, and reign over us. And the bramble said unto the trees, If in truth ye anoint me king over you, then come and put your trust in ⁶ my shadow; and if not, ⁷ let fire come out of the bramble, and devour the ⁸ cedars of Lebanon. Now therefore, if ye have done truly and sincerely, in that ye have made Abimelech king, and if ye have dealt well with Jerubbaal and his house, and have done unto him ⁹ according to the 17 deserving of his hands; (for my father fought for you, and ⁶ adventured 18 his life far, and delivered you out of the hand of Midian: and ye are risen up against my father's house this day, and have slain his sons, threescore and ten persons, upon one stone, and have made Abimelech, the son of his maid-servant, king over the men of Shechem, because he is 19 your brother;) if ye then have dealt truly and sincerely with Jerubbaal and with his house this day, then ² rejoice ye in Abimelech, and let him 20 also rejoice in you: but if not, let fire come out from Abimelech, and devour the men of Shechem, and the house of Millo; and let fire come out from the men of Shechem, and from the house of Millo, and devour Abimelech.

B. C. 1249.
³ Or, by the oak of the pillar.
 Josh. 21. 26.
 1 Ki. 12. 1, 12.
⁴ Deut. 11. 29.
 Deut. 7. 11.
 Josh. 8. 3, 31.
 John 4. 20.
⁵ 2 Ki. 14. 9.
 Eze. 17. 3.
 Dan. 4. 17.
⁶ ch. 8. 22, 23.
⁷ Ex. 29. 2, 7.
 Lev. 2. 1.
 1 Ki. 19. 15, 16.
 Ps. 69. 29.
 Ps. 101. 15.
 Acts 4. 27.
 Acts 19. 30.
⁸ go up and down for other trees.
⁹ Or, thistle.
¹⁰ Isa. 30. 2.
 Dan. 4. 12.
 Hos. 14. 7.
¹¹ Num. 21. 2, 3.
 Eze. 19. 14.
¹² 2 Ki. 14. 9.
 Ps. 101. 19.
 Isa. 2. 13.
 Isa. 37. 21.
 Eze. 31. 3.
¹³ ch. 8. 35.
¹⁴ cast his life.
¹⁵ Isa. 8. 6.
 Phil. 3. 3.
 Jas. 4. 16.

the deceased monarch usurping the throne, and hastening to confirm himself in the possession by the massacre of all the natural or legitimate competitors. Abimelech slew his brethren on one stone, either by dashing them from one rock or sacrificing them on one stone altar, in revenge for the demolition of Baal's altar by their father. This latter view is the more probable, from the Shechemites (v. 24) aiding in it. threescore and ten persons. A round number is used, but it is evident that two are wanting to complete that amount.

6. all the men of Shechem . . . and all the house of Millo—i. e., a mound or rampart; so that the meaning is, all the men in the house or temple; namely, the priests of Baal. made Abimelech king by the plain of the pillar—rather, by the oak near a raised mound, so that the ceremony of coronation might be conspicuous to a crowd.

7-21.—JOTHAM BY A PARABLE REPROACHETH THEM.

7. he went and stood in the top of mount Gerizim, and lifted up his voice. The spot he chose was, like the house-tops, the public place of Shechem; and the parable drawn from the rivalry of the various trees was appropriate to the diversified foliage of the valley below. Eastern

people are exceedingly fond of parables, and use them for conveying reproofs which they could not give in any other way. The top of Gerizim is not so high in the rear of the town as it is nearer to the plain. With a little exertion of voice, he could easily have been heard by the people of the city; for the hill so overhangs the valley that a person from the side or summit would have no difficulty in speaking to listeners at the base. Modern history records a case in which soldiers on the hill shouted to the people in the city, and endeavoured to instigate them to an insurrection. There is something about the elastic atmosphere of an Eastern clime which causes it to transmit sound with wonderful celerity and distinctness (Hackett, 'Illustrations of Scripture,' p. 198; Buckingham's 'Palestine,' ii., p. 470; Stanley's 'Sinai and Palestine,' p. 235, note). 8. The trees went forth—lit., 'went on going.' 13. wine, which cheereth God and man. Not certainly in the same manner. God might be said to be 'cheered' by it when the sacrifices were accepted, as He is said also to be honoured by oil (v. 9). [But עֲרֹבָה, God, is frequently used to signify magistrates; and the words here are rendered by some, 'wine which cheereth high and low.'] 14. bramble [Rhamnus paliurus, Linnaeus]—southern buckthorn.

21 And Jotham ran away, and fled, and went to Beer, and dwelt there, for fear of Abimelech his brother.

22 When Abimelech had reigned three years over Israel, then God sent 23 an evil spirit between Abimelech and the men of Shechem; and the 24 men of Shechem dealt treacherously with Abimelech: that the cruelty done to the threescore and ten sons of Jerubbaal might come, and their blood be laid upon Abimelech their brother, which slew them; and upon the men of Shechem, which aided him in the killing of his brethren.

25 And the men of Shechem set liers in wait for him in the top of the mountains, and they robbed all that came along that way by them: and 26 it was told Abimelech. And Gaal the son of Ebed came with his brethren, and went over to Shechem: and the men of Shechem put their confidence in him. And they went out into the fields, and gathered their vineyards, and trode the grapes, and made merry, and went into the house of their god, and did eat and drink, and cursed Abimelech.

28 And Gaal the son of Ebed said, Who is Abimelech, and who is Shechem, that we should serve him? Is not he the son of Jerubbaal? and Zebul his officer? Serve the men of Hamor the father of Shechem; for why 29 should we serve him? And would to God this people were under my hand! then would I remove Abimelech. And he said to Abimelech, Increase thine army, and come out.

30 And when Zebul the ruler of the city heard the words of Gaal the son 31 of Ebed, his anger was kindled. And he sent messengers unto Abimelech privily, saying, Behold, Gaal the son of Ebed, and his brethren, be 32 come to Shechem; and, behold, they fortify the city against thee. Now therefore up by night, thou and the people that is with thee, and lie in 33 wait in the field: and it shall be, that in the morning, as soon as the sun is up, thou shalt rise early, and set upon the city: and, behold, when he and the people that is with him come out against thee, then mayest thou do to them as thou shalt find occasion.

34 And Abimelech rose up, and all the people that were with him, by 35 night, and they laid wait against Shechem in four companies. And Gaal the son of Ebed went out, and stood in the entering of the gate of the city: and Abimelech rose up, and the people that were with him, from 36 lying in wait. And when Gaal saw the people, he said to Zebul, Behold, there come people down from the top of the mountains. And Zebul said unto him, Thou seest the shadow of the mountains as if they were men.

B C 1209.

Num 21. 14,
Josh. 19. 8,
2 Sam. 20.
14.
1 Sam. 16.
14.
1 Ki 12 15,
1 Ki. 18. 19,
Isa. 10.2, 11.
2 Thos. 2. 1,
11.
Isa. 33. 1.
Matt 7. 2.
1 Ki 2. :3.
Esth 9. 2i.
Ps 7. 16
Ps. 58. 10,
11.
Matt. :3 2i.
7 strengthened his hands to kill.
8 Or, song3.
Ps. 4. 7.
Isa. 16. 9.
Jer. 21. 30.
Amos 6. 1-6.
10 ch. 8. 33.
ch. 16. 21.
Dan. 5. 1-1.
11 Ex. 5. 2.
1 Sam. 25.
10.
12 Gen. 34. 2.
13 2 Sam 15. 4.
1 Ki :0. 11.
14 Or hot.
15 craftily,
or, to Tor-
mah.
v. r. 41.
16 as thine
hand shall find.
1 Sam. 10. 7.
Ecl. 9. 10.
17 Mark 8. 21.

21. Jotham ran away, and fled. The moral of the parable he had spoken was this,—That foolish and wicked men are found boldly usurping places of power and prominence, from the responsibility of which wise and good men are apt to shrink; and that the associates in such proceedings, where no regard is paid to principle or personal merit, will sooner or later fall by mutual destruction. and went to Beer—the modern village el-Bireh, on the ridge which bounds the northern prospects of Jerusalem.

22-49.—GAAL'S CONSPIRACY.

22. When Abimelech had reigned three years. His reign did not probably at first extend beyond Shechem; but by stealthy and progressive encroachments he subjected some of the neighbouring towns to his sway. None could 'reign' in Israel except by rebellious usurpation; and hence the reign of Abimelech is expressed in the original by a word signifying 'despotism;' not that which describes the mild and divinely authorized rule of the judge. 23. Then God sent an evil spirit between Abimelech and the men of Shechem—i. e., in the course of Providence, jealousy, distrust, secret disaffection, and smothered rebellion appeared among his subjects, disappointed and

disgusted with his tyranny; and God permitted those disorders to punish the complicated crimes of the royal fratricide and idolatrous usurper. 26. Gaal . . . came with his brethren . . . and the men of Shechem put their confidence in him. An insurrection of the original Canaanites, headed by this man, at last broke out in Shechem. 27. they went out into the fields, and gathered their vineyards . . . and went into the house of their god, and did eat and drink. This is an instance of what is universally admitted, that wine was used in the sacred feasts of the heathen. and cursed Abimelech—i. e., expressed their malevolence to him in the songs they sung on that occasion in the temple (Harmer, iv., p. 149). 29. would to God this people were under my hand! He seems to have been a boastful, impudent, and cowardly person, totally unfit to be a leader in a revolutionary crisis. The consequence was, that he allowed himself to be drawn into an ambush, was defeated, the city of Shechem destroyed and strewn with salt—Abimelech thereby intimating his desire that it might always continue barren and uninhabited—and the people took refuge in the stronghold, which was set fire to, and all in it perished.

37 And Gaal spake again, and said, See there come people down by the ¹²middle of the land, and another company come along by the plain of

38 ¹³Meonenim. Then said Zebul unto him, ^aWhere is now thy mouth, wherewith thou saidst, Who is Abimelech, that we should serve him? Is not this the people that thou hast despised? Go out, I pray now, and

39 fight with them. And Gaal went out before the men of Shechem, and fought with Abimelech. And Abimelech chased him, and he fled before him: and many were overthrown and wounded, *even* unto the entering

41 of the gate. And Abimelech dwelt at Arumah: and Zebul thrust out Gaal and his brethren, that they should not dwell in Shechem.

42 And it came to pass on the morrow, that the people went out into the

43 field; and they told Abimelech. And he took the people, and divided them into three companies, and laid wait in the field, and looked, and, behold, the people *were* come forth out of the city; and he rose up against them,

44 and smote them. And Abimelech, and the company that *was* with him, rushed forward, and stood in the entering of the gate of the city: and the two *other* companies ran upon all the *people* that *were* in the fields,

45 and slew them. And Abimelech fought against the city all that day; and he took the city, and slew the people that *was* therein, and ^bbeat down the city, and ^csowed it with salt.

46 And when all the men of the tower of Shechem heard *that*, they entered

47 into an hold of the house ^dof the god Berith. And it was told Abimelech,

48 that all the men of the tower of Shechem were gathered together. And Abimelech gat him up to ^emount Zalmon, he and all the people that *were* with him; and Abimelech took an ax in his hand, and cut down a bough from the trees, and took it, and laid *it* on his shoulder, and said unto the people that *were* with him, What ye have seen ¹⁴me do, make haste, and

49 do as I *have done*. And all the people likewise cut down every man his bough, and followed Abimelech, and put *them* to the hold, and set the hold on fire upon them: so that all the men of the tower of Shechem died also, about a thousand men and women.

50 Then ^fwent Abimelech to Thebez, and encamped against Thebez, and

51 took it. But there was a strong tower within the city, and thither fled all the men and women, and all they of the city, and shut *it* to them, and

52 gat them up to the top of the tower. And Abimelech came unto the tower, and fought against it, and went hard unto the door of the tower

53 to burn it with fire. And ^ga certain woman cast a piece of a millstone

54 upon Abimelech's head, and all to break his skull. Then ^hhe called

B. C. 1206.

¹² navel¹³ Or, the

regarders

of the

tim-^s.

sooth-

sayers.

Josh. 17. 22.

^a 2 Sam. 24. 26.

27.

2 Ki. 14. 8.

Jer. 2. 28.

^b Deut. 21. 23.

1 Ki. 12. 25.

2 Ki. 3. 25.

Job 8. 22.

Job 18. 5.

15. 21.

Job 21. 17.

30.

Ps. 107. 34.

Zeph. 2. 9.

^c Thus

marking

it out for

perpetual

desolation

and bar-

renness.

^d ch. 8. 3.

1 Ki. 18. 26.

2 Ki. 1. 2-4.

Ps. 115. 8.

Isa. 18. 15-

18.

Isa. 37. 38.

^e Ps. 68. 14.¹⁴ I have

done.

^f Ex. 14. 4.

2 Ki. 14. 10.

^g ch. 4. 17.

2 Sam. 11.

21.

Job 31. 3.

Jer. 49. 20.

Jer. 50. 46.

1 Cor. 1. 27.

^h 1 Sam. 31. 4.

46. they entered into an hold, &c.—*lit.*, into the tower of the house of the god Berith, which was capacious enough to admit more than a thousand persons. Amongst the heathen, temples and places of worship were commonly built on mountains or high places, either in the form of forts or with towers attached to them. 49. all the people . . . followed Abimelech . . . and set the hold on fire upon them. As this tower or fortress was so strong, and there was no hope of its being taken by storm, Abimelech resolved to set it on fire, being a wooden edifice. With this view he went up to mount Zalmon, which, in the opinion of *Dr. Robinson* ('Physical Geography of Palestine,' p. 36), 'could only be some part of Gerizim or Ebal, then covered with wood, since there is no other mountain near to Shechem.' There having cut down a branch, he lifted it on his shoulder, and bade all the people around do the same. A large quantity of fuel was thus brought down from the mountain, and laid in the fosse round the tower. This being ignited, the flames, communicating with the tower, began to act on its wooden walls, so that all who had taken refuge in it were suffocated by

the smoke or perished in the conflagration. The application of fire was a common expedient in sieges (see *Layard*, 'Nineveh and its Remains,' ii., p. 373). The assailants, creeping stealthily to the gates, applied torches to them, while they screened themselves from observation and from danger by overcanopying their heads with their uplifted shields (cf. *Homer*, 'Iliad,' ii., 464; xv.; *Æschylus*, 'Suppliants,' 76).

50-57.—ABIMELECH SLAIN.

50. Then went Abimelech to Thebez, and encamped against . . . it—now Tâbas, not far from Shechem. 51. all the men and women . . . gat them up to the top of the tower. The Canaanite forts were generally mountain-fastnesses or keeps, and they often had a strong tower, which served as a last refuge. 53. a certain woman cast a . . . millstone upon Abimelech's head, and all to break his skull. Similar was the fate of *Pyrrhus*. The Argives did not receive him; he fell before the wall, a certain woman having thrown down a tile from above on his head (*Strabo*, lib. v., 101). The Assyrian bas-reliefs afford counterparts of the scene here described, so vivid and exact that

- hastily unto the young man his armour-bearer, and said unto him, Draw thy sword, and slay me, that men say not of me, A woman slew him.
- 55 And his young man thrust him through, and he died. And when the men of Israel saw that Abimelech was dead, they departed every man unto his place.
- 56 Thus ² God rendered the wickedness of Abimelech, which he did unto
- 57 his father, in slaying his seventy brethren: and all the evil of the men of Shechem did God render upon their heads: and upon them came the curse of Jotham the son of Jerubbaal.
- 10 AND after Abimelech there ^a arose, to ¹ defend Israel, Tola the son of Puah, the son of Dodo, a man of Issachar; and he dwelt in Shamir in
- 2 mount Ephraim. And he judged Israel twenty and three years, and died, and was buried in Shamir.
- 3 And after him arose Jair, a Gileadite, and judged Israel twenty and
- 4 two years. And he had thirty sons that ^b rode on thirty ass colts, and they had thirty cities, which ^c are called ² Havoth-jair unto this day,
- 5 which *are* in the land of Gilead. And Jair died, and was buried in Camon.
- 6 And ^d the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the LORD, and served Baalim, and Ashtaroth, and ^e the gods of Syria, and the gods of ^g Zidon, and the gods of Moab, and the gods of the children of Ammon, and the gods of the Philistines, and forsook the LORD, and served not him.
- 7 And the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, and he ^h sold them into the hands of the Philistines, and into the hands of the children of Ammon.
- 8 And that year they vexed and ³ oppressed the children of Israel eighteen years, all the children of Israel that *were* on the other side Jordan, in the
- 9 land of the Amorites, which *is* in Gilead. Moreover the children of Ammon passed over Jordan to fight also against Judah, and against Benjamin, and against the house of Ephraim; so that Israel was sore distressed.

B. C. 1266.

ⁱ Gen. 9. 5. 6.
 Job 31. 3.
 Ps. 94. 23.
 Fro 5. 22.
 Pro. 21. 12.
 Matt. 7. 2.
 Rom. 2. 6.
 Gal 6. 7.
 Rev. 19. 20.
 21.

CHAP. 10.

^a ch 2. 16.
 ch. 3. 2.
¹ save, or, deliver.
^b ch 5. 10.
^c Deut. 3. 11.
² Or, the villages of Jair.
 Num 32. 41.
^d ch 2. 11.
 ch. 4. 1.
 ch. 6. 1.
 ch. 13. 1.
^e ch 2. 13.
 ch. 3. 7.
 2 Chr 23. 27.
 Fs 106. 26.
^f ch 2. 12.
^g 1 Ki 11. 33.
 1 Ki. 16. 31.
 2 Ki 17. 16, 29, 31.
 Fs. 106. 33.
^h 1 Sam. 12. 9.
 Isa. 40. 1.
ⁱ crushed.

we might almost suppose them to be representations of the same historic events. The besieged city, the strong tower within, the men and women crowding its battlements, the fire applied to the doors, and even the huge fragments of stone dropping from the hands of one of the garrison on the heads of the assailants, are all well represented to the life, just as they are here described in the narrative of inspired truth (*Gosse*, 'Assyria,' p. 343).

56. Thus God rendered the wickedness of Abimelech, &c. The manner in which the Nemesis was dealt out to this fratricide and unprincipled usurper affords a striking instance of the particular administration of Providence over the Jews, and of which several instances have already occurred in this book (ch. i. 1-19, 22, 27-33; ii. 3). 'The apparent severity in some of these instances arose from the operation of human passions in the agents employed or permitted to execute these judgments, without being miraculously controlled in their conduct; or if directly commanded, we may be well assured it was indispensably necessary to effect the purposes of the divine economy' (*Graves*, 'Lectures on the Pentateuch,' ii., p. 151).

CHAP. X. 1-5.—TOLA JUDGEETH ISRAEL IN SHAMIR.

1. After Abimelech there arose, to defend Israel, Tola—*i. e.*, to save. Deliverance was necessary as well from intestine usurpation as from foreign aggression. the son of Puah. He was uncle to Abimelech by the father's side, and consequently brother of Gideon; yet the former was of the tribe of Issachar, while the latter was of Manasseh. They were most probably uterine brothers.

dwelt in Shamir in mount Ephraim. As a central place, he made it the seat of government.

3. Jair, a Gileadite. This judge was a different person from the conqueror of that north-eastern territory, and founder of Havoth-jair, or 'Jair's villages' (Num. xxxii. 41; Dent. iii. 14; 1 Chr. ii. 22). 4. he had thirty sons that rode on thirty ass colts. This is a characteristic trait of Eastern manners in those early times; and the grant of a village to each of his thirty sons was a striking proof of his extensive possessions. His having thirty sons is no conclusive evidence that he had more than one wife; much less that he had more than one at a time. There are instances in this country of men having as many children by two successive wives (see 'Hebrew Wife,' p. 20).

6.9.—ISRAEL OPPRESSED BY THE PHILISTINES AND AMMONITES.

6. the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord. This apostasy seems to have exceeded every former one in the grossness and universality of the idolatry practised, the Hebrews having, if they did not actually erect a Pantheon, adopted the objects of worship amongst the several heathen countries contiguous to the district of Palestine in which they lived. 7. Philistines and . . . the children of Ammon. The predatory incursions of these two hostile neighbours were made naturally on the parts of the land respectively contiguous to them. But the Ammonites, animated with the spirit of conquest, carried their arms across the Jordan, so that the central and southern provinces of Canaan were extensively desolated.

- 10 And ¹the children of Israel cried unto the LORD, saying, We have sinned against thee, both because we have forsaken our God, and also
- 11 served Baalim. And the LORD said unto the children of Israel, *Did not I deliver you* ²from the Egyptians, and ³from the Amorites, ⁴from the children of Ammon, ⁵and from the Philistines? The ⁶Zidonians also, ⁷and the Amalekites, and the Maonites, ⁸did oppress you; and ye cried
- 12 to me, and I delivered you out of their hand. Yet ⁹ye have forsaken me, and served other gods: wherefore I will deliver you no more. Go and ¹⁰cry unto the gods which ye have chosen; let them deliver you in the
- 13 time of your tribulation. And the children of Israel said unto the LORD, We have sinned: ¹¹do thou unto us whatsoever ¹²seemeth good unto thee; deliver us only, we pray thee, this day. And ¹³they put away the ¹⁴strange gods from among them, and served the LORD: and ¹⁵his soul ¹⁶was grieved for the misery of Israel.
- 17 Then the children of Ammon were ¹⁷gathered together, and encamped in Gilead: and the children of Israel assembled themselves together,
- 18 and encamped in ¹⁸Mizpeh. And the people *and* princes of Gilead said one to another, What man *is he* that will begin to fight against the children of Ammon? he shall be head over all the inhabitants of Gilead.
- 11 NOW Jephthah the Gileadite was ¹⁹a mighty man of valour, and he ²⁰was the son of ²¹an harlot: and Gilead begat Jephthah. And Gilead's wife bare him sons: and his wife's sons grew up, and they thrust out Jephthah, and said unto him, Thou shalt not inherit in our father's
- 3 house; for thou *art* the son of a strange woman. Then Jephthah fled ²from his brethren, and dwelt in the land of Tob; and there were gathered ³vain men to Jephthah, and went out with him.

B. C. 1202.

¹ ch. 3. 9.
¹ Sam. 12. 10
² Ex. 14. 30.
³ Num. 21. 21.
⁴ ch. 3. 12.
⁵ ch. 5. 31.
⁶ ch. 5. 19.
⁷ ch. 6. 3.
⁸ 1's. 101. 42.
⁹ D ut 32. 15.
¹⁰ Jer. 2. 13.
¹¹ 2 Ki. 3. 13.
¹² 1 Sam. 3. 18.
¹³ 4 is good in thine eyes.
¹⁴ 2 Chr. 7. 14.
¹⁵ gods of strangers.
¹⁶ 1's. 106. 44.
¹⁷ was shor'en'ed
¹⁸ cried together.
¹⁹ Gen. 31. 49.

CHAP. 11.
¹ ch. 6. 12.
¹ a woman an har'ot.
² from the face.
³ ch. 9. 4.
¹ Sam. 22. 2.
¹ Sam. 27. 2.

10-15.—THEY CRY TO GOD.

10. We have sinned against thee. The first step of repentance is confession of sin; and the best proof of its sincerity is given by the transgressor when he mourns not only over the painful consequences which have resulted from his offences to himself, but over the heinous evil committed against God. 11. the Lord said . . . Did not I deliver you. The communications recorded in this and the following verses were most probably made through the high priest, whose duty it was to interpret the will of God. 12. Maonites—i. e., Midianites.

16-18.—THEY REPENT—GOD PITIETH THEM.

16. his soul was grieved for the misery of Israel. On their abandonment of idolatry and return to purity of worship, God graciously abridged the term of national affliction, and restored times of peace.

17. the children of Ammon were gathered together. From carrying on a guerilla warfare, the Ammonites proceeded to a continued campaign, their settled aim being to wrest the whole of the trans-Jordanic territory from their actual occupiers. In this great crisis a general meeting of the Israelitish tribes was held at Mizpeh. This Mizpeh was in eastern Manasseh (Josh. xi. 3).

CHAP. XI. 1-3.—JEPHTHAH.

1. Jephthah—'opener.' son of an harlot—a concubine, or foreigner; implying an inferior sort of marriage prevalent in Eastern countries. It is conjectured that she was the Aramitess, the concubine of Gilead, mentioned in 1 Chr. vii. 14. Whatever dishonour might attach to his birth, his own high and energetic character rendered him early a person of note. Gilead begat Jephthah. His father seems to have belonged to the tribe of Manasseh (1 Chr. vii. 14, 17). 2. Thou shalt not inherit in our father's house. As

there were children by the legitimate wife, the son of the secondary one was not entitled to any share of the patrimony, and the prior claim of the others was indisputable. Hence, as the brothers of Jephthah seem to have resorted to rude and violent treatment, they must have been influenced by some secret ill-will. 'I conceive,' says *Lord Arthur Hervey* ('Genealogies,' p. 244), 'that Jephthah was the son of this Aramitess, born to Gilead in his old age in the wilderness, and possibly about seventeen years old at the time of the entrance into Canaan. When he laid claim to a share of the land of Gilead, on the return of his brethren from the wars of Canaan, some twenty years after (he having remained in Gilead with the women and children under age to go to war), his brethren reproached him with his base and foreign birth, and expelled him from their land. Or, more probably, the younger Gileadites, who had remained behind with him when the men of war went over Jordan with Joshua, when they grew up to man's estate, drove him away.' 3. Jephthah . . . dwelt in the land of Tob—on the north of Gilead, beyond the frontier of the Hebrew territories (2 Sam. x. 6, 8). there were gathered vain men to Jephthah—idle, daring, or desperate; probably the Arabs of the adjoining desert. and went out with him—followed him as a military chief. They led a freebooting life, sustaining themselves by frequent incursions on the Ammonites and other neighbouring people, in the style of Robin Hood, or Highland reivers in the border forays, even when England and Scotland were at peace. The same kind of life is led by many an Arab or Tartar still, who, as the leader of a band, acquires fame by his stirring or gallant adventures; and it is not deemed dishonourable when the expeditions are directed against those out of his own tribe or nation. Jephthah's mode of life

4 And it came to pass ³ in process of time, that the children of Ammon
 5 made war against Israel. And it was so, that, when the children of
 Ammon made war against Israel, the elders of Gilead went to fetch
 6 Jephthah out of the land of Tob: and they said unto Jephthah, Come,
 and be our captain, that we may fight with the children of Ammon.
 7 And Jephthah said unto the elders of Gilead, ^c Did not ye hate me, and
 expel me out of my father's house? and why are ye come unto me now
 8 when ye are in distress? And the elders of Gilead said unto Jephthah,
 Therefore ^d we turn again to thee now, that thou mayest go with us, and
 fight against the children of Ammon, and be our ^e head over all the
 9 inhabitants of Gilead. And Jephthah said unto the elders of Gilead, If
 ye bring me home again to fight against the children of Ammon, and the
 10 LORD deliver them before me, shall I be your head? And the elders of
 Gilead said unto Jephthah, ^f The LORD ⁴ be witness between us, if we do
 11 not so according to thy words. Then Jephthah went with the elders of
 Gilead, and the people made him head and captain over them: and
 Jephthah uttered all his words ^g before the LORD in Mizpeh.
 12 And Jephthah sent messengers unto the king of the children of
 Ammon, saying, What hast thou to do with me, that thou art come
 13 against me to fight in my land? And the king of the children of
 Ammon answered unto the messengers of Jephthah, Because ^h Israel took
 away my land, when they came up out of Egypt, from Arnon even unto
ⁱ Jabbok, and unto Jordan: now therefore restore those *lands* again
 peaceably.
 14 And Jephthah sent messengers again unto the king of the children of
 15 Ammon, and said unto him, Thus saith Jephthah, ^j Israel took not away
 16 the land of Moab, nor the land of the children of Ammon: but when
 Israel came up from Egypt, and ^k walked through the wilderness unto the

B C 1161.
^a after days.
^b Gen. 26. 27.
 Gen. 37. 27.
 Pro. 17. 17.
^c Luke 17. 4.
^d ch. 10. 13.
^e Gen 31. 50.
 Jer. 29. 23.
 Jer. 42. 5.
 Mic 1. 2.
 Rom. 1. 9.
 1 Thes 2. 5.
^f b the
 hearer
 between
 us.
^g ch. 10. 17.
 ch. 10. 1.
 1 Sam. 10.
 17.
 1 Sam. 11.
 15.
 Pro 16. 3.
^h Num. 21. 21.
 19. 10. 9.
ⁱ Gen 32. 22.
^j Num 22. 15.
 27-30.
 Deut 2. 9.
 19.
 2 Chr. 20. 10.
 Acts 21. 12.
 13.
^k Num. 11. 25.
 Deut. 1. 10.
 Jo-h. 5. 6.

was similar to that of David when driven from the court of Saul.

411.—THE GILEADITES COVENANT WITH JEPHTHAH.

4. in process of time—on the return of the season. the children of Ammon made war. Having prepared the way by the introduction of Jephthah, the sacred historian here resumes the thread of his narrative from ch. x. 17. The Ammonites seem to have invaded the country, and active hostilities were inevitable. 5. the elders of Gilead went to fetch Jephthah. All eyes were directed towards him as the only person possessed of the qualities requisite for the preservation of the country in this time of imminent danger; and a deputation of the chief men was despatched from the Hebrew camp at Mizpeh to solicit his services. 7. Jephthah said . . . Did not ye hate me? He gave them at first a haughty and cold reception. It is probable that he saw some of his brothers among the deputies. Jephthah was now in circumstances to make his own terms. With his former experience, he would have shown little wisdom or prudence without binding them to a clear and specific engagement to invest him with unlimited authority, the more especially as he was about to imperil his life in their cause. Although ambition might to a certain degree have stimulated his ready compliance, it is impossible to overlook the piety of his language, which creates a favourable impression that his roving life, in a state of social manners so different from ours, was not incompatible with habits of personal religion. 10. The Lord be witness between us. Their offer being accompanied by the most solemn oath, Jephthah intimated his acceptance of the mission, and his willingness to accompany them. But, to make

'assurance doubly sure,' he took care that the pledge given by the deputies in Tob should be ratified in a general assembly of the people at Mizpeh; and the language of the historian, "Jephthah uttered all his words before the Lord," seems to imply that his inauguration with the character and extraordinary office of judge was solemnized by prayer for the Divine blessing, or some religious ceremonial.

12-28.—HIS EMBASSY TO THE KING OF AMMON. 12. Jephthah sent messengers unto the king of the children of Ammon. This first act in his judicial capacity reflects the highest credit on his character for prudence and moderation, justice and humanity. The bravest officers have always been averse to war; so Jephthah, whose courage was indisputable, resolved not only to make it clearly appear that hostilities were forced upon him, but to try measures for avoiding, if possible, an appeal to arms; and in pursuing such a course, he was acting with the prudence, and on the pacific policy, which became a leader in Israel, who was required by law not to resolve on war until negotiation had failed (Deut. xx. 10-18). 13. the king of . . . Ammon answered . . . Because Israel took away my land—(see on Deut. ii. 19-37.) The subject of quarrel was a claim of right advanced by the Ammonite monarch to the lands which the Israelites were occupying.

14. Jephthah sent messengers again unto the king of the children of Ammon. Jephthah's reply was clear, decided, and unanswerable,—first, those lands were not in the possession of the Ammonites when his countrymen got them, and that they had been acquired by right of conquest from the Amorites; secondly, that the Israelites had now, by a lapse of 300 years of undisputed possession, established a prescriptive right to the occupation;

- 17 Red sea, and 'came to Kadesh, then ^mIsrael sent messengers unto the king of Edom, saying, Let me, I pray thee, pass through thy land: but the king of Edom would not hearken *thereto*. And in like manner they sent unto the king of Moab: but he would not *consent*: and Israel
- 18 ⁿabode in Kadesh. Then they went along through the wilderness, and ^ocompassed the land of Edom, and the land of Moab, and ^pcame by the east side of the land of Moab, and pitched on the other side of Arnon, but came not within the border of Moab: for Arnon *was* the border of
- 19 Moab. And ^qIsrael sent messengers unto Sihon king of the Amorites, the king of Heshbon; and Israel said unto him, Let us pass, we pray thee, through thy land into my place. But Sihon trusted not Israel to pass through his coast: but Sihon gathered all his people together, and
- 20 pitched in Jahaz, and fought against Israel. And the LORD God of Israel delivered Sihon and all his people into the hand of Israel, and they ^rsmote them: so Israel possessed all the land of the Amorites, the
- 22 inhabitants of that country. And they possessed all the coasts of the Amorites, from Arnon even unto Jabbok, and from the wilderness even
- 23 unto Jordan. So now the LORD God of Israel hath dispossessed the Amorites from before his people Israel, and shouldst thou possess it?
- 24 Wilt not thou possess that which Chemosh ^sthy god giveth thee to possess? So whomsoever ^tthe LORD our God shall drive out from before us, them will we possess. And now *art* thou anything better than
- 25 ^uBalak the son of Zippor, king of Moab? did he ever strive against
- 26 Israel, or did he ever fight against them, while Israel dwelt in Heshbon and her towns, and in ^vAroer and her towns, and in all the cities that *be* along by the coasts of Arnon, three hundred years? why therefore did
- 27 ye not recover *them* within that time? Wherefore I have not sinned against thee, but thou doest me wrong to war against me: the LORD ^wthe Judge be judge this day between the children of Israel and the children of Ammon.
- 28 Howbeit the king of the children of Ammon hearkened not unto the words of Jephthah which he sent him.
- 29 Then ^xthe Spirit of the LORD came upon Jephthah, and he passed over Gilead and Manasseh, and passed over Mizpeh of Gilead, and from Mizpeh of Gilead he passed over *unto* the children of Ammon.

B C. 1143.
^l Num 13. 26.
Num. 20. 1-
Deut. 1. 46.
^m Num. 20. 14.
ⁿ Num 20. 1.
^o Num 21. 4.
Deut. 2. 1-3.
^p Num 21. 11.
^q Num 21. 21-
35.
Feut. 2. 23.
Deut. 3. 1-
17.
Josh. 13. 8-
12.
^r Num. 21. 21.
Deut. 2. 23.
34.
^s Num. 21. 29.
1 Ki 11. 7.
Jer. 48. 7.
^t Ex. 13. 28,
31.
Deut. 9. 3.
6.
Deut. 15. 12.
Josh. 3. 10.
Jo-h. 13. 6.
Josh 24. 11.
13
2 Chr. 7. 20.
2 Chr 20. 7.
Is. 44. 2, 3.
Acts 13. 19.
^u Num. 21. 2.
Deut. 23. 3.
4.
Josh 21. 9.
Mic. 6. 5.
^v Deut. 2. 26.
^w Gen 18. 25.
Job 9. 15.
John 5. 22,
23.
^x ch. 3. 19.

thirdly, having received a grant of them from the Lord, His people were entitled to maintain their right on the same principle that guided the Ammonites in receiving from their god Chemosh (cf. ch. xxi. 29, where he is stated to be the tutelary deity of Moab also) the territory they now occupied; and, fourthly, that no attempt had been made, even by Balak, to dispossess the Israelites of Heshbon, Aroer, &c., all the time they occupied those places. The Israelite camp was pitched north of the Arnon, and the main body remained there while the fighting men were engaged in the conquest of Bashan. Afterwards the camp was removed to Abel-shittim, in the Jordan valley; but a considerable portion of the Israelites seem to have remained on the eastern uplands, and to have inhabited the towns to the very brink of the Arnon ravine (cf. Num. xxi. 24). 26. **three hundred years.** This is believed to be a corrupt reading for three hundred cities. After "cities," *Lord A. Hervey* ("Genealogies," p. 240) suggests an amended translation as follows:— "Did Balak ever strive against Israel, or did he ever fight against them, when Israel dwelt in Heshbon and her towns, and in Aroer and her towns, and in all the cities that be along by the coasts of Arnon, three hundred cities? Why, therefore, did ye not recover them at that time?"

(See 'Introduction' to Judges.) This diplomatic statement, so admirable for the clearness and force of its arguments, which doubtless were embodied in a state paper or letter of instructions furnished to the ambassadors, concluded with a solemn appeal to God to maintain, by the issue of events, the cause of right and justice.

28. **Howbeit the king of . . . Ammon hearkened not unto the words of Jephthah.** His remonstrances to the aggressor were disregarded; and war being inevitable, preparations were made for a determined resistance.

29-31.—His Vow.

29. **Then the Spirit of the Lord came upon Jephthah.** The calm wisdom, sagacious forethought, and indomitable energy which he was enabled to display, were a pledge to himself, and a convincing evidence to his countrymen, that he was qualified by higher resources than his own for the momentous duties of his office. **he passed over Gilead and Manasseh**—the provinces most exposed and in danger, for the purpose of levying troops, and exciting by his presence a wide-spread interest in the national cause. Returning to the camp at Mizpeh, he thence began his march against the enemy, and there he made his celebrated vow, in accordance with an ancient custom for generals at the outbreak of a war, or on the eve of a battle,

30 And Jephthah ²vowed a vow unto the LORD, and said, If thou shalt
 31 without fail deliver the children of Ammon into mine hands, then it shall
 be, that ⁵whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me,
 when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, ²shall surely be the
 LORD's, ⁶and I will offer it up for a burnt offering.
 32 So Jephthah passed over unto the children of Ammon to fight against
 33 them; and the LORD delivered them into his hands. And he smote them
 from Aroer, even till thou come to ^aMinnith, *even* twenty cities, and unto
⁷the plain of the vineyards, with a very great slaughter. Thus the children
 of Ammon were subdued before the children of Israel.
 34 And Jephthah came to ^bMizpeh unto his house, and, behold, ^chis
 daughter came out to meet him with timbrels and with dances: and she
 35 *was his only child*; ⁸beside her he had neither son nor daughter. And it
 came to pass, when he saw her, that he ⁴rent his clothes, and said, Alas,
 my daughter! thou hast brought me very low, and thou art one of them
 that trouble me: for I ^ehave opened my mouth unto the LORD, and ^fI
 36 cannot go back. And she said unto him, My father, *if* thou hast opened
 thy mouth unto the LORD, do ⁹to me according to that which hath
 proceeded out of thy mouth; forasmuch as the ^hLORD hath taken
 vengeance for thee of thine enemies, *even* of the children of Ammon.
 37 And she said unto her father, Let this thing be done for me: let me alone
 two months, that I may ⁹go up and down upon the mountains, and

B. C. 1143.

⁵ Gen. 28. 20.⁷ that which

cometh

forth.

which

shall come

forth

⁶ Lev. 27. 2.⁶ Or. or I

will offer

it, etc.

⁴ Eze. 27. 17.⁷ Or. Abel.⁶ ch. 10. 17.⁶ Ex. 15. .0.⁸ of himself,

or he had

not of his

own ei-her

son or

daughter,

^a Gen. 37. 29.¹ ccl. 5. 2.^f Ps. 15. 4.⁹ Num. 32. 2.^h 2Sam. 18. 19.⁹ go and go

down.

to promise the god of their worship a costly oblation, or dedication of some valuable booty, in the event of a victory. Vows were in common practice also among the Israelites, (1 Sam. i. 11; 2 Sam. xv. 8, &c.) They were encouraged by the Divine approval, as emanating from a spirit of piety and gratitude, and rules laid down in the law for regulating the performance. But it is difficult to bring Jephthah's vow within the legitimate range (see on Lev. xxvii. 25).

31. *whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me.* This evidently points not to an animal—for that might have been a dog, which, being unclean, was unfit to be offered; but to a person: and it looks extremely like as if he, from the first, contemplated a human sacrifice. Bred up as he had been, beyond the Jordan, where the Israelitish tribes, far from the tabernacle, were looser in their religious sentiments, and living latterly on the borders of a heathen country where such sacrifices were common, it is not impossible that he may have been so ignorant as to imagine that a similar immolation would be acceptable to God. His mind, engrossed with the prospect of a contest, on the issue of which the fate of his country depended, might, through the influence of superstition, consider the dedication of the object dearest to him the most likely to ensure success. *shall surely be the Lord's, and (or) I will offer it up for a burnt offering.* The adoption of the latter particle, which many interpreters suggest, introduces the important alternative, that if it were a person, the dedication would be made to the service of the sanctuary; if a proper animal or thing, it would be offered on the altar.

32, 33.—HE OVERCOMES THE AMMONITES.

32. *passed over unto the children of Ammon . . . and the Lord delivered them into his hands.* He met and engaged them at Aroer, a town in the tribe of Gad, upon the Arnon. A decisive victory crowned the arms of Israel, and the pursuit was continued to *מִינִיִּת*—*i. e.*, plain of the vineyards; from south to north, over an extent of about sixty miles.

34. *Jephthah came to Mizpeh unto his house.*

The return of the victors was hailed, as usual, by the joyous acclaim of a female band (1 Sam. xviii. 6), the leader of whom was Jephthah's daughter. The vow was full in his mind; and it is evident that it had not been communicated to any one, otherwise precautions would doubtless have been taken to place another object at his door. The shriek, and other accompaniments of irrepressible grief, seem, in the opinion of many, to indicate that her life was to be forfeited as a sacrifice; that the nature of the sacrifice (which was abhorrent to the character of God), and distance from the tabernacle, does not suffice to overturn this view, which the language and whole strain of the narrative plainly support; and that although the lapse of two months might be supposed to have afforded time for reflection, and a better sense of his duty, there is but too much reason to conclude that he was impelled to the fulfilment by the dictates of a pious but unenlightened conscience. On the other hand, there are strong reasons for the adoption of another view of the mode in which this vow was carried into effect—*viz.*, by the daughter being devoted to perpetual virginity. The words, *v. 35*, "thou hast brought me very low," or thou hast greatly crushed me, are quite susceptible of a meaning which implies Jephthah's being reduced from his high position to deep obscurity,—*nay*, of having his name and family extinguished, through want of posterity. Then, again, the statement, "thou art one of them that trouble me," is very singular to be made at the time when her presence and her purpose were intended to do honour to her father. [*פָּרַד* means to disturb, to put in confusion, or bring evil upon one (cf. Josh. vi. 8; vii. 25; 1 Sam. xiv. 29); and the daughter cannot be conceived to have produced such an effect upon Jephthah, but by her presence suddenly calling up the remembrance of his rash vow.] 35. *I have opened my mouth* [*פָּתַחְתִּי*]*—the verb used for the utterance of rash, hasty, and foolish words (cf. Job xxxv. 16; Ps. lxxv. 13, 14); and it is perfectly evident that the daughter had no knowledge of what her father had bound himself*

38 bewail my ⁱvirginity, I and my fellows. And he said, Go. And he sent her away for two months: and she went with her companions, and
 39 bewailed her virginity upon the mountains. And it came to pass, at the end of two months, that she returned unto her father, who ^jdid with her according ^kto his vow which he had vowed: and she knew no man. And
 40 it was a ^lcustom in Israel, that the daughters of Israel went ^myearly to ⁿlament the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite four days in a year.
 12 AND ^othe men of Ephraim ^pgathered themselves together, and went northward, and said unto Jephthah, Wherefore passedst thou over to fight against the children of Ammon, and didst not call us to go with thee? we
 2 will burn thine house upon thee with fire. And Jephthah said unto them, I and my people were at great strife with the children of Ammon; and
 3 when I called you, ye delivered me not out of their hands. And when I saw that ye delivered me not, I ^qput my life in my hands, and passed over against the children of Ammon, and the Lord delivered them into my hand: wherefore then are ye come up unto me this day, to fight against me?
 4 Then Jephthah gathered together all the men of Gilead, and fought

B C. 1113.

i Gen 31. 23.

j Luke 1 27.

k 1 Sam. 1. 22.

l 1 Sam 1 : 4.

m 1 Sam 2. 18.

n 10 Or,

ord'nance

11 from year

to year

12 Or, talk

with.

CHAP. 12.

a ch. 8. 1.

1 were

called.

b 1 Sam. 19. 5.

1 Sam. 23.

21.

Job 3 11.

1's. 1. 9. 11. 9

Rom. 16. 4.

Rev. 12. 11.

by solemn obligation to do, until he informed her; and when, on the startling information being communicated, that her own fate was involved in his vow, does it seem wonderful that, under the mental agitation the intelligence must have produced, she requested that the performance of the vow should be delayed for a specified time. When that time had expired, she returned home, and surrendered herself, with filial piety, to her father's disposal. 39. she returned unto her father, who did with her according to his vow which he had vowed. But how or what did he do with her? Certainly he did not offer her in sacrifice. The immolation of a human victim had never been made by any Israelite who was a worshipper of the true God; and supposing the case of Jephthah was an exception, the offering of his daughter must either have been made at Shiloh, where the tabernacle, the only appointed place of sacrifice, was established, or at some place east of Jordan. But the sacrifice could not have been offered at Shiloh, not only because Jephthah was not likely to go to Shiloh, having a bitter feud with the Ephraimites, within whose territory it lay, but because no Levitical priest would have lent his services to put a human victim upon the altar of God; and if Jephthah himself had immolated her at his own home, he would have incurred the triple guilt of the impious assumption of the priestly office, of offering at an unaccepted place, and presenting a sacrifice abhorrent to the law and character of God. Jephthah, who appears to have been a pious man (v. 11), and from his despatch to the Ammonite king (v. 14-27), well acquainted with the Mosaic history, would not have perpetrated any of these presumptuous sins; and hence we conclude that no sacrifice of the kind was made. Dropping, therefore, the alternative part of the vow, and accepting the first part of it as that which Jephthah performed—viz., that whatsoever came forth of the doors of his house to meet him, when he returned in peace from the children of Ammon, should surely be the Lord's—we believe that his daughter was consecrated for life to the service of the sanctuary. This view is strengthened both by the significant clause, "she knew no man," being doomed to live unmarried—a disappointment particularly severe to a Hebrew damsel—and by the annual custom, which was thenceforth adopted by her female associates, of celebrating her deed of public devotion. It was

a custom in Israel, 40. That the daughters of Israel went yearly to lament, &c. [למנוח]—to rehearse (v. 11) her doings; i. e., to praise her for the religious life she led. It might be that this anniversary was observed only during the lifetime of Jephthah's daughter, and chiefly by the women of the Gileadite district who were acquainted with her, or cognizant of the circumstances connected with her pious self-sacrifice. This view of Jephthah's vow, which has occasioned perplexity in every subsequent age of the Church, seems in perfect accordance with Scripture, and possesses the merit of rescuing from the reproach of a dark and malignant superstition the character of a judge in Israel, whom the Spirit of God has enrolled amongst the worthies of the ancient Church.

CHAP. XII. 1-3.—THE EPHRAIMITES QUARRELLING WITH JEPHTHAH.

1. gathered themselves together—Hebrew, were summoned, and went northward. After crossing the Jordan, their route from Ephraim was, strictly speaking, in a north-easterly direction, towards Mizpeh. and said unto Jephthah, Wherefore . . . thou . . . didst not call us. This is a fresh demonstration of the jealous, rash, and irritable temper of the Ephraimites. The ground of their offence now was their desire of enjoying the credit of patriotism, although they had not shared in the glory of victory. 2. when I called you, ye delivered me not out of their hands. The straightforward answer of Jephthah shows that their charge was false, their complaint of not being treated as confederates and allies entirely without foundation, and their boast of a ready contribution of their services came with an ill grace from people who had purposely delayed appearing till the crisis was past. 3. I put my life in my hands—a common form of speech in the East for undertaking a duty of imminent peril. This Jephthah had done, having encountered and routed the Ammonites, with the aid of his Gileadite volunteers alone; and since the Lord had enabled him to conquer without requiring assistance from any other tribe, why should the Ephraimites take offence? They ought rather to have been delighted, and thankful that the war had terminated without their incurring any labour and danger.

4. 15.—DISCERNED BY THE WORD SIBBOLETH, ARE SLAIN BY THE GILEADITES.

- with Ephraim: and the men of Gilead smote Ephraim, because they said, Ye Gileadites ^care fugitives of Ephraim among the Ephraimites, and 5 among the Manassites. And the Gileadites took the ^d passages of Jordan before the Ephraimites: and it was so, that when those Ephraimites which were escaped said, Let me go over; that the men of Gilead said unto him, 6 *Art* thou an Ephraimite? If he said, Nay; then said they unto him, Say now ^eShibboleth; and he said Sibboleth: for he could not frame to pronounce *it* right. Then they took him, and slew him at the passages of Jordan: and there fell at that time of the Ephraimites forty and two thousand.
- 7 And Jephthah judged Israel six years. Then died Jephthah the Gileadite, and was buried in *one* of the cities of Gilead.
- 8, And after him Ibzan of Beth-lehem judged Israel. And he had thirty 9 sons, and thirty daughters, *whom* he sent abroad, and took in thirty daughters from abroad for his sons: and he judged Israel seven years.
- 10 Then died Ibzan, and was buried at Beth-lehem.
- 11 And after him Elon, a Zebulonite, judged Israel; and he judged Israel 12 ten years. And Elon the Zebulonite died, and was buried in Aijalon in the country of Zebulun.
- 13 And after him Abdon the son of Hillel, a Pirathonite, judged Israel. 14 And he had forty sons and thirty ³nephews, that ^crode on threescore and 15 ten ass colts: and he judged Israel eight years. And Abdon the son of Hillel the Pirathonite died, and was buried in Pirathon in the land of Ephraim, ^fin the mount of the Amalekites.
- 13 AND the children of Israel ¹did evil again in the sight of the LORD; ²and the LORD delivered them ^ainto the hand of the Philistines forty years.

B C. 11:3.

^a 1 Sam. 25.

10.

Ps. 78. 9.

^d Josh. 22. 11.

ch. 3. 28.

ch. 7. 21.

² Which

signifieth

a burden,

or eir of

corn, or

stream

Ps. 64. 2.

³ sons' s. ns.^c ch. 5. 10.

ch. 10. 4.

^f Gen. 14. 7.

Ex. 17. 8.

ch. 3. 11.

ch. 5. 11.

CHAP. 13.

¹ added to

commit,

etc.

ch. 2. 11.

ch. 3. 7.

ch. 4. 1.

ch. 6. 1.

ch. 10. 6.

² This seems

a partial

captivity.

^a 1 Sam. 12. 3.

4. the men of Gilead smote Ephraim, because they said, Ye Gileadites are fugitives of Ephraim. The remonstrances of Jephthah, though reasonable and temperate, were not only ineffectual, but followed by insulting sneers that the Gileadites were reckoned both by the western Manassites and Ephraimites as outcasts, the scum and refuse of their common stock. This was addressed to a peculiarly sensitive people. A feud immediately ensued. The Gileadites, determined to chastise this public affront, gave them battle; and having defeated the Ephraimites, chased their foul-mouthed but cowardly assailants out of the territory; and rushing to the ford of the Jordan—a few miles below the confluence of the Jordan and the Jabbok (Wady Zerka)—interecepted and slew every fugitive. The method adopted for discovering an Ephraimite was by the pronunciation of a word naturally suggested by the place where they stood. "Shibboleth" means a stream, "Sibboleth" a burden. The Eastern tribe had, it seems, a dialectical provincialism in the sound of Shibboleth; and the Ephraimites could not bring their organs to pronounce it.

7. Jephthah . . . died. After a government of six years this 'mighty man of valour died;' and however difficult it may be for us to understand some passages in his history, he has been ranked by apostolic authority among the worthies of the ancient Church. He was followed by a succession of minor judges, of whom the only memorials preserved relate to the number of their families and their state.

8. after him Ibzan of Beth-lehem judged Israel. As Beth-lehem is not followed by the distinguishing term Ephratah or Judah, it is most probable that the northern Beth-lehem is meant—viz., that in the territory of Zebulun (Josh. xix. 15). *Josephus* ('Antiquities,' b. v., ch. vii., sec. 13) says

that, except being the head of a very numerous family, 'he did nothing in the seven years of his administration that was worth recording, or deserved a memorial. So he died an old man, and was buried in his own country.

11. after him Elon, a Zebulonite [זְבוּלוֹנִי, the Zebulonite; Septuagint, Ἀἰλῶν ὁ Ζαβουλωνίτης]. *Josephus* calls him Helon.

13. after him Abdon the son of Hillel, a Pirathonite, judged Israel [עַבְדוֹן בֶּן־חִלֵּל = עַבְדוֹן] (the *v* being dropped, as was often the case among the Phœnicians, in the word עֶבֶר, *Gesenius*), Bedan (1 Sam. xii. 11), בִּדְפָרְתוֹ, the Pirathonite, from the city Pirathon; supposed by *Dr. Robinson* to be represented by the modern Ter'ata, six miles or two hours west of Shechem (Nablûs) ('Biblical Researches,' iii.; 'Arab. Lists,' Part 1., No. ix.); Septuagint, Ἀβδὼν ὁ Πιραθωνίτης]. Of him *Josephus* says ('Antiquities,' b. v., ch. vii., sec. 15). 'He is only recorded to have been happy in his children; for the public affairs were then so peaceable and in such security that he had no occasion to perform glorious actions. He had forty sons, and by them left thirty grandchildren; and he marched in state with these seventy, who were all very skilful in riding horses (ass-colts), and he left them all alive after him. He died an old man, and obtained a magnificent burial in Pirathon.'

CHAP. XIII. 1.—ISRAEL SERVES THE PHILISTINES FORTY YEARS.

1. the Lord delivered them into the hand of the Philistines forty years. The Israelites were represented (ch. x. 6, 7) as having fallen universally into a state of gross and confirmed idolatry; and in chastisement of this great apostasy the Lord raised up enemies that harassed them in various quarters, especially the Ammonites and Philistines. The invasions and defeat of the former

2 And there was a certain man of ^bZorah, of the family of the Danites,
 3 whose name *was* Manoah; and his wife *was* barren, and bare not. And
 the ^cangel of the LORD appeared unto the woman, and said unto her,
 Behold now, thou *art* barren, and bearest not: but thou shalt conceive,
 4 and bear a son. Now therefore beware, I pray thee, and ^ddrink not wine
 5 nor strong drink, and eat not any unclean *thing*: for, lo, thou shalt
 conceive, and bear a son; and no ^erazor shall come on his head: for the
 child shall be a Nazarite unto God from the womb: and he shall ^fbegin
 to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines.
 6 Then the woman came and told her husband, saying, ^gA man of God
 came unto me, and ^hhis countenance *was* like the countenance of an
 angel of God, very terrible: but I asked him not whence he *was*, neither
 7 told he me his name: but he said unto me, Behold, thou shalt conceive,
 and bear a son; and now drink no wine nor strong drink, neither eat any
 unclean *thing*: for the child shall be a Nazarite to God from the womb to
 the day of his death.
 8 Then Manoah entreated the LORD, and said, O my Lord, let the man
 of God which thou didst send come again unto us, and teach us what we
 9 shall do unto the child that shall be born. And God hearkened to the
 voice of Manoah; and the angel of God came again unto the woman as
 10 she sat in the field: but Manoah her husband *was* not with her. And
 the woman made haste, and ran, and showed her husband, and said unto
 him, Behold, the man hath appeared unto me, that came unto me the
 11 *other* day. And Manoah arose, and went after his wife, and came to the
 man, and said unto him, *Art* thou the man that spakest unto the woman?
 12 And he said, *I am*. And Manoah said, Now let thy words come to pass.
 13 ³How shall we order the child, and ⁴*how* shall we do unto him? And
 the angel of the LORD said unto Manoah, Of all that I said unto the
 14 woman let her beware. She may not eat of any *thing* that cometh of the
 vine, neither let her drink wine or strong drink, nor eat any unclean
thing: all that I commanded her let her observe.
 15 And Manoah said unto the angel of the LORD, I pray thee, ⁵let us
 16 detain thee, until we shall have made ready a kid ⁶for thee. And the
 angel of the LORD said unto Manoah, Though thou detain me, I will not
 eat of thy bread: and if thou wilt offer a burnt offering, thou must offer
 it unto the LORD. For Manoah knew not that he *was* an angel of the

B. C. 1161.

^b Josh. 15. 31,
 Josh. 19. 41,
^c Gen. 16. 7-
 13.
 Gen. 22. 15.
 Gen. 31. 11.
 Ex. 3. 2, 3.
 ch. 2. 1.
 ch. 6. 12.
 Hos. 12. 3-5.
 Mal. 3. 1.
 Luke 1. 11,
 13, 28, 31.
 Ex. 3. 2, 3.
 Acts 7. 30.
^d Num. 6. 2, 3.
 Luke 1. 15.
^e Num. 6. 5.
 1 Sam. 1. 11.
 1 Sam. 7. 13.
 2 Sam. 8. 1.
 1 Chr. 18. 1.
^f Deut. 33. 1.
 Josh. 14. 6.
 1 Sam. 2. 27.
 1 Sam. 9. 6.
 1 Ki. 17. 24.
 2 Ki. 4. 9, 16.
 1 Tim. 6. 11.
^g Matt. 23. 3.
 Luke 9. 29.
 Acts 6. 15.
^h What shall
 be the
 manner of
 the, etc.
 Gen. 18. 19.
 Pro. 4. 4.
 Pro. 32. 6.
⁴ What shall
 be his
 work? or
 what shall
 he do?
⁵ Gen. 15. 5.
 ch. 6. 13.
⁶ Def re
 thee.

were narrated in the two chapters immediately preceding this: and now the sacred historian proceeds to describe the inroads of the latter people. The period of Philistine ascendancy comprised forty years, reckoning from the time of Elon till the death of Samson.

2-10.—AN ANGEL APPEARS TO MANOAH'S WIFE.

2. **Zorah**—a Danite town (Josh. xv. 33), lying on the common boundary of Judah and Dan, so that it was near the Philistine border. 3. the **angel of the Lord**—the messenger of the covenant; the Divine personage who made so many remarkable appearances of a similar kind already described. 5. *thou shalt conceive, and bear a son*. This predicted child being to be a Nazarite, the mother was, for the sake of her promised offspring, required to practise the rigid abstinence of the Nazarite law (see on Num. vi. 3). *he shall begin to deliver Israel*—a prophecy encouraging to a patriotic man; the terms of it, however, indicated that the period of deliverance was still to be distant.

8. **Then Manoah entreated the Lord**. On being informed by his wife of the welcome intimation, the husband made it the subject of earnest prayer to God; and this is a remarkable instance, indicative of the connection which God has established

between prayer and the fulfilment of His promises.

11-14.—THE ANGEL APPEARS TO MANOAH.

11. *Art thou the man that spakest unto the woman?* Manoah's intense desire for the repetition of the angel's visit was prompted, not by doubts or anxieties of any kind, but was the fruit of lively faith, and of his great anxiety to follow out the instructions given. 'Blessed was he who had not seen, yet had believed.' 12. *How shall we order the child?* [מַה יִּשְׁמַע הַיָּלֵד?—What will be the manner of the child?—i. e., What sort of a child, and what will he do?

15-23.—MANOAH'S SACRIFICE.

15. *let us detain thee, until we shall have made ready a kid*. The stranger declined the intended hospitality; and intimated that if the meat were to be an offering, it must be presented to the Lord. Manoah needed this instruction, for his purpose was to offer the prepared viands to Him, not as the Lord, but as what he imagined Him to be, not even an angel (v. 16), but a prophet or merely human messenger. It was on this account, and not as rejecting divine honours, that he spoke in this manner to Manoah. The angel's language was exactly similar to that of our Lord,

- 17 LORD. And Manoah said unto the angel of the LORD, What *is* thy name, that when thy sayings come to pass we may do thee honour?
- 18 And the angel of the LORD said unto him, ^jWhy askest thou thus
- 19 after my name, seeing it *is* ^ksecret? So Manoah took a kid with a meat offering, ^land offered it upon a rock unto the LORD: and *the angel* did
- 20 wondrously; and Manoah and his wife looked on. For it came to pass, when the flame went up toward heaven from off the altar, that the angel of the LORD ascended in the flame of the altar. And Manoah and his
- 21 wife looked on *it*, and ^mfell on their faces to the ground. But the angel of the LORD did no more appear to Manoah and to his wife.
- 22 ⁿThen Manoah knew that he *was* an angel of the LORD. And Manoah
- 23 said unto his wife, ^oWe shall surely die, because we have seen God. But his wife said unto him, If the LORD were pleased to kill us, he would not have received a burnt offering and a meat offering at our hands, neither would he have showed ^pus all these *things*, nor would as at this time have told us *such things* ^qas these.
- 24 And the woman bare a son, and called his name ^rSamson: and ^sthe
- 25 child grew, and the LORD blessed him. And ^tthe Spirit of the LORD began to move him at times in ^uthe camp of Dan between ^vZorah and Eshtaol.
- 14 AND Samson went down to ^wTimnath, and ^xsaw a woman in Timnath
- 2 of the daughters of the Philistines. And he came up, and told his father and his mother, and said, I have seen a woman in Timnath of the
- 3 daughters of the Philistines: now therefore ^yget her for me to wife. Then

B. C. 1161.

^j Gen. 32. 29.^k Or.

wonderful.

Isa 9. 6.

^l ch. 6. 19. 20.^m Lev. 9. 24.ⁿ 1 Chr. 21. 16.^o ch. 6. 22.^p Gen. 32. 30.^q Ex. 3. 10.^r Dent 4. 33.^s Ps 25. 11.^t That is,

Fervent

like the

sun.

^u Heb 11. 31.^v 1 Sam. 3. 19.^w Luke 1. 80.^x ch. 3. 10.^y 1 Sam 11. 6.^z Matt. 4. 1.^{aa} Mal'anch-

dan.

^{ab} Josh. 15. 33.

CHAP. 14.

^{ac} Gen. 31. 13.^{ad} Josh. 15. 10.^{ae} Gen. 31. 2.^{af} Gen. 21. 21.

Matt. xix. 17. 17. What is thy name? Manoah's request elicited the most unequivocal proofs of the divinity of this supernatural visitor—in his name "secret" [שֵׁטֶר, wonderful] (used in regard to what is supernatural, cf. Isa. ix. 6), and in the miraculous flame that betokened the acceptance of the sacrifice. There was an extraordinary mystery enveloping the angel's appearance to Manoah and his wife, as well as in his subsequent procedure, which stamped him in the eyes of that pious pair as wonderful. There is a marked difference between the mode of the Divine procedure in pre-intimating the births of Isaac and of Samson. 'While Jehovah enters Abraham's abode as a guest, and partakes of the food that is set before him, in the history of Manoah, on the contrary, "the angel of Jehovah" expressly declines to do so. How shall we explain this difference? In Abraham's case so intimate a relation subsists between him and his God, that he obtains a distinction which, in accordance with his exalted vocation as the Friend of God, he only could obtain. But another relation comes before us, where the standing-point of the theocratic law had revealed the alienation between God and man, and the majesty of God is there, even as on mount Sinai, a majesty fenced around with bounds that may not be passed' (Hävernick's 'Introduction to the Pentateuch,' p. 160).

22. We shall surely die, because we have seen God—(see on Gen. xvi. 13.) The frequent manifestations of the angel of Jehovah to the worthies of the early Jewish Church had rendered the description of His terrible majesty a current tradition. A popular belief also prevailed that the party to whom He thus revealed Himself would die. In this belief Manoah participated; and he was relieved from the painful apprehension of impending death only by the reasonable and happy suggestion of his wife, that the acceptance of their offerings was a pledge of His gracious and beneficent purposes towards them.

24, 25.—SAMSON BORN.

24. the woman bare a son, and called his name Samson. The birth of this child of promise, and the report of the important national services he was to render, must from the first have made him an object of peculiar interest and careful instruction. 25. the Spirit of the Lord began to move him at times—not probably as it moved the prophets, who were charged with an inspired message, but kindling in his youthful bosom a spirit of high and devoted patriotism. [עָרַב is improperly rendered in our version "at times," as if the Divine afflatus was merely occasional; for the purport of this verse is to state that an extraordinary influence began to be exerted upon him for the first time. עָרַב denotes an auvil, a tread of the foot, an impression on the senses made with sudden violence; and hence trop to agitate the mind, to arouse it to a state of powerful emotion.] The word, as employed in the present instance, is evidently expressive of the excitation of the Hebrew youth to feats of chivalrous valour, exceeding anything which he or any of his companions could have exhibited, if they had been left to the exercise of their ordinary strength, in order that he might be prepared, by the experience which he thus had of supernatural aid, to trust in Jehovah when he should be called to fill situations in which nothing short of that aid could enable him successfully to cope with the enemies of his people (cf. ch. xiv. 6; xv. 14). Eshtaol—the free city. It, as well as Zorah, stood on the border between Judah and Dan.

CHAP. XIV. 1-5.—SAMSON DESIRES A WIFE OF THE PHILISTINES.

1. Timnath—now Tibna, about three miles from Zorah, his birthplace. saw a woman . . . of the Philistines. 2. get her for me to wife. In the East, parents did, and do in many cases still, negotiate the marriage alliances for their sons. During their period of ascendancy, the Philistine invaders had settled in the towns; and the intercourse be-

his father and his mother said unto him, *Is there never a woman among the daughters of* ^a *thy brethren, or among all my people, that thou goest to take a wife of the* ^c *uncircumcised Philistines?* And Samson said unto
 4 his father, Get her for me; for ¹ *she pleaseth me well.* But his father and his mother knew not that it *was* ^d *of the LORD, that he sought an occasion against the Philistines: for at that time the Philistines had dominion*
 5 *over Israel.* Then went Samson down, and his father and his mother, to Timnath, and came to the vineyards of Timnath; and, behold, a young
 6 lion roared ² *against him.* And ^e *the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him, and he rent him as he would have rent a kid, and he had nothing in his hand: but he told not his father or his mother what he*
 7 *had done.* And he went down and talked with the woman; and she pleased Samson well.
 8 And after a time he returned to take her, and he turned aside to see the carcase of the lion; and, behold, *there was a swarm of bees and honey*
 9 *in the carcase of the lion.* And he took thereof in his hands, and went on eating, and came to his father and mother, and he gave them, and they did eat: but he told not them that he had taken the honey out of the carcase of the lion.
 10 So his father went down unto the woman: and Samson made there a
 11 feast; for so used the young men to do. And it came to pass, when they
 12 saw him, that they brought thirty companions to be with him. And Samson said unto them, I will now ^h *put forth a riddle unto you: if ye*

B. C. 1141.

d Gen. 13. 8.
 Gen. 21. 3. 4.
 e Gen. 31. 14.
 Ex. 31. 16.
 Deut. 7. 3.
 ch. 13. 18.
 1 Sam. 11. 6.
 1 Sam. 12.
 26: 37.
 1 Sam. 31. 4.
 2 Sam. 1. 29.
 1 she is right in mine eyes.
 f Josh. 11. 50.
 1 Ki. 12. 15.
 2 Ki. 6. 37.
 2 Chr. 0. 15.
 2 Chr. 27. 7.
 1's 25. 29.
 Ps. 115. 3.
 2 in meeting him.
 g ch. 3. 10.
 ch. 13. 7. 5.
 1 Sam. 11. 6.
 h 1 Ki. 10. 1.
 Eze. 17. 2.
 Luke 14. 7.

tween them and the Israelites was often of such a friendly and familiar character as to issue in matrimonial relations. Moreover, the Philistines were not in the number of the seven devoted nations of Canaan, with whom the law forbade them to marry. 3. *Is there never a woman among the daughters of thy brethren*—i. e., of thine own tribe; a Danite woman. Samson said . . . *Get her for me; for she pleaseth me well*—is *lit.*, 'she is right in mine eyes;' not by her beautiful countenance or handsome figure, but *right or fit for his purpose.* And this throws light on the historian's remark in reference to the resistance of his parents; 'they knew not that it was of the Lord, that he sought an occasion against the Philistines,'—rather, *from the Philistines*—originating on their side. The Lord, by a course of retributive proceedings, was about to destroy the Philistine power; and the means which He meant to employ was not the forces of a numerous army, as in the case of the preceding judges, but the miraculous prowess of the single-handed champion of Israel. In these circumstances, the provocation to hostilities could only spring out of a *private* quarrel; and this marriage scheme was doubtless suggested by the secret influence of the Spirit as the best way of accomplishing the intended result.

5.9.—HE KILLS A LION.

5. a young lion—Hebrew, a lion in the pride of his youthful prime. The wild mountain passes of Judah were the lairs of savage beasts; and most, or all, the 'lions' of Scripture occur in that wild country. 6. the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him [רַעַד]—cleft, broke through; used specially of the Spirit of God proving men: came upon, fell suddenly upon him, communicating those extraordinary energies by which he was qualified to perform feats of physical strength far beyond the natural capability of man. His rending and killing the shaggy monster, without any weapon in his hand, was accomplished by that superhuman courage and strength which the supernatural influences of the Spirit enabled him to put forth, and by the exertion of which, in such

private incidental circumstances, he was gradually trained to confide in them for the more public work to which he was destined. 7. talked with the woman—i. e., espoused her; for the interview between the youth of different sexes is extremely rare and limited in the East, and generally after they are betrothed.

8. after a time he returned to take her—probably after the lapse of a year, the usual interval between the ceremonies of betrothal and marriage. It was spent by the bride elect with her parents in preparation for the nuptials; and at the proper time the bridegroom returned to take her home. a swarm of bees and honey in the carcase of the lion. *Aristotle* and other eminent naturalists affirm that bees will not alight upon a dead carcase, nor taste the flesh. Nor is there in the fact mentioned by the sacred historian anything at variance with this statement of *Aristotle*. In such a climate the myriads of insects and the ravages of birds of prey, together with the influence of the solar rays, would in a few months put the carcase in a state inviting to such cleanly animals as bees. And the phrase, "after a time," which introduces the relation of this incident, shows that the hiving of the bees in the carcase of the lion was long posterior to the death of the animal, when it had been completely divested of all putrid effluvia, and reduced to a mere skeleton.

10, 11.—HIS MARRIAGE FEAST.

10. his father went down. The father is mentioned as the head and representative of Samson's relatives. Samson made there a feast. The wedding festivity lasted a week. The men and women were probably entertained in separate apartments—the bride, with her female relatives, at her parents' house; Samson, in some place obtained for the occasion, as he was a stranger. A large number of paronyms, or 'friends of the bridegroom,' furnished, no doubt, by the bride's family, attended his party, ostensibly to honour the nuptials, but really as spies on his proceedings.

12. 18.—HIS RIDDLE.

12. I will now put forth a riddle. Riddles are

can certainly declare it me ¹within the seven days of the feast, and find ²it out, then I will give you thirty ³sheets and thirty change ⁴of garments: 13 but if ye cannot declare *it* me, then shall ye give me thirty sheets and thirty change of garments. And they said unto him, Put forth thy 14 riddle, that we may hear it. And he said unto them,

Out of the eater came forth meat,

And out of the strong came forth sweetness.

15 And they could not in three days expound the riddle. And it came to pass on the seventh day, that they said unto Samson's wife, ^kEntice thy husband, that he may declare unto us the riddle, ^llest we burn thee and thy father's house with fire: have ye called us ⁴to take 16 that we have? *is it not so?* And Samson's wife wept before him, and said, ^mThou dost but hate me, and lovest me not: thou hast put forth a riddle unto the children of my people, and hast not told *it* me. And he said unto her, Behold, I have not told *it* my father nor my mother, and 17 shall I tell *it* thee? And she wept before him ⁵the seven days, while their feast lasted; and it came to pass on the seventh day, that he told her, because she lay sore upon him: and she told the riddle to the 18 children of her people. And the men of the city said unto him on the seventh day before the sun went down,

What *is* sweeter than honey?—and what *is* stronger than a lion?

And he said unto them, If ye had not ploughed with my heifer, ye had 19 not found out my riddle. And ⁿthe Spirit of the LORD came upon him, and he went down to Ashkelon, and slew thirty men of them, and took their ⁶spoils, and gave change of garments unto them which expounded the riddle.

And his anger was kindled, and he went up to his father's house.

20 But Samson's wife was *given* to his companion, whom he had used as his friend.

15 BUT it came to pass within a while after, in the time of wheat harvest, that Samson visited his wife with ^aa kid; and he said, I will go

a favourite Oriental amusement at festive entertainments of this nature, and rewards are offered to those who give the solution. Samson's riddle related to honey got in the lion's carcase. The prize he offered was thirty sindinim, or shirts—not sheets, as in our version, but wide linen garments worn next the body, only, it would seem, by persons of rank and wealth—and thirty changes of garments, probably woollen. Three days were passed in vain attempts to unravel the enigma. The festive week was fast drawing to a close, when they secretly enlisted the services of the newly married wife.

17. she wept before him the seven days, while their feast lasted. Three days of the seven had already elapsed before she was asked and had undertaken to do so. But the full week is mentioned, according to the Jewish mode of reckoning, which is followed in Scripture; just as it was foretold that our Lord should be three days and three nights in the grave, although He was not laid in the tomb till late in the first, and He left it very early on the third day. Having got the secret, she revealed it to her friends.

ploughed with my heifer—a metaphor borrowed from agricultural pursuits, in which not only oxen, but cows and heifers, were, and continue to be, employed in dragging the plough. Divested of metaphor, the meaning is taken by some in a criminal sense, but probably bears no more than that they had resorted to the aid of his wife—an unworthy expedient, which might have been deemed by a man of less noble spirit and generosity as releasing him from the obligation to fulfil his

B C 1st.¹ Gen. 29 27.² Chr 7. 8.³ Or. shirts.

Matt 27. 28.

Mark 14 51.

⁴ Gen. 45. 22.

2 Ki. 5. 22.

^k Gen. 3. 6.

ch. 16. 5.

1 Ro. 5. 3.

1 Ro. 6. 21.

Mic. 7. 5.

^l ch 15. 6.⁴ to possess

us, or, to

impo-

ver-

ish

us.

^m ch 16. 15.⁵ Or, the rest

of the

seven days,

etc.

ⁿ Num. 11. 17.

Num 27. 18.

ch 3. 10.

ch. 13. 25.

1 Sam. 10. 6.

1 Sam 11. 6.

1 Sam. 16.

13.

1 Cor. 12. 4-

11.

⁶ Cr,

apparel.

CHAP. 15.

^a Gen. 33. 17.

1 Sam. 16.

20.

Luke 15. 29.

bargain. The Philistine plough, as seen in the Shephelah at the present day, is a very primitive implement, formed of a rude piece of wood, pointed with iron, and attached to a short upright handle, which the ploughman holds in one hand, while he urges the cattle with a pole in the other. It is usually drawn, as from Samson's simile it may be concluded it was in his days, by a couple of small bullocks, or heifers.

19. 20.—HE SLAYS THIRTY PHILISTINES.

19. went down to Ashkelon, and slew thirty men. This town was about twenty-four miles west by south-west from Timnath; and his selection of this place, which was dictated by the Divine Spirit, was probably owing to its bitter hostility to Israel. took their spoil. The custom of stripping a slain enemy was not unknown in Hebrew warfare.

20. his companion, whom he had used as his friend—*i. e.*, 'the friend of the bridegroom,' who was the medium of communicating during the festivities between him and his bride; and whose acceptance of her hand, therefore, was an act of base treachery, that could not fail to provoke the just resentment of Samson.

CHAP. XV. 1, 2.—SAMSON IS DENIED HIS WIFE.

1. in the time of wheat harvest—*i. e.*, about the end of our April, or the beginning of our May. The shocks of grain were then gathered into heaps, and lying on the field, or on the threshing-floors. It was the dry season—dry far beyond our experience—and the grain in a most combustible state. Samson visited his wife with a kid. It is usual for a visitor in the East to carry some

in to my wife into the chamber: but her father would not suffer him to
 2 go in. And her father said, I verily thought that thou hadst utterly
 hated her; therefore I gave her to thy companion: *is* not her younger
 sister fairer than she? ¹ take her, I pray thee, instead of her.
 3 And Samson said concerning them, ² Now shall I be more blameless
 4 than the Philistines, though I do them a displeasure. And Samson went
 and caught three hundred ³ foxes, and took ⁴ firebrands, and turned tail
 5 to tail, and put a firebrand in the midst between two tails. And when
 he had set the brands on fire, he let *them* go into the standing corn of the
 Philistines, and burnt up both the shocks, and also the standing corn,
 6 with the vineyards *and* olives. Then the Philistines said, Who hath
 done this? And they answered, Samson, the son-in-law of the Timnite,
 because he had taken his wife, and given her to his companion. And
 the Philistines came up, and burnt her and her father with fire.
 7 And Samson said unto them, Though ye have done this, yet will I be
 8 avenged of you, and after that I will cease. And he smote them ⁵ hip
 and thigh with a great slaughter: and he went down and dwelt in the
 top of the rock Etam.

B. C. 11 0.

1 let her be
 thine.
 2 Cr. Now
 shall I be
 blameless
 from the
 Philis-
 tines,
 though,
 etc
 3 Cr. Jackals,
 which were
 in great
 numbers
 in some
 parts of
 Palestine
 4 Cr.
 torches.
 5 That is,
 with great
 confusion.

present. In this case it might be not only as a token of civility, but of reconciliation; and a kid was esteemed a great delicacy (cf. Gen. xxxviii. 16, 17; Luke xv. 29). he said—*i. e.*, to himself. It was his secret purpose. **into the chamber**—the female apartments, or harem. **2. I verily thought that thou hadst utterly hated her.** This allegation was a mere sham—a flimsy pretext to excuse his refusal of admittance. The proposal he made of a marriage with her younger sister was but an insult to Samson, and one which it was unlawful for an Israelite to accept (Lev. xviii. 18).

3-8.—HE BURNS THE PHILISTINES' CORN.

3. Now shall I be more blameless than the Philistines. This nefarious conduct provoked the hero's just indignation, and he resolved to take signal vengeance. **4. went and caught three hundred foxes**—rather [כַּזְזָיִם], jackals—an animal between a wolf and a fox (*Canis aureus*), which, unlike our fox, a solitary creature, are gregarious, prowling in large packs or herds, and abound in the mountains of Palestine. The collection of so great a number would require both time and assistance. They were probably snared into traps, or caught in pitfalls; and as these creatures are exceedingly numerous about Gaza and the southern parts of Philistia (*Hasselquist*: cf. Josh. xix. 3; 1 Sam. xiii. 17), Samson could have had no difficulty, with the aid of servants, in procuring the number here specified. **took firebrands**—torches or matches, which would burn slowly, retaining the fire, and blaze fiercely when blown by the wind. He put two jackals together, tail by tail, and fastened tightly a fire-match between them. But the uniting cord was probably of considerable length, so that, the animals being gregarious, they might run in couples, and though tied, be little, if at all, impeded in their movements. At night-fall he lighted the firebrand, and sent each pair successively down from the hills into the 'Shephelah,' or plain of Philistia, lying on the borders of Dan and Judah—a rich and extensive corn district. The pain caused by the fire would make the animals toss about to a wide extent, kindling one great conflagration; but no one could render assistance to his neighbour, the devastation was so general, the panic would be so great. 'There is reason to think,' says *Burder* ('Oriental Customs,' *in loco*), 'that there was nothing new or uncommon in this operation, as it was the most

obvious, for the end proposed, that the wit of man could devise. We accordingly find that *Ovid* alludes to the practice, and mentions that foxes and firebrands were every year exhibited at Rome, and killed in the circus. For it was the custom in many places to sacrifice, by way of retaliation, animals which did particular injury to the fruits of the earth. In consequence of this they introduced these foxes, which had been employed for that purpose with firebrands. He then mentions an instance of much injury by a fox accoutred with a firebrand.' This incident has been so frequently made the subject of infidel railery, that several writers have endeavoured to explain it away. One commentator maintains that the agents employed by Samson were not four-footed animals, but the Shualim, or men of Shual, a district on the borders of Philistia. *Kennicott*, on the support of seven MSS., holds that the proper reading should be, not Shualim, but Sholim, handfuls of sheaves; and that what Samson did was to place the shocks of corn two by two endways, so that the fire, aided by a smart breeze, was no sooner 'sent in' amongst the dry grain, than it quickly consumed it. But it is objected to this translation that Sholim, which occurs only three times in the Scriptures, means strictly a *handful*, and cannot, but by a very forced construction, signify *sheaves*. On every view, the commonly received opinion is the most probable (*Jamieson's* edition of *Paxton's* 'Illustrations of Scripture Natural History,' p. 361). **6. Who hath done this?** The author of this outrage, and the cause that provoked such an extraordinary retaliation, soon became known; and the sufferers, enraged by the destruction of their crops, rushing with tumultuous fury to the house of Samson's wife, "burnt her and her father with fire." This was a remarkable retribution. To avoid this menace she had betrayed her husband, and by that unprincipled conduct eventually exposed herself to the horrid doom which, at the sacrifice of conjugal fidelity, she had sought to escape.

7. Though ye have done this, yet will I be avenged of you. By that act the husbandmen had been the instruments in avenging his private and personal wrongs. But as a judge, divinely appointed to deliver Israel, his work of retribution was not yet accomplished. **8. smote them hip and thigh**—a proverbial expression for a merciless slaughter. **went down and dwelt in the top of**

9 Then the Philistines went up, and pitched in Judah, and spread themselves in Lehi. And the men of Judah said, Why are ye come up against us? And they answered, To bind Samson are we come up, to do to him as he hath done to us. Then three thousand men of Judah^c went to the top of the rock Etam, and said to Samson, Knowest thou not that the Philistines are^b rulers over us? what is this that thou hast done unto us? And he said unto them, As they did unto me, so have I done unto them. 12 And they said unto him, We are come down to bind thee, that we may deliver thee into the hand of the Philistines. And Samson said unto 13 them, Swear unto me, that ye will not fall upon me yourselves. And they spake unto him, saying, No; but we will bind thee fast, and deliver thee into their hand: but surely we will not kill thee. And they bound him with two new cords, and brought him up from the rock. 14 And when he came unto Lehi, the Philistines shouted against him: and the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him, and the cords that were upon his arms became as flax that was burnt with fire, and his 15 bands^d loosed from off his hands. And he found a^e new jawbone of an ass, and put forth his hand and took it and slew^c a thousand men there- 16 with. And Samson said,

With the jawbone of an ass,^g heaps upon heaps,
With the jaw of an ass have I slain a thousand men.

17 And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking, that he cast away the jawbone out of his hand, and called that place^h Ramath-lehi.

18 And he was sore athirst, and called on the LORD, and said, Thou hast given this great deliverance into the hand of thy servant: and now shall 19 I die for thirst, and fall into the hand of the uncircumcised? But God clave an hollow place that was inⁱ the jaw, and there came water there-out; and when he had drunk, his spirit came again, and he revived: wherefore he called the name thereof^j Eu-hakkore, which is in Lehi unto this day.

20 And he judged Israel^k in the days of the Philistines twenty years.

16 THEN went Samson to Gaza, and saw there^l an harlot, and went in 2 unto her. And it was told the Gazites, saying, Samson is come hither. And they^m compassed him in, and laid wait for him all night in the gate of the city, and wereⁿ quiet all the night, saying, In the morning, when

the rock Etam—rather, went down and dwelt [רָמַת לֵהִי] in a cleft; i. e., a cave or cavern of the cliff Etam.

9-13.—HE IS BOUND BY THE MEN OF JUDAH, AND DELIVERED TO THE PHILISTINES.

9. Then the Philistines went up—to the high land of Judah. and spread themselves in Lehi—a district on the border of the Philistine territory, now el-Lekieh, abounding with limestone cliffs, the sides of which are perforated with caves. The object of the Philistines in this expedition was to apprehend Samson, in revenge for the great slaughter he had committed on their people. With a view of freeing his own countrymen from all danger from the infuriated Philistines he allowed himself to be bound and surrendered a fettered prisoner into their power. Exulting with joy at the near prospect of riddance from so formidable an enemy, they went to meet him. But by a sudden illapse of the Spirit he exerted his superhuman strength, and finding a new (or moist) jawbone of an ass, he laid hold of it, and, with no other weapon, slew a thousand men at a place which he called Ramath-lehi—i. e., the hill of the jawbone, a chain of steep, craggy rocks. The origin of the name is traced by the sacred historian, not to the

rugged character of the hill, but to Samson's throwing away of the jawbone [as if written, not as in the Hebrew text, רָמַת לֵהִי, but רָמַת לֵהִי, from רָמַת, to throw (Gesenius, sub voce)].

16. with the jawbone of an ass, heaps upon heaps. The inadequacy of the weapon plainly shows this to have been a miraculous feat, 'a case of supernatural strength;' just as the gift of prophecy is a case of supernatural knowledge (Chalmers).

19. an hollow place . . . in the jaw—in Lehi, taking the word as a proper noun, marking the place. his spirit came again. His strength, exhausted by the violent and long-continued exertion, was recruited by the refreshing draught from the spring; and it was called Eu-hakkore, the 'supplication well,' a name which records the piety of this heroic champion.

CHAP. XVI. 1-3.—SAMSON CARRIES AWAY THE GATES OF GAZA.

1. Gaza [גָּזָא, the strong]—now Guzzah; the capital of the largest of the five Philistine principal cities, about fifteen miles south-west of Ashkelon, and, like that town, was captured by the tribe of Judah, but re-taken by the Philistines. The object of Samson's visit to this city is

B C 1140.

6 went down.

b Deut. 23. 43.

ch. 2. 13, 14.

ch. 13. 1.

ch. 14. 4.

Neh. 9. 26.

1's 73. 53.

7 were

mell'ed.

8 moist.

c Josh. 23. 10.

ch. 3. 31.

1 Sam. 14. 6-

16.

2 Sam. 23. 8.

9 an heap.

two heaps.

10 That is,

The lifting

up of the

jawbone,

or, cast'ing

away of

the jaw-

bone.

d 1's. 3. 7.

11 Lehi, the

name of

the place.

e Gen. 45. 27.

Isa. 40. 29.

Isa. 57. 15.

12 That is,

The well of

him that

call'd, or,

cried.

f Ps. 34. 6.

ch. 13. 1.

CHAP. 16.

1 a woman

an harlot.

g 1 Sam. 13

26.

2 silent.

3 it is day, we shall kill him. And Samson lay till midnight, and arose at midnight, and took the doors of the gate of the city, and the two posts, and went away with them, ³bar and all, and put *them* upon his shoulders, and carried them up to the top of an hill, that *is* before Hebron.

4 And it came to pass afterward, that he loved a woman ⁴in the valley

5 of Sorek, whose name *was* Delilah. And the lords of the Philistines came up unto her, and said unto her, ⁵Entice him, and see wherein his great strength *lieth*, and by what *means* we may prevail against him, that we may bind him to ⁵afflict him: and we will give thee, every one of us, eleven hundred *pieces* of silver.

6 And Delilah said to Samson, Tell me, I pray thee, wherein thy great strength *lieth*, and wherewith thou mightest be bound to afflict thee.

7 And Samson said unto her, If they bind me with seven ⁶green withs that

8 were never dried, then shall I be weak, and be as ⁷another man. Then the lords of the Philistines brought up to her seven green withs which had

9 not been dried, and she ⁶bound him with them. Now *there were* men lying in wait, abiding with her in the chamber. And she said unto him, The Philistines *be* upon thee, Samson. And he brake the withs, as a thread of tow is broken when it ⁸toucheth the fire: ⁸so his strength was not known.

10 And Delilah said unto Samson, Behold, thou hast mocked me, and told me lies: now ⁶tell me, I pray thee, wherewith thou mightest be bound.

11 And he said unto her, ⁷If they bind me fast with new ropes ⁹that never

12 were occupied, then shall I be weak, and be as another man. Delilah therefore took new ropes, and bound ⁹him therewith, and said unto him,

B. C. 1120.
 8 with the bar.
 4 Or, by the brook.
 6 ch 11. 15.
 Pro. 2. 16-19.
 Pro. 5. 3.
 Pro. 6. 21-24.
 Pro. 7. 21.
 1 Cor. 6. 15, 13.
 5 Or, humble.
 6 moist.
 7 one.
 6 Pro. 6. 26.
 8 smelleth.
 Fs. 53. 9.
 d John 5. 14.
 6 Pro. 23. 7, 8.
 Pro. 24. 23.
 Eze. 33. 1.
 Luke 2:48.
 / Pro. 13. 3.
 Eph. 4. 25.
 9 wherewith work hath not been done.
 9 1 ro 7. 22.

not recorded; and, unless he had gone in disguise, it was a perilous exposure of his life in one of the enemy's strongholds. It soon transpired that he was there, and it was immediately resolved to secure him; but deeming themselves certain of their prey, the Gazites deferred the execution of their measures till the morning. 3. Samson . . . arose at midnight, and took the doors of the gate of the city. A ruinous pile of masonry is still pointed out as the site of the gate. It was probably a part of the town wall; and as this ruin is "toward Hebron," there is no improbability in the tradition, carried them up to the top of an hill that is before Hebron. That hill is el-Montar; but by "Hebron" in this passage is meant "the mountains of Hebron;" for otherwise Samson, had he run night and day from the time of his flight from Gaza, could only have come on the evening of the following day within sight of the city of Hebron. The city of Gaza was in those days probably not less than three-quarters of an hour distant from el-Montar. To have climbed to the top of this hill with the ponderous doors and their bolts on his shoulders, through a road of thick sand, was a feat which none but a Samson could have accomplished (*Van de Velde*). The gates of cities, as well as of houses and temples, are generally very low and strait, or narrow, as they appear to have been also in the most ancient times (Ps. xxiv. 7; Luke xiii. 24). "On entering Tiberias from the south I could not get through the gate of the city except by stooping close to the mane of my horse. If the gates of Gaza were like those of Tiberias, the act of Samson, who carried them a considerable distance, would still be regarded as an extraordinary feat, but not beyond the limits of credibility" (*Bovet*, 'Voyage en Terre Sainte,' p. 285).

414.—DELILAH CORRUPTED BY THE PHILISTINES.

4. He loved a woman in the valley of Sorek. The situation of this place is not known, although

Jerome ('Onomast.') mentions a village called Capharsorech, the village of Sorech, north of Eleutheropolis, near Taraa (Zorah, ch. xiii. 2), where Samson was born; nor can the character of Delilah be clearly ascertained. Her abode, her mercenary character, and her heartless blandishments afford too much reason to believe she was a profligate woman. 5. the lords of the Philistines. The five rulers deemed no means beneath their dignity to overcome this national enemy; and learning the ascendancy which had acquired over the Hebrew champion, they bribed her to use that influence in promoting their designs. Entice him, and see wherein his great strength lieth. They probably imagined that he carried some amulet about his person, or was in the possession of some important secret, by which he had acquired such Herculean strength; and they bribed Delilah, doubtless by a large reward, to discover it for them. She undertook the service, and made several attempts, plying all her arts of persuasion and blandishment, in his soft and communicative moods, to extract his secrets (see *Josephus*, 'Antiquities,' b. v., ch. viii., sec. 10-12).

7. bind me with seven green withs. Vine tendrils, pliant twigs, or twists made of crude vegetable stalks, are used in many Eastern countries for ropes at the present day. 8. she bound him with them—probably in a sportive manner, to try whether he was jesting or in earnest. 9. there were men . . . abiding . . . in the chamber וְאֵרָאֵב יָשֵׁב בְּחַמְרָא—now the ambush was abiding with her in the inner apartment, the harem, or female chamber.

10. And Delilah said. To avoid exciting suspicion, she must have allowed some time to elapse before making this renewed attempt. 11. If they bind me fast with new ropes [בְּצִנְדֵי, with cords].

It is not said of what material they were formed; but, from their being dried, it is probable they

The Philistines *be* upon thee, Samson. And *there were* liers in wait abiding in the chamber. And he brake them from off his arms like a thread.

13 And Delilah said unto Samson, Hitherto thou hast mocked me, and told me lies: tell me wherewith thou mightest be bound. And he said

14 unto her, If thou weavest the seven locks of my head with the web. And she fastened *it* with the pin, and said unto him, The Philistines *be* upon thee, Samson. And he awaked out of his sleep, and went away with the pin of the beam, and with the web.

15 And she said unto him, ^aHow canst thou say, I love thee, when thine heart *is* not with me? thou hast mocked me these three times, and hast

16 not told me wherein thy great strength *lieth*. And it came to pass, when she pressed him daily with her words, and urged him, *so* that his soul was

17 ¹⁰vexed unto death, that he ¹told her all his heart, and said unto her, ^jThere hath not come a razor upon mine head; for I *have been* a Nazarite unto God from my mother's womb: if I be shaven, then my strength will go from me, and I shall become weak, and be like any *other* man.

18 And when Delilah saw that he had told her all his heart, she sent and called for the lords of the Philistines, saying, Come up this once, for he hath showed me all his heart. Then the lords of the Philistines came up

19 unto her, and brought money in their hand. And ^kshe made him sleep upon her knees: and she called for a man, and she caused him to shave off the seven locks of his head; and she began to afflict him, and his

20 strength went from him. And she said, The Philistines *be* upon thee, Samson. And he awoke out of his sleep, and said, I will go out, as at other times before, and shake myself. And he wist not that the LORD

21 ^lwas departed from him. But the Philistines took him, and ¹¹put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza, and bound him with fetters of brass; and he did grind in the prison house.

B. C. 1120.

^a ch. 11. 16.
Pro. 2. 1a.
Pro. 5. 3-11.

¹⁰ shortened.

¹ 1 Chr. 28. 9.
2 Chr. 15. 2.
Pro. 18. 2.
Pro. 29. 11.
Mic. 7. 5.

^j Num. 6. 5.
ch. 13. 5.
Acts 18. 18.

^k Pro. 5. 3, 4.
Pro. 7. 21.
Pro. 23. 33.
34.
Eccl. 7. 25.
24.

^l Num. 14. 9.
42, 43.
Josh. 7. 12.
1 Sam. 16.
14.
1 Sam. 13.
12.

1 Sam. 28.
15, 16.
2 Chr. 15. 2.
Ps. 33. 16.
Pro. 23. 14.
Jer. 9. 23.
24.
Hos. 9. 12.
2 Cor. 3. 5.

¹¹ b-red out.
Ps. 74. 20.
Pro. 12. 10.

were twigs, like the former. The Hebrew intimates that they were twisted or interwoven, and of a thick, strong description.

13. If thou weavest the seven locks of my head—braids or tresses, into which, like many in the East who wore long hair, he chose to plait his hair. It appears from the Egyptian monuments that two sorts of looms were anciently used for weaving,—the horizontal loom, at which men wrought; the upright loom, which was chiefly employed by women. Of this description was that into which Delilah entwined the seven locks of Samson's hair. It was of a very simple construction; the woof was driven into the warp, not by a reed, but by a wooden spatula; the extremity of the web was fastened to a pin or stake fixed in the wall or ground; and while Delilah sat squatting at her loom in a recess of the chamber, Samson lay stretched on the floor, with his head reclining on her lap—a position very common in the East. 14. went away with the pin of the beam, and with the web—i. e., the whole weaving apparatus.

15-20.—HE IS OVERCOME.

16. pressed him daily with her words. Though disappointed and mortified, this vile woman resolved to persevere; and conscious how completely he was enslaved by his passion for her, she assailed him with a succession of blaudishing arts, till she at length discovered the coveted secret. 17. If I be shaven, then my strength will go from me. His Herculean powers did not arise from his hair, but from his peculiar relation to God as a Nazarite. His unshorn locks were a sign of his Nazaritism, and a pledge on the part of God that his supernatural strength would be continued. In other words, his strength depended upon his

faithful performance of the Nazarite vow. Whilst he did this, the Lord was with him, and therein his great strength lay; and we are expressly told that after he had permitted his vow to be broken, that a razor should not come upon his head, *the Lord was departed from him*.

19. called for a man, and she caused him to shave off. It is uncertain, however, whether the ancient Hebrews cut off the hair to the same extent as Orientals now. 20. he wist not that the Lord was departed from him. What a humiliating and painful spectacle! Deprived of the Divine influences—degraded in his character—and yet, through the infatuation of a guilty passion, scarcely awake to the wretchedness of his fallen condition.

21. 22.—THE PHILISTINES TOOK HIM AND PUT OUT HIS EYES.

21. the Philistines took him, and put out his eyes [עָרְפוּ, they dug out]. To this cruel privation prisoners of rank and consequence have commonly been subjected in the East, and the punishment is inflicted in various ways,—by piercing the eye, or destroying the sight by holding a red-hot iron before the eyes, or by scooping out the eye-balls, which was the punishment inflicted on rebels and formidable enemies, and brought him down to Gaza. They chose it, probably, as their strongest fortress, though the most distant from the valley of Sorek, where he was entrapped, experience having taught them that he was a dangerous foe; and the greatest precautions were needed for the confinement of so important a captive. His security was made doubly sure by his being bound with fetters of brass (copper), not of leather, like other captives. did grind in the prison house.

- 22 Howbeit the hair of his head began to grow again ¹²after he was shaven.
- 23 Then the lords of the Philistines gathered them together for to offer a great sacrifice unto ¹³Dagon their god, and to rejoice: for they said, Our
- 24 god hath delivered Samson our enemy into our hand. And when the people saw him, they praised ^mtheir god: for they said, Our god hath delivered into our hands our enemy, and the destroyer of our country,
- 25 ¹⁴which slew many of us. And it came to pass, when their hearts were ⁿmerry, that they said, Call for Samson, that he may make us sport. And they called for Samson out of the prison house; and he made ¹⁵them
- 26 sport: and they set him between the pillars. And Samson said unto the lad that held him by the hand, Suffer me that I may feel the pillars
- 27 whereupon the house standeth, that I may lean upon them. Now the house was full of men and women; and all the lords of the Philistines were there; and there were upon the ^oroof about three thousand men and
- 28 women, that beheld while Samson made sport. And Samson called unto the LORD, and said, O Lord God, ^premember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes. And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars upon which the house stood, and ¹⁶on which it was borne up, of the one with his right hand, and of the other with his left.
- 30 And Samson said, Let ¹⁷me die with the Philistines. And he bowed himself with *all his* might; and the house fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that were therein: so the dead which he slew at his death were more than *they* which he slew in his life.
- 31 Then his brethren and all the house of his father came down, and took him, and brought *him* up, and ^qburied him between Zorah and Eshtaol, in the burying-place of Manoah his father: and he judged Israel twenty years.
- 17 AND there was a man of mount Ephraim, whose name was Micah.

B. C. 11:0.

¹² Or, as when he was shaven.¹³ Signifies, A fish.^m Deut. 22:27.

1 Sam. 31:9.

1 Chr. 10:9.

Isa. 37:30.

Dan. 5:4,

23.

1 Cor. 8:4.

1 Cor. 10:19.

20.

¹⁴ and who multiplied our slain.ⁿ ch. 9:27.

ch. 18:20.

ch. 19:6-9.

2 Sam. 13:28.

1 Ki. 10:12.

Esth. 3:15.

Isa. 22:13.

¹⁵ before them.^o Deut. 22:8.

Josh. 2:6.

^p Jer. 15:15.¹⁶ Or, he leaned on them.¹⁷ my soul.^q Josh. 19:41.

ch. 13:25.

This grinding with hand millstones being the employment of menials, he was set to it as the deepest degradation.

22. Howbeit the hair of his head began to grow again. It is probable that he had now reflected on his folly, and, becoming a sincere penitent, renewed his Nazarite vow. 'His hair grew together with his repentance, and his strength with his hairs' (*Bishop Hall*).

23-25.—THEIR FEAST TO DAGON.

23. the lords of the Philistines gathered . . . to offer a great sacrifice unto Dagon. It was a common practice in heathen nations, on the return of their solemn religious festivals, to bring forth their war prisoners from their places of confinement or slavery, and in heaping on them every species of indignity, offer their grateful tribute to the gods by whose aid they had triumphed over their enemies. A vast temple was there erected to Dagon, who was a sea-idol, usually represented as having the head and upper parts human, while the rest of the body resembled a fish.

29-31.—HIS DEATH.

27. there were upon the roof about three thousand men and women. This building seems to have been similar to the spacious and open amphitheatres well known among the Romans, and still found in many countries of the East. They are built wholly of wood. The standing-place for the spectators is a wooden floor resting chiefly upon two midmost pillars, and rising on an inclined plane, so as to enable all to have a view of the area in the centre. In the middle there are two large beams, on which the whole weight of the structure lies, and these beams are sup-

ported by two pillars placed almost close to each other, so that when these are unsettled or displaced, the whole pile must tumble to the ground.

28. Samson called unto the Lord. His penitent and prayerful spirit seems clearly to indicate that this meditated act was not that of a vindictive suicide, and that he regarded himself as putting forth his strength in his capacity of a public magistrate. He must be considered, in fact, as dying for his country's cause; and his death was not designed or sought, except as it might be the inevitable consequence of his great effort. His prayer must have been a silent ejaculation, and from its being revealed to the historian, approved and accepted of God.

31. Then his brethren . . . brought him up, and buried him. This awful catastrophe seems to have so completely paralyzed the Philistines that they neither attempted to prevent the removal of Samson's corpse (which was conveyed by his relatives for interment, according to *Josephus*, 'in Sarasat (Zorah), his own country, with the rest of his family'), nor to molest the Israelites for a long time after. Thus the Israelitish hero rendered by his strength and courage signal services to his country, and was always regarded as the greatest of its champions. But his slavish subjection to the domination of his passions was unworthy of so great a man, and lessens our respect for his character. Yet he is ranked among the ancient worthies who maintained a firm faith in God (Heb. xi. 32).

CHAP. XVII. 1-4.—MICAH RESTORING THE STOLEN MONEY TO HIS MOTHER, SHE MAKES IMAGES.

1. a man of mount Ephraim—i. e., the moun-

2 And he said unto his mother, The eleven hundred *shekels* of silver that were taken from thee, about which thou cursedst, and spakest of also in mine ears, behold, the silver is with me; I took it. And his mother said,
 3 ^a Blessed be thou of the LORD, my son. And when he had restored the eleven hundred *shekels* of silver to his mother, his mother said, I had wholly dedicated the silver unto the LORD from my hand for my son, to ^b make a graven image, and a molten image: now therefore I will restore
 4 it unto thee. Yet he restored the money unto his mother; and his mother ^c took two hundred *shekels* of silver, and gave them to the founder, who made thereof a graven image and a molten image: and they were in
 5 the house of Micah. And the man Micah had an house of gods, and made an ^d ephod, and ^e teraphim, and ¹ consecrated one of his sons, who
 6 became his priest. In ^f those days there was no king in Israel, ^g but every man did that which was right in his own eyes.
 7 And there was a young man out ^h of Beth-lehem-judah, of the family
 8 of Judah, who was a Levite, and he sojourned there. And the man departed out of the city from Beth-lehem-judah to sojourn where he could find a place: and he came to mount Ephraim, to the house of Micah, ² as
 9 he journeyed. And Micah said unto him, Whence comest thou? And he said unto him, I am a Levite of Beth-lehem-judah, and I go to sojourn
 10 where I may find a place. And Micah said unto him, Dwell with me, ³ and be unto me a father and a priest, and I will give thee ten *shekels* of silver by the year, and ³ a suit of apparel, and thy victuals. So the Levite
 11 went in. And the Levite was content to dwell with the man; and the
 12 young man was unto him as one of his sons. And Micah consecrated the Levite; and the young man became his priest, and was in the house of

B. C. 1406.
 CHAP. 17.
^a Gen. 14. 19.
 Ruth 3. 10.
^b Ex. 20. 4, 23.
 Lev. 19. 4,
^c Isa. 46. 6.
^d Ex. 28. 4-15.
 ch. 8. 27.
^e Gen. 31. 19.
 Hos 3. 4.
 1 filled the hand.
 Ex. 29. 9.
 1 Ki. 13. 33.
^f ch. 13. 1.
 ch. 19. 1.
 ch. 21. 25.
^g Deut. 33. 5.
^h Deut. 12. 8.
¹ Josh. 19. 15.
 ch. 19. 1.
 Ruth 1. 1, 2.
 Mic 5. 2.
 2 in making his way.
³ ch. 15. 19.
³ Gen. 45. 8.
 Job 29. 16.
 3 an order of garments, or, a double suit, etc.

tainous parts of Ephraim. This and the other narratives that follow form a miscellaneous collection, or appendix to the Book of Judges, belonging to a period when the Hebrew nation was in a greatly disordered and corrupt state. This episode of Micah is connected with ch. i. 34, and it relates to his foundation of a small sanctuary of his own, a miniature representative of the Shiloh tabernacle, which he stocked with images modelled probably in imitation of the ark and cherubim. Micah and his mother were sincere in their intention to honour God. But their faith was blended with a sad amount of ignorance and delusion. The divisive course they pursued, as well as the will-worship they practised, subjected the perpetrators to the penalty of death. 3. a graven image, and a molten image—the one carved from a block of wood or stone, to be plated over with silver; the other a figure formed of the solid metal cast into a mould. It is observable, however, that only two hundred shekels were given to the founder; and probably the expense of making two such figures of silver, with their appurtenances (pedestals, bases, &c.), might easily cost, in those days, two hundred shekels, which, at 2s. 4d. each, is about £23—a sum not adequate to the formation of large statues (*Taylor's 'Fragments'*). 5. the man Micah had an house of gods [מִיכָהּ בֵּית־אֱלֹהִים]—a house of God—a domestic chapel, a private religious establishment of his own, an ephod—(see on Exod. xxviii. 4.) teraphim—tutelary gods of the household (see on Gen. xxxi. 19, 30). consecrated one of his sons, who became his priest. The assumption of the priestly office by any one out of the family of Aaron was a direct violation of the divine law (Num. iii. 10; xvi. 17; Dent. xxi. 5; Heb. v. 4). 6. every man did that which was right in his own eyes. From want of a settled government, there was no one to call him

to account. No punishment followed any crime. But in this case of Micah, there was no rejection of Jehovah as his God (v. 3); the images were designed to aid their worship, and the priest, the ephod, and the teraphim indicated a wish on his part to assimilate his remote sanctuary to that of the tabernacle at Shiloh, as far as his views would admit. But the teraphim were idolatrous (cf. Hos. iii. 4; Zech. x. 2 with 2 Ki. xxiii. 24; Gen. xxxi. 30, 34 with Gen. xxxv. 4).

7. Beth-lehem-judah—so called in contradistinction to a town of the same name in Zebulun (Josh. xix. 15). of the family (*i. e.*, tribe) of Judah. Men of the tribe of Levi might connect themselves, as Aaron did (Exod. vi. 23), by marriage with another tribe; and this young Levite (according to *Jerome*, *Quæst. Hebraicæ*, v. 1 Chr. xxiii. 15, 16, his name was Shebuel) belonged to the tribe of Judah by his mother's side, which accounts for his being in Beth-lehem, not one of the Levitical cities. 8. the man departed. . . to sojourn where he could find a place. A competent provision being secured for every member of the Levitical order, his wandering about showed him to have been a person of a roving disposition or unsettled habits. In the course of his journeying he came to the house of Micah, who, on learning what he was, engaged his permanent services. 10. be unto me a father—a spiritual father, to conduct the religious services of my establishment. He was to receive, in addition to his board, a salary of ten shekels of silver, equal to 25s. a year. a suit of apparel—not only dress for ordinary use, but vestments suitable for the discharge of his priestly functions. 12. consecrated the Levite [מִיכָהּ קָדַשׁ לְיָדָיו, filled his hand]. This act of consecration was not less unlawful for Micah to perform than for this Levite to

- 13 Micah. Then said Micah, Now know I that the LORD will do me good, seeing I have a Levite to my priest.
- 18 IN ^athose days *there was* no king in Israel:
 And in those days ^bthe tribe of the Danites sought them an inheritance to dwell in; for unto that day *all their* inheritance had not fallen unto
 2 them among the tribes of Israel. And the children of Dan sent of their family five men from their coasts, ¹men of valour, from ^cZorah, and from Eshtaol, to ^dspy out the land, and to search it; and they said unto them, Go, search the land: who when they came to mount Ephraim, to the
 3 ^ehouse of Micah, they lodged there. When they *were* by the house of Micah, they knew the voice of the young man the Levite: and they turned in thither, and said unto him, Who brought thee hither? and
 4 what makest thou in this *place*? and what hast thou here? And he said unto them, Thus and thus dealeth Micah with me, and hath ^fhired me, and I am his priest. And they said unto him, ^gAsk counsel, we pray thee, ^hof God, that we may know whether our way which we go shall be
 6 prosperous. And the priest said unto them, ⁱGo in peace: before the LORD *is* your way wherein ye go.
 7 Then the five men departed, and came to ^jLaish, and saw the people that *were* therein, how they dwelt careless, after the manner of the Zidonians, quiet and secure; and *there was* no ²magistrate in the land, that might put *them* to shame in *any* thing; and they *were* far from the
 8 Zidonians, and had no business with *any* man. And they came unto their brethren to Zorah and Eshtaol: and their brethren said unto them,
 9 What *say* ye? And they said, ^kArise, that we may go up against them: for we have seen the land, and, behold, it *is* very good: and *are* ^lye still?
 10 be not slothful to go, *and* to enter to possess the land. When ye go, ye shall come unto a people secure, and to a large land: for God hath given it into your hands; ^ma place where *there is* no want of any thing that *is* in the earth.

B C. 1403.

CHAP. 18.
 a ch 17. 6.
 ch 21. 25.
 b Josh. 19. 47.
 1 sons.
 c ch 13. 25.
 d Num 13. 17.
 Josh. 2. 1.
 e ch. 17. 1.
 f ch. 17. 10.
 John 10. 12.
 13.
 Acts 8. 18.
 21.
 Acts 70. 33.
 1 Tim 3. 3.
 1 Ki. 22. 5.
 Isa 30. 1.
 Hos. 4. 12.
 h ch. 17. 5.
 i 1 Ki. 22. 6.
 j Josh 19. 47.
 called
 Leshem.
 2 possessor,
 or, heir of
 restraint.
 k Num. 13. 30.
 Josh. 2. 23.
 24.
 1 Sam. 14.
 48.
 l 1 Ki. 22. 3.
 m Deut. 8. 9.
 Deut. 11. 11.
 12.
 Eze. 20. 6.
 1 Tim. 6. 17.

receive (see on ch. xviii. 30). 13. Now know I that the Lord will do me good. The removal of his son, followed by the installation of this Levite into the priestly office, seems to have satisfied his conscience that, by what he deemed the orderly ministrations of religion, he would prosper. This expression of his hope evinces the united influence of ignorance and superstition.

CHAP. XVIII. 1-26.—THE DANITES SEEK OUT AN INHERITANCE.

1. in those days . . . the Danites sought them an inheritance to dwell in. The Danites had a territory assigned them as well as the other tribes. But they were the last of the tribes to whom, in the division of the land, an allotment was assigned. Their portion was small, and, small as it was, it suffered diminution by the encroachments of their powerful neighbours, the Amorites (ch. i. 34), and still more of the Philistines. It was the most exposed part of the country, not only on the sea-coast, where at Joppa (Jaffa) foreign invaders might easily at any time debark to attack them, but on the side of the Philistines; for the plain of Sharon is only a continuation of their country, and there was no kind of barrier or protection between them and the Shephelah. In consequence of this annoying exposure, and also of being straitened for room, a considerable number resolved on trying to effect a new and additional settlement in a remote part of the land. A small deputation being despatched to reconnoitre the country, arrived on their progress northward at [2, near] the residence of Micah; and recognizing this priest as one of their former acquaintances,

or perhaps by his provincial dialect, they eagerly enlisted his services in ascertaining the result of their present expedition. His answer, though apparently promising, was delusive, and really as ambiguous as those of the heathen oracles. This application brings out still more clearly and fully than the schism of Micah the woeful degeneracy of the times. The Danites expressed no emotions either of surprise or of indignation at a Levite daring to assume the priestly functions, and at the existence of a rival establishment to that of Shiloh. They are ready to seek, through means of the teraphim, the information that could only be lawfully applied for through the high priest's Urim; and, being thus equally erroneous in their views and habits as Micah, showed the low state of religion, and how much superstition prevailed in all parts of the land.

7. the five men departed, and came to Laish—or Leshem (Josh. xix. 47), supposed to have been peopled by a colony of Zidonians. The place was very secluded, the soil rich in the abundance and variety of its produce, and the inhabitants, following the peaceful pursuits of agriculture, lived in their fertile and sequestered valley, according to the Zidonian style of ease and security, happy among themselves, and maintaining little or no communication with the rest of the world. The discovery of this northern paradise seemed, to the delight of the Danite spies, an accomplishment of the priest's prediction, and they hastened back to inform their brethren in the south both of the value of their prize and how easily it could be made their prey.

- 11 And there went from thence of the family of the Danites, out of Zorah and out of Eshtaol, six hundred men ²appointed with weapons of war.
- 12 And they went up, and pitched ³in Kirjath-jearim, in Judah: wherefore they called that place ⁴Mahaueh-dan unto this day: behold, *it is behind*
- 13 Kirjath-jearim. And they passed thence unto mount Ephraim, and came
- 14 unto the house of Micah. Then ⁵answered the five men that went to spy out the country of Laish, and said unto their brethren, Do ye know that there ⁶is in these houses an ephod, and teraphim, and a graven image, and a molten image? now therefore consider what ye have to do. And they turned thitherward, and came to the house of the young man the
- 16 Levite, *even* unto the house of Micah, and ⁷saluted him. And the six hundred men appointed with their weapons of war, which *were* of the
- 17 children of Dan, stood by the entering of the gate. And the five men that went to spy out the land went up, *and* came in thither, *and* took ⁸the graven image, and the ephod, and the teraphim, and the molten image: and the priest stood in the entering of the gate with the six
- 18 hundred men *that were* appointed with weapons of war. And these went into Micah's house, and fetched the carved image, the ephod, and the teraphim, and the molten image. Then said the priest unto them, What
- 19 do ye? And they said unto him, Hold thy peace, ⁹lay thine hand upon thy mouth, and go with us, ¹⁰and be to us a father and a priest: *is it* better for thee to be a priest unto the house of one man, or that thou be
- 20 a priest unto a tribe and a family in Israel? And the priest's heart was glad; and he took the ephod, and the teraphim, and the graven
- 21 image, and went in the midst of the people. So they turned and departed, and put the little ones and the cattle and the carriage before them.
- 22 *And* when they were a good way from the house of Micah, the men that *were* in the houses near to Micah's house were gathered together,
- 23 and overtook the children of Dan. And they cried unto the children of Dan. And they turned their faces, and said unto Micah, What aileth
- 24 thee, ¹¹that thou comest with such a company? And he said, Ye have taken away my gods which I made, and the priest, and ye are gone away; and what have I more? and what *is* this *that* ye say unto me, What aileth

B. C. 1406.

³ girded.
⁴ Josh. 15. 60.
¹ Sam 7. 1.
⁴ That is,
 Camp of Dan.
 ch. 13. 26.
⁶ 1 Sam. 14. 24.
⁷ Ex. 28. 4-15.
 ch. 8. 27.
 ch. 17. 5.
¹ Sam. 23. 6.
⁵ asked him of peace
 Gen. 43. 27.
¹ Sam. 17. 22.
⁷ Gen. 31. 13.
 10.
 Ex. 13. 20.
 ch. 6. 31.
 ch. 17. 4. 5.
¹ Sam. 4. 11.
² Ki. 19. 18, 13.
 Isa. 41. 29.
 Isa. 46. 1, 2.
 Mic. 5. 13.
⁹ Job 21. 6.
 Job 29. 9.
 Job 40. 4.
 Fro. 30. 32.
 Mic. 7. 16.
 Rom. 11. 3. 1.
⁸ Gen. 45. 8.
 ch. 17. 10.
² Ki. 6. 21.
 Job 29. 15.
 Matt. 23. 9.
⁶ that thou art gathered together?

11. there went from thence of the family of the Danites . . . six hundred men. This was the collective number of the men who were equipped with arms to carry out this expeditionary enterprise, without including the families and furniture of the emigrants (v. 21). Their journey led them through the territory of Judah, and their first halting-place was "behind," that is, on the west of, Kirjath-jearim, on a spot called afterwards 'the camp of Dan.' Prosecuting the northern route, they skirted the base of the Ephraimite hills; and on approaching the neighbourhood of Micah's residence, the spies having given information to the exploring party that a private sanctuary was kept there, the priest of which had rendered them important service when on their reconnoitering expedition, it was unanimously agreed that both he and the furniture of the establishment would be a valuable acquisition to their proposed settlement. A plan of spoliation was immediately formed. They went to the residence of the young Levite, adjoining to the mansion of Micah, and while the armed men stood sentinels at the gate, the five spies broke into the chapel, pillaged the images and vestments, and succeeded in bribing the priest also, by a tempting offer, to transfer his services to their new colony. Taking charge of the ephod, the teraphim, and the graven image, "he went in the midst of the people"¹¹—a central position assigned

him in the march, perhaps for his personal security; but more probably in imitation of the place appointed for the priests and the ark in the middle of the congregated tribes, on the marches through the wilderness. This theft presents a curious medley of low morality and strong religious feeling. The Danites exemplified a deep-seated principle of our nature,—that mankind have religious affections, which must have an object on which these may be exercised, while they are often not very discriminating in the choice of the objects. In proportion to the slender influence religion wields over the heart, the greater is the importance attached to external rites; and in the exact observance of these the conscience is fully satisfied, and seldom or never molested by reflections on the breach of minor morals.

22. the men that were in the houses near to Micah's house were gathered together. The robbery of the chapel having been discovered, though not till the expeditionary party were a considerable way on their journey, a hot pursuit was forthwith commenced by Micah, at the head of a considerable body of followers. The readiness with which they joined in the attempt to recover the stolen articles affords a presumption that the advantages of the chapel had been open to all in the neighbourhood; and the importance which Micah, like Laban, attached to his teraphim, is seen by the urgency with which he pursued the thieves,

25 thee? And the children of Dan said unto him, Let not thy voice be heard among us, lest ⁷angry fellows run upon thee, and ⁸thou lose thy
 26 life, with the lives of thy household. And the children of Dan went their way: and when Micah saw that they *were* too strong for him, he turned and went back unto his house.
 27 And they took *the things* which Micah had made, and the priest which he had, and ⁴came unto Laish, unto a people *that were* at quiet and secure: ⁵and they smote them with the edge of the sword, and burnt the city with fire. And *there was* no deliverer, because it *was* far from ⁶Zidon, and they had no business with *any* man; and it was in the valley that *lieth* ⁷by Beth-rehob.
 29 And they built a city, and dwelt therein. And ⁸they called the name of the city Dan, ⁹after the name of Dan their father, who was born unto
 30 Israel: howbeit the name of the city *was* Laish at the first. And the children of Dan set up the graven image: and Jonathan, the son of Gershom, the son of Manasseh, he and his sons were priests to the tribe of
 31 Dan ¹⁰until the day of the captivity of the land. And they set them up Micah's graven image, which he made, "all the time that the house of God was in Shiloh.
 19 AND it came to pass in those days, "when *there was* no king in Israel, that there was a certain Levite sojourning on the side of mount Ephraim, who took to him ¹a concubine out of ²Beth-lehem-judah.
 2 And his concubine played the whore against him, and went away from him unto her father's house to Beth-lehem-judah, and was there ³four whole months.

B. C. 1406.
⁷ bitter of soul.
⁸ gather thy soul and the soul of thy household.
⁴ Deut. 33. 22.
⁵ Josh. 19. 47.
⁶ Gen. 49. 13.
⁷ Josh. 8. 11.
⁸ ch. 10. 12.
⁹ Num. 13. 21.
¹⁰ 2 Sam. 10. 6.
¹ Josh. 19. 47.
² Gen. 14. 14.
³ ch. 13. 1.
⁴ Josh. 18. 1.
⁵ 1 Sam. 4. 1.

CHAP. 19.
¹ ch. 17. 6.
¹ a woman a concubine, or, a wife a concubine.
² ch. 17. 7.
³ days four months, or, a year and four months.

and the risk of his life in attempting to procure their restoration. 25. the children of Dan said unto him, Let not thy voice be heard among us, &c. Both Micah and the Danites attached great importance to the possession of lifeless images as guaranteeing the power and favour of Jehovah: both thought that, by the forcible transfer of a little silver from one party to the other, the one had lost and the other had gained the surest means of prosperity. Finding his party, however, not a match for the Danites, Micah thought it prudent to desist, well knowing the rule which was then prevalent in the land, that

'They should take who had the power, And they should keep who could.'

27-29.—THEY WIN LAISH.

27. they . . . came unto Laish, unto a people that were . . . at quiet and secure: and they smote them . . . and burnt the city. 'We are revolted by this inroad and massacre of a quiet and secure people. Nevertheless, if the original grant of Canaan to the Israelites gave them the warrant of a divine commission and command for this enterprise, that sanctifies all, and legalizes all' (*Chalmers*). This place seems to have been a dependency of Zidon, the distance of which, however, rendered it impossible to obtain aid thence in the sudden emergency. Tyre was twenty miles distant, but it had not risen into importance at that early period.

28. built a city . . . 29. called the name of the city Dan. It was in the northern extremity of the land; and hence the origin of the phrase, "from Dan to Beer-sheba."

30, 31.—THEY SET UP IDOLATRY.

30. the children of Dan set up the graven image. Their distance secluded them from the rest of the Israelites; and doubtless this, which was their apology for not going to Shiloh, was the cause of perpetuating idolatry among them for many gener-

ations. Jonathan, the son of Gershom, the son of Manasseh. [The best MSS. universally have מנשה, Moses, not מנשה, Manasseh.] A sad proof of the degeneracy of the great lawgiver's family, as well as of the religious disorders of that age. until . . . the captivity of the land—i. e., till the overthrow of the kingdom. 31. they set them up Micah's graven image . . . all the time that the house of God was in Shiloh. This early apostasy to idolatry, with the infamy subsequently attached to Dan, by its being the chosen site of one of Jeroboam's calves, is supposed to be the reason why this tribe is omitted in the enumeration of the tribes in the Apocalypse, (Rev. vii.)

CHAP. XIX. 1-15.—A LEVITE GOING TO BETH-LEHEM TO FETCH HIS WIFE.

1. it came to pass in those days. The painfully interesting episode that follows, together with the intestine commotion the report of it produced throughout the country, belongs to the same early period of anarchy and prevailing disorder. a certain Levite . . . took . . . a concubine. The priests under the Mosaic law enjoyed the privilege of marrying, as well as other classes of the people. It was no disreputable connection this Levite had formed; for a nuptial engagement with a concubine-wife (though, as wanting in some outward ceremonies, it was reckoned a secondary or inferior relationship) possessed the true essence of marriage: it was not only lawful, but sanctioned by the example of many good men. 2. went away from him unto her father's house. The cause of the separation assigned in our version rendered it unlawful for her husband to take her back (Deut. xxiv. 4); and according to the uniform style of sentiment and practice in the East, she would have been put to death, had she gone to her father's family. Other versions concur with *Josephus* in representing the reason of the flight from her husband's house to be, that she was disgusted with him through frequent brawls.

3 And her husband arose, and went after her, to speak ³ friendly unto her, *and* to bring her again, having his servant with him, and a couple of asses: and she brought him into her father's house: and when the
 4 father of the damsel saw him, he rejoiced to meet him. And his father-in-law, the damsel's father, retained him; and he abode with him three
 5 days: so they did eat and drink, and lodged there. And it came to pass on the fourth day, when they arose early in the morning, that he rose up to depart: and the damsel's father said unto his son-in-law,
 4 Comfort thine heart with a morsel of bread, and afterward go your way.
 6 And they sat down, and did eat and drink both of them together: for the damsel's father had said unto the man, Be content, I pray thee, and
 7 tarry all night, and let thine heart be merry. And when the man rose up to depart, his father-in-law urged him; therefore he lodged there
 8 again. And he arose early in the morning on the fifth day to depart: and the damsel's father said, Comfort thine heart, I pray thee. And
 9 they tarried ⁵ until after noon, and they did eat both of them. And when the man rose up to depart, he, and his concubine, and his servant, his father-in-law, the damsel's father, said unto him, Behold, now the day
 6 draweth toward evening, I pray you tarry all night: behold, ⁷ the day groweth to an end; lodge here, that thine heart may be merry; and
 10 to-morrow get you early on your way, that thou mayest go ⁸ home. But the man would not tarry that night, but he rose up and departed, and came
 9 over against ⁶ Jebus, which is Jerusalem; and *there were* with him two asses saddled; his concubine also *was* with him.
 11 *And* when they *were* by Jebus, the day was far spent; and the servant said unto his master, Come, I pray thee, and let us turn in into this city
 12 ⁹ of the Jebusites, and lodge in it. And his master said unto him, We will not turn aside hither into the city of a stranger, that is not of the
 13 children of Israel; we will pass over ⁶ to Gibeah. And he said unto his servant, Come, and let us draw near to one of these places to lodge all
 14 night, in Gibeah, or in Ramah. And they passed on and went their way; and the sun went down upon them *when they were* by Gibeah,
 15 which *belongeth* to Benjamin. And they turned aside thither, to go in *and* to lodge in Gibeah: and when he went in, he sat him down in a street of the city; for *there was* no man that ¹⁰ took them into his house to lodging.

B. C. 1403.
³ to her heart.
 Gen. 34 3
⁴ Strengthen.
 Gen. 18. 5.
 1 Sam. 14. 27. 29.
 1 Sam. 30. 12.
 1 Ki. 13. 7.
 Ps. 104. 15.
 John 4. 34.
⁵ till the day declined.
⁶ is weak.
⁷ it is the pitching time of the day.
⁸ to thy tent.
⁹ to over against.
⁶ Josh. 15. 8, 63.
 Jo-h. 18. 23, ch. 1. 8.
 2 Sam. 5. 6.
⁴ Gen. 10. 15, 16.
 Ex. 33. 2.
 Num. 13. 29.
 Josh. 15. 8, 63.
 ch. 1. 21.
 2 Sam. 5. 6.
 2 Sam. 24. 16.
 1 Chr. 1. 17, 14.
⁶ Josh. 13. 23.
 1 Sam. 10. 26.
 Isa. 10. 29.
 Hos. 5. 8.
¹⁰ gathered.
 Matt. 25. 43.
 Heb. 13. 2.

3. went after her, to speak friendly unto her—Hebrew, 'speak to her heart' in a kindly and affectionate manner, so as to rekindle her affection. Accompanied by a servant, he arrived at the house of his father-in-law, who rejoiced to meet him, in the hope that a complete reconciliation would be brought about between his daughter and her husband. The Levite, yielding to the hospitable importunities of his father-in-law, prolonged his stay for days. 8. tarried (with reluctance) until afternoon—*lit.*, the decline of the day. People in the East, who take little or nothing to eat in the morning, do not breakfast till from 10 to 12 A.M.; and this meal the hospitable relative had purposely protracted to so late a period as to afford an argument for urging a further stay. 9. the day draweth toward evening—Hebrew, 'the pitching time of day.' Travellers who set out at day-break usually halt about the middle of the afternoon the first evening, to enjoy rest and refreshment. It was then too late a time to commence a journey. But duty, perhaps, obliged the Levite to indulge no further delay. 10. the man . . . departed, and came over against Jebus [יָבֻס], trodden down; a threshing floor.] *Lightfoot* infers from this and other names that the old Canaanites spoke Hebrew. The note, 'which is Jerusalem,' must have

been inserted by Ezra or some later hand. Jebus being still, though not entirely (ch. i. 8), in the possession of the old inhabitants, the Levite resisted the advice of his attendant to enter it, and determined rather to press forward to pass the night in Gibeah, which he knew was occupied by Israelites. The distance from Beth-lehem to Jerusalem is about six miles. The event showed that it would have been better to have followed the advice of his attendant—to have trusted themselves among aliens than among their own countrymen.

13. in Gibeah, or in Ramah. The first of these places was five miles north-east, the other from four to five north, of Jerusalem. 15. he went in . . . sat him down in a street of the city. The towns of Palestine at this remote period could not, it seems, furnish any establishment in the shape of an inn or public lodging-house; and hence we conclude that the custom, which is still frequently witnessed in the cities of the East, was then not uncommon for travellers who were late in arriving, and who had no introduction to a private family, to spread their bedding in the streets, or, wrapping themselves up in their cloaks, pass the night in the open air. In the Arab towns and villages, however, the sheikh, or some other per-

16 And, behold, there came an old man from his work out of the field at even, which was also of mount Ephraim; and he sojourned in Gibeah: but the men of the place were Benjaminites. And when he had lifted up his eyes, he saw a wayfaring man in the street of the city: and the old man said, Whither goest thou? and whence comest thou? And he said unto him, We are passing from Beth-lehem-judah toward the side of mount Ephraim; from thence am I: and I went to Beth-lehem-judah, but I am now going to the house of the LORD; and there is no man that receiveth me to house. Yet there is both straw and provender for our asses; and there is bread and wine also for me, and for thy handmaid, and for the young man which is with thy servants: there is no want of any thing. And the old man said, Peace be with thee: howsoever let all thy wants lie upon me; only lodge not in the street. So he brought him into his house, and gave provender unto the asses: and they washed their feet, and did eat and drink.

22 Now as they were making their hearts merry, behold, the men of the city, certain sons of Belial, beset the house round about, and beat at the door, and spake to the master of the house, the old man, saying, Bring forth the man that came into thine house, that we may know him. And the man, the master of the house, went out unto them, and said unto them, Nay, my brethren, nay, I pray you, do not so wickedly; seeing that this man is come into mine house, do not this folly.

24 Behold, here is my daughter, a maiden, and his concubine; them I will bring out now, and humble ye them, and do with them what seemeth good unto you: but unto this man do not so vile a thing. But the men would not hearken to him; so the man took his concubine, and brought her forth unto them; and they knew her, and abused her all the night until the morning: and when the day began to spring, they let her go.

26 Then came the woman in the dawning of the day, and fell down at the door of the man's house where her lord was, till it was light. And her

B. C. 1406.
 / Ps. 104. 23.
 11 sons of Jemini.
 Gen. 35. 18.
 9 Josh 18. 1. ch. 18. 31. ch. 20. 18.
 1 Sam. 1. 3. 7.
 12 gathereth.
 h Gen. 43. 23. ch. 6. 23.
 1 Cor. 1. 2. j Gen. 19. 2. j Gen. 24. 32. Gen. 43. 24.
 k Gen. 18. 4. John 13. 5.
 l Gen. 19. 4. ch. 20. 5.
 Hos. 9. 9. Hos. 10. 9.
 m Deut. 13. 13. 1 Sam. 2. 12. 1 Ki. 21. 10. 2 Chr. 13. 7. 2 Cor. 6. 15. n Gen. 19. 5. Rom. 1. 26. 27.
 o Gen. 19. 6.
 p 2 Sam. 13. 12.
 q Gen. 19. 8.
 r Gen. 31. 2. Deut. 21 11.
 13 the matt. r of this folly.
 s Gen. 4. 1.

son, usually comes out and urgently invites the strangers to his house. This was done also in ancient Palestine (Gen. xviii. 4; xix. 2); and that the same hospitality was not shown in Gibeah seems to have been owing to the bad character of the people.

16-21. — AN OLD MAN ENTERTAINS HIM AT GIBEAH.

16. there came an old man from his work . . . which was also of mount Ephraim—and perhaps his hospitality was quickened by learning the stranger's occupation, and that he was on his return to his duties at Shiloh. 19. there is no want of anything. In answering the kindly enquiries of the old man, the Levite deemed it right to state that he was under no necessity of being burdensome on any one, for he possessed all that was required to relieve his wants. Oriental travellers always carry a stock of provisions with them; and knowing that even the khans or lodging-houses they may find on their way afford nothing beyond rest and shelter, they are careful to lay in a supply of food both for themselves and their beasts. Instead of hay, which is seldom met with, they use chopped straw, which, with a mixture of barley, beans, or such-like, forms the provender for cattle. The old man, however, in the warmth of a generous heart, refused to listen to any explanation, and bidding the Levite keep his stock for any emergency that might occur in the remainder of his journey, invited them to accept of the hospitalities of his house for the night. 20. Peace be with thee—the genuine Hebrew and Oriental

salutations still in use. only lodge not in the street. As this is no rare or singular circumstance in the East (see on Gen. xix. 2), the probability is that the old man's earnest dissuasive from such a procedure arose from his acquaintance with the infamous practices of the place. 21. So he brought him into his house, and gave provender unto the asses [גָּמְלוֹ, and mingled (food)]—i. e., chopped straw and barley.

22-23. — THE GIBEAHITES ABUSE HIS CONCUBINE TO DEATH.

22. certain sons of Belial, beset the house. The narrative of the horrid outrage that was committed, of the proposal of the old man, the unfeeling, careless, and in many respects inexplicable conduct of the Levite towards his wife, disclose a state of morality that would have appeared incredible, did it not rest on the testimony of the sacred historian. Both the one and the other ought to have protected the female inmates of the house, even though at the expense of their lives, or thrown themselves on God's providence. It should be noted that the guilt of such a foul outrage is not fastened on the general population of Gibeah. At the same time, the indulgence of debasing passions reveals the true origin of the strong addictedness to idolatrous rites. 'In the relaxing, oppressive climate of the Ghor the most-odious vices appear native; and this explains the demoralized condition of the Benjaminites in whose territory this plain was situated (Josh. xviii.)' (Drew's 'Scripture Lands, p. 100; also Stewart, 'Tent and Khan,' p. 375).

lord rose up in the morning, and opened the doors of the house, and went out to go his way; and, behold, the woman his concubine was fallen down *at* the door of the house, and her hands *were* upon the threshold. And he said unto her, Up, and let us be going: but ¹none answered. Then the man took her *up* upon an ass, and the man rose up, and gat him unto his place.

29 And when he was come into his house, he took a knife, and laid hold on his concubine, and ²divided her, *together* with her bones, into twelve pieces, and sent her into all the coasts of Israel. And it was so, that all that saw it said, There was no such deed done nor seen from the day that the children of Israel came up out of the land of Egypt unto this day: consider of it, ³take advice, and speak *your minds*.

30 THEN ⁴all the children of Israel went out, and the congregation was gathered together as one man, from ¹Dan even to Beer-sheba, with the land of Gilead, unto the LORD ²in Mizpeh. And the chief of all the people, *even* of all the tribes of Israel, presented themselves in the assembly of the people of God, four hundred thousand footmen ³that drew sword. (Now the children of Benjamin heard that the children of Israel were gone up to Mizpeh.)

Then said the children of Israel, Tell *us*, how was this wickedness? 4 And ²the Levite, the husband of the woman that was slain, answered and said, I ¹came into Gibeath that *belongeth* to Benjamin, I and my concubine, to lodge. And ³the men of Gibeath rose against me, and beset the house round about upon me by night, and thought to have slain me; ⁴and my concubine have they ³forced, that she is dead. And ⁵I took my concubine, and cut her in pieces, and sent her throughout all the country of the inheritance of Israel: for they ⁶have committed lewdness and folly in Israel. Behold, ye *are* all children of Israel; give ⁷here your advice and counsel.

8 And all the people arose as one man, saying, We will not any *of us* go to his tent, neither will we any *of us* turn into his house: but now this *shall* be the thing which we will do to Gibeath; *we will go up* by lot against

B. C. 1105.

¹ ch. 20. 5.
² ch. 20. 6.
 1 Sam. 11. 7.
³ ch. 10. 7.
 1 Pro. 11. 14.
 1 Pro. 13. 10.
 1 Pro. 15. 22.

CHAP. 21.
¹ Deut. 13. 17.
 Josh. 22. 12.
 ch. 21. 5.
 1 Sam. 11. 7.

1 That is,
 The whole country.
 ch. 14. 19.
 1 Sam. 3. 20.
 2 Sam. 14. 2.
² Judg. 0. 17.
 Judg. 11. 11.
 1 Sam. 7. 5.
 1 Sam. 10. 17.

³ ch. 8. 10.
⁴ the man the Levite.

⁴ ch. 19. 15.
⁵ ch. 19. 21.

⁶ ch. 19. 25.
 26.
⁷ humbled

Deut. 22. 25.
 26.
⁸ ch. 19. 29.

⁹ Gen. 34. 7.
 Jesh. 7. 15.

¹⁰ Ex. 19. 5, 6, 6.
 Josh. 9. 14.
 ch. 19. 30.

1 Pro. 13. 10.
 Jas. 1. 5.

29. divided her . . . into twelve pieces. The want of a regular government warranted an extraordinary step; and certainly no method could have been imagined more certain of rousing universal horror and indignation than this terrible summons of the Levite.

CHAP. XX. 1-7.—THE LEVITE, IN A GENERAL ASSEMBLY, DECLARES HIS WRONG.

1. all . . . the congregation was gathered . . . as one man. In consequence of the immense sensation the horrid tragedy of Gibeath had produced, a national assembly was convened, at which 'the chief [מִצְפֵּה, corners] (cf. 1. Sam. xiv. 38, where the term is used for a leader in a military sense) of all the people' from all parts of the land, including the Eastern tribes, appeared as delegates. Mizpeh—the place of convention (for there were other Mizpehs) was in a town situated on the confines of Judah and Benjamin (Josh. xv. 38; xviii. 26). Assemblies were frequently held there afterwards (1 Sam. vii. 11; x. 17); and as it was but a short distance from Shiloh, the phrase, "Unto the Lord," may be taken in its usual sense, as denoting consultation of the oracle. This circumstance, together with the convention being called "the assembly of the people of God," seems to indicate that, amid the excited passions of the nation, those present felt the profound gravity of the occasion, and adopted the best means of maintaining a becoming deportment. 3. Now the children of Benjamin heard. Some suppose that Benjamin had been passed over, the crime having been per-

petrated within the territory of that tribe; and that, as the concubine's corpse had been divided into twelve pieces, two had been sent to Manasseh, one respectively to the Western and Eastern division. It is more probable that Benjamin had received a formal summons, like the other tribes, but chose to treat it with indifference or haughty disdain.

4. the Levite . . . answered and said. The injured husband gave a brief and unvarnished recital of the tragic outrage, from which it appears that force was used which he could not resist. His testimony was doubtless corroborated by those of his servant and the old Ephraimite. There was no need of strong or highly-coloured description to work upon the feelings of the audience. The facts spoke for themselves, and produced one common sentiment of detestation and vengeance.

8.—THEIR DECREE.

8. all the people arose as one man. The extraordinary unanimity that prevailed shows that, notwithstanding great disorders had broken out in many parts, the people were sound at the core; and remembering their national covenant with God, now felt the necessity of wiping out so foul a stain on their character as a people. It was resolved that the inhabitants of Gibeath should be subjected to condign punishment. But the resolutions were conditional; for as the common law of nature and nations requires that an enquiry should be made, and satisfaction demanded, before committing an act of hostility or vengeance, mes-

10 it; and we will take ten men of an hundred throughout all the tribes of Israel, and an hundred of a thousand, and a thousand out of ten thousand, to fetch victual for the people, that they may do, when they come to Gibeah of Benjamin, according to all the folly that they have wrought in Israel.

11 So all the men of Israel were gathered against the city, ⁴ knit together as one man. And ^j the tribes of Israel sent men through all the tribe of Benjamin, saying, What wickedness *is* this that is done among you? 12 Now therefore deliver *us* the men, ^k the children of Belial, which *are* in Gibeah, that we may put them to death, and ^l put away evil from Israel. But the children of Benjamin would not ^m hearken to the voice of their 13 brethren the children of Israel: but the children of Benjamin gathered themselves together out of the cities unto Gibeah, to go out to battle 14 against the children of Israel. And the children of Benjamin were numbered at that time out of the cities twenty and six thousand men that drew sword, besides the inhabitants of Gibeah, which were numbered 15 seven hundred chosen men. Among all this people *there were* seven hundred chosen men ⁿ left-handed; every one could sling stones at an hair 16 *breadth*, and not miss. And the men of Israel, besides Benjamin, were numbered four hundred thousand men that drew sword: all these *were* men of war.

17 And the children of Israel arose, and went up to the house of God, and ^o asked counsel of God, and said, Which of us shall go up first to the battle against the children of Benjamin? And the LORD said, Judah *shall go up* first.

18 And the children of Israel rose up in the morning, and encamped 19 against Gibeah. And the men of Israel went out to battle against Benjamin; and the men of Israel put themselves in array to fight against 20 them at Gibeah. And ^p the children of Benjamin came forth out of Gibeah, and ^q destroyed down to the ground of the Israelites that day twenty and two thousand men.

B. C. 1406.

⁴ fellows.
^j Deut. 13. 11.
 Deut. 20. 10.
 Josh. 22. 13,
 16.
 Matt 18. 15-
 18.
 Rom. 12. 18.
^k Deut 13. 13.
 ch. 19. 22.
 2 Sam. 20. 1.
 1 Ki. 21. 13.
 2 Chr 13. 7.
 2 Cor. 6. 15.
^l Deut 17. 12.
 Deut. 19. 19.
 Deut. 21. 21.
 Deut. 2. 21,
 21.
 Eccl. 11. 10.
 1 Cor. 5. 13.
^m 1 Sam 2. 25.
 2 Chr 25. 16.
 1 Ro. 2. 1.
 Hos 9. 9.
 Rom. 1. 32
 Rev. 18. 4. 5.
ⁿ ch 3. 15.
 1 Chr. 12. 2
^o Ex. 23. 30.
 Num 27. 21.
 Josh. 9. 14.
 ch. 1. 1.
 1 Sam. 23. 9.
 Ezra 8. 21.
^p Gen 49. 27.
^q Deut. : 3. 9.
 2 Chr. 28. 10.
 Eccl. 9. 1,
 11.

sengers were despatched through the whole territory of Benjamin, demanding the immediate surrender or execution of the delinquents. The request was just and reasonable; and by refusing it, the Benjamites virtually made themselves a party in the quarrel. It must not be supposed that the people of this tribe were insensible or indifferent to the atrocious character of the crime that had been committed on their soil. But their patriotism or their pride were offended by the hostile demonstration of the other tribes. The passions were inflamed on both sides; but certainly the Benjamites incurred an awful responsibility by the attitude of resistance they assumed. 10. we will take ten men, &c. The soldiers in the Jewish army seem to have been divided into tens, who should lodge under the same tent, and mess together, as is highly probable, from every tenth man's being appointed to fetch or prepare provision for his fellow-soldiers. Nay, if we are to explain the sacred history of the Jews by modern Eastern arrangements, we must suppose that the appointment of every tenth man in the congregation of Israel was not so much to collect food for the use of their companions in that expedition as to dress it, to serve it up, and to wait upon them in eating it, (*Harmer*, iii.; 'Observations,' lxxiv. 4; 'Observations,' ix.)

14. the children of Benjamin gathered themselves together out of the cities unto Gibeah. Allowing their valour to be ever so great, nothing but blind passion and unbending obstinacy could have impelled them to take the field against their brethren with such a disparity of numbers. 16.

left-handed; every one could sling. The sling was one of the earliest weapons used in war. The Hebrew sling was probably similar to that of the Egyptian, consisting of a leather thong, broad in the middle, with a loop at one end, by which it was firmly held with the hand; the other end terminated in a lash, which was let slip, when the stone was thrown. Those skilled in the use of it, as the Benjamites were, could hit the mark with unerring certainty. A good slug could carry its full force to the distance of 200 yards.

18-28.—THE ISRAELITES LOSE FORTY THOUSAND. 18. the children of Israel arose, and went up to the house of God. This consultation at Shiloh was right. But they ought to have done it at the commencement of their proceedings. Instead of this, all their plans were formed; and never doubting, it would seem, that the war was just and inevitable, the only subject of their enquiry related to precedency of the tribes—a point which it is likely was discussed in the assembly. Had they asked counsel of God sooner, their expedition would have been conducted on a different principle—most probably by reducing the number of fighting men, as in the case of Gideon's army. As it was, the vast amount of volunteers formed an excessive and unwieldy force, unfit for strenuous and united action against a small, compact, and well-directed army. A panic ensued, and the confederate tribes, in two successive engagements, sustained great losses. These repeated disasters (notwithstanding their attack on Benjamin had been divinely authorized) overwhelmed them with shame and sorrow. Led to reflection, they

- 22 And the people, the men of Israel, encouraged themselves, and set their battle again in array, in the place where they put themselves in array the first day. (And the children of Israel went up and wept ⁷ before the LORD until even, and asked counsel of the LORD, saying, Shall I go up again to battle against the children of Benjamin my brother? And the LORD said, Go up against him.) And the children of Israel came near against the children of Benjamin the second day. And Benjamin went forth against them out of Gibeah the second day, and ⁸ destroyed down to the ground of the children of Israel again eighteen thousand men; all these drew the sword.
- 26 Then all the children of Israel, and all the people, went up, and came unto the house of God, and wept, and sat there before the LORD, and fasted that day until even, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD. And the children of Israel ⁹ enquired of the LORD, (for ¹⁰ the ark of the covenant of God was there in those days; and ¹¹ Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, ¹² stood before it in those days,) saying, Shall I yet again go out to battle against the children of Benjamin my brother, or shall I cease? And the LORD said, Go up; for to-morrow I will deliver them into thine hand.
- 29, 30 And Israel ¹³ set liers in wait round about Gibeah. And the children of Israel went up against the children of Benjamin on the third day, and put themselves in array against Gibeah, as at other times. And the children of Benjamin went out against the people, *and* were drawn away from the city; and they began ¹⁴ to smite of the people, *and* kill, as at other times, in the highways, of which one goeth up to ¹⁵ the house of God, and the other to Gibeah in the field, about thirty men of Israel.
- 32 And the children of Benjamin said, They *are* smitten down before us, as at the first. But the children of Israel said, Let us flee, and draw them from the city unto the highways. And all the men of Israel rose up out of their place, and put themselves in array at Baal-tamar; and the liers in wait of Israel came forth out of their places, *even* out of the meadows of Gibeah. And there came against Gibeah ten thousand chosen men out of all Israel, and the battle was sore: ¹⁶ but they knew not that evil *was* near them. And the LORD smote Benjamin before Israel: and the children of Israel destroyed of the Benjamites that day twenty and five thousand and an hundred men: all these drew the sword.
- 36 So the children of Benjamin saw that they were smitten: ¹⁷ for the men of Israel gave place to the Benjamites, because they trusted unto the liers in wait which they had set beside Gibeah. And ¹⁸ the liers in wait ¹⁹ drew *themselves* along, and smote all the city with the edge of the sword. Now there was an appointed ²⁰ sign between the men of Israel ²¹ and the liers in wait, that they should make a great ²² flame with smoke to rise up out of the city.
- 39 And when the men of Israel retired in the battle, Benjamin began ²³ to smite *and* kill of the men of Israel about thirty persons; for they said,

B C. 140R.

⁷ Ps. 78. 34-36.
 Hos. 5. 15.
⁸ Job. 9. 12.
 Ps. 66. 18.
 Ps. 97. 2.
 Hos. 10. 9.
 Mic 3. 4.
 John 9. 31:
 Rom. 2. 5.
 Rom. 3. 5.
 Rom. 11. 23.
⁹ Job 22. 27.
 Ps. 50. 15.
 Ps. 91. 15.
 Pro. 3. 6.
¹⁰ Josh. 18. 1.
 1 Sam. 4. 3.
 4.
 Ps. 78. 60.
 Jer. 7. 12.
¹¹ Ex. 6. 25.
 Num. 25. 7.
 11.
 Num. 31. 6.
 Josh. 22. 13.
 Josh. 24. 33.
¹² Deut. 10. 8.
 Deut. 18. 5.
¹³ Josh. 8. 4.
 2 Sam. 5. 53.
¹⁴ to smite of the people wounded as at, etc.
¹⁵ Or, Beth-el.
 Gen. 28. 19.
¹⁶ Josh. 8. 14.
 Job 21. 13.
 Pro. 29. 6.
 Eccl. 8. 11.
 Isa. 47. 11.
 Luke 21. 31.
¹⁷ Josh. 8. 15.
¹⁸ Josh. 8. 19.
¹⁹ Or, made a long sound with the trumpets.
 Josh. 6. 5.
²⁰ Or, time.
²¹ with.
²² elevation.
²³ to smite the wounded.

became sensible of their guilt in not repressing their national idolatries, as well as in too proudly relying on their superior numbers, and the precipitate rashness of this expedition. Having humbled themselves by prayer and fasting, as well as observed the appointed method of expiating their sins, they were assured of acceptance as well as of victory. The presence and services of Phinehas on this occasion help us to ascertain the chronology thus far, that the date of the occurrence must be fixed shortly after the death of Joshua.

29-43.—THEY DESTROY ALL THE BENJAMITES EXCEPT SIX HUNDRED.

29. Israel set liers in wait round about Gibeah. A plan was formed of taking that city by stratagem, similar to that employed in the capture of Ai. 33. Baal-tamar—a palm grove where Baal was worshipped. The main army of the confederate tribes was drawn up there. out of the meadows of Gibeah—Hebrew, the caves of Gibeah; a hill in which the ambuscades lay hid. 34. ten thousand chosen men. This was a third division, different both from the ambuscade and the army who were fighting at Baal-tamar. The general account stated in v. 35 is followed by a detailed narrative of the battle, which is continued to the end of the chapter.

40 Surely they are smitten down before us, as *in* the first battle. But when the flame began to arise up out of the city with a pillar of smoke, the Benjamites ^b looked behind them, and, behold, ¹² the flame of the city
 41 ascended up to heaven. And when the men of Israel turned again, ^c the men of Benjamin were amazed: for they saw that evil ¹³ was come upon
 42 them. Therefore they turned *their backs* before the men of Israel unto the way of the wilderness; but the battle overtook them; and them
 43 which *came* out of the cities they destroyed in the midst of them. Thus they ^d inclosed the Benjamites round about, and chased them, and *trode* them down ¹⁴ with ease ¹⁵ over against Gibeah toward the sun-rising.
 44 And there fell of Benjamin eighteen thousand men: all these *were* men of
 45 valour. And they turned and fled toward the wilderness unto the rock of ^e Rimmon: and they gleaned of them in the highways five thousand men; and pursued hard after them unto Gidom, and slew two thousand
 46 men of them. So that all which fell that day of Benjamin were twenty and five thousand men that drew the sword; all these *were* men of valour.
 47 But ^f six hundred men turned and fled to the wilderness unto the rock Rimmon, and abode in the rock Rimmon four months.
 48 And the men of Israel turned again upon the children of Benjamin, and smote them with the edge of the sword, as well the men of *every* city, as the beast, and all that ¹⁶ came to hand: also they set on fire all the cities that ¹⁷ they came to.
 21 NOW ^a the men of Israel had sworn in Mizpeh, saying, There shall not any of us give his daughter unto Benjamin to wife. And the people came ^b to the house of God, and abode there till even before God, and lifted up
 3 their voices, and wept sore; and said, O LORD God of Israel, why is this come to pass in Israel, that there should be to-day one tribe lacking in
 4 Israel? And it came to pass on the morrow, that the people rose early, and ^c built there an altar, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings.
 5 And the children of Israel said, Who *is there* among all the tribes of Israel that came not up with the congregation unto the LORD? ^a For they had made a great oath concerning him that came not up to the
 6 LORD to Mizpeh, saying, He shall surely be put to death. And the children of Israel repented them for Benjamin their brother, and said,
 7 There is one tribe cut off from Israel this day. How shall we do for

B C. 1403.

^b Josh. 8. 20.
¹² the whole consumption.
^c Ex. 15. 9.
 10.
 Fro. 5. 22.
 Pro. 11. 5. 6.
 Iro. 23. 6.
 Isa 33. 14.
¹³ touched them.
^d Hos. 9. 9.
 Hos. 10. 9.
¹⁴ Or, from Menu-chah, etc.
¹⁵ unto over against.
^e Josh. 15. 32.
^f ch. 21. 13.
 Isa 1. 9.
 Jer. 14. 9.
 10.
¹⁶ was found.
¹⁷ were found.

CHAP. 21.

^a ch. 20. 1.
 1 Sam. 7. 5.
 6.
^b Josh. 18. 1.
 ch. 20. 18.
 29.
^c Gen. 8. 20.
 Gen. 12. 7.
 Ex. 20. 24.
 25.
 ch. 6. 26.
 2 Sam. 24.
 25.
 1 Ki 8. 64.
^d Lev. 27. 28.
 23.
 ch. 5. 13.

45. the rock of Rimmon. Numbers of the fugitives found refuge in the caves of this rocky mountain, which is situated to the north-east of Beth-el. Such places are still sought as secure retreats in times of danger; and until the method of blowing up rocks by gunpowder became known, a few men could in such caves sustain a siege for months. 46. all which fell that day of Benjamin. On comparing this with *v.* 35, it will be seen that the loss is stated here in round numbers, and is confined only to that of the third day. We must conclude that 1,000 had fallen during the two previous engagements, in order to make the aggregate amount given, *v.* 15.

48. the men of Israel turned again upon the children of Benjamin. This frightful vengeance, extending from Gibeah to the whole territory of Benjamin, was executed under the impetuous impulse of highly-excited passions. But doubtless the Israelites were only the agents of inflicting the righteous retributions of God; and the memory of this terrible crisis, which led almost to the extermination of a whole tribe, was conducive to the future good of the whole nation.

CHAP. XXI. 1-15.—THE PEOPLE BEWAIL THE DESOLATION OF ISRAEL.

2. the people . . . lifted up their voices, and

wept. The characteristic fickleness of the Israelites was not long in being displayed; for scarcely had they cooled from the fierceness of their sanguinary vengeance than they began to relent, and rushed to the opposite extreme of self-accusation and grief at the desolation which their impetuous zeal had produced. Their victory saddened and humbled them. Their feelings on the occasion were expressed by a public and solemn service of expiation at the house of God. And yet this extraordinary observance, though it enabled them to find vent for their painful emotions, did not afford them full relief; for they were fettered by the obligation of a religious vow, heightened by the addition of a solemn anathema on every violator of the oath. There is no previous record of this oath; but the purport of it was, that they would treat the perpetrators of this Gibeah atrocity in the same way as the Canaanites, who were doomed to destruction; and the entering into this solemn league was of a piece with the rest of their inconsiderate conduct in this whole affair.

6. There is one tribe cut off from Israel this day—*i. e.*, in danger of becoming extinct; for, as it appears from *v.* 7, they had massacred all the women and children of Benjamin, and 600 men alone survived of the whole tribe. The

wives for them that remain, seeing we have sworn by the LORD that we will not give them of our daughters to wives? And they said, What one *is there* of the tribes of Israel that came not up to Mizpeh to the LORD?

And, behold, there came none to the camp from ^eJabesh-gilead to the assembly. For the people were numbered, and, behold, *there were* none of the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead there. And the congregation sent thither twelve thousand men of the valiantest, and commanded them, saying, ^fGo and smite the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead with the edge of the sword, with the women and the children. And this *is* the thing that ye shall do, Ye ^gshall utterly destroy every male, and every woman that ^hhath lain by man. And they found among the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead four hundred ⁱyoung virgins, that had known no man by lying with any male; and they brought them unto the camp to ^kShiloh, which *is* in the land of Canaan.

And the whole congregation sent *some* ^lto speak to the children of Benjamin ^mthat *were* in the rock Rimmon, and to ⁿcall peaceably unto them. And Benjamin came again at that time; and they gave them wives which they had saved alive of the women of Jabesh-gilead: and yet so they sufficed them not. And the people repented them for Benjamin, because that the LORD had made a breach in the tribes of Israel.

Then the elders of the congregation said, How shall we do for wives for them that remain, seeing the women are destroyed out of Benjamin? And they said, *There must be* an inheritance for them that be escaped of Benjamin, that a tribe be not destroyed out of Israel. Howbeit we may not give them wives of our daughters: ^ofor the children of Israel have sworn, saying, Cursed *be* he that giveth a wife to Benjamin.

Then they said, Behold, *there is* a feast of the LORD in Shiloh ^pyearly, *in a place* which *is* on the north side of Beth-el, ^qon the east side ^rof the highway that goeth up from Beth-el to Shechem, and on the south of Lebonah. Therefore they commanded the children of Benjamin, saying, Go and lie in wait in the vineyards; and see, and, behold, if the daughters of Shiloh come out ^sto dance in dances, then come ye out of the vineyards, and catch you every man his wife of the daughters of Shiloh, and go to the land of Benjamin. And it shall be, when their fathers or their brethren come unto us to complain, that we will say unto them, ^tBe favourable unto them for our sakes: because we reserved not to each man

B. C. 1403.
^a 1 Sam. 11. 1.
 1 Sam. 31. 11.
^f Deut. 13. 15.
 Josh. 7. 24.
 ch. 5. 23.
 1 Sam. 11. 7.
^g Num. 31. 17.
 Deut. 2. 34.
^h knoweth the lying with man.
ⁱ young women, virgins.
^k Josh. 18. 1.
 Josh. 22. 9.
 ch. 20. 18.
 1 Sam. 1. 3.
 Ps. 78. 69.
 60.
 Jer. 7. 12.
 14.
^l and spake and called.
 Josh. 15. 32.
^m ch. 20. 47.
ⁿ Or, proclaim peace.
 Deut. 20. 10.
^o ch. 11. 35.
^p from year to year.
^q Or, toward the sun-rising.
^r Or, on.
^s Ex. 15. 20.
 Ex. 32. 6.
 19.
 ch. 11. 34.
 1 Sam. 15. 6.
 1 Sam. 21. 11.
 Jer. 31. 13.
^t Or, gratify us in them.

prospect of such a blank in the catalogue of the twelve tribes—such a gap in the national arrangements—was too painful to contemplate, and immediate measures must be taken to prevent this great catastrophe.

8. there came none to the camp from Jabesh-gilead to the assembly. This city lay within the territory of Eastern Manasseh, about fifteen miles east of the Jordan, and was, according to *Josephus*, the capital of Gilead. The ban which the assembled tribes had pronounced at Mizpeh seemed to impose on them the necessity of punishing its inhabitants for not joining the crusade against Benjamin; and thus, with a view of repairing the consequences of one rash proceeding, they hurriedly rushed to the perpetration of another, though a smaller tragedy. But it appears (v. 11) that, besides acting in fulfilment of their oath, the Israelites had the additional object by this raid of supplying wives to the Benjamite remnant. This shows the intemperate fury of the Israelites in the indiscriminate slaughter of the women and children.

16-21.—THE ELDERS CONSULT HOW TO FIND WIVES FOR THOSE THAT WERE LEFT.

16. How shall we do for wives for them that remain. Though the young women of Jabesh-gilead had been carefully spared, the supply was found inadequate, and some other expedient must be resorted to. 17. There must be an inheritance for them that be escaped of Benjamin. As they were the only rightful owners of the territory, provision must be made for transmitting it to their legitimate heirs; and a new act of violence was meditated (v. 19), the opportunity for which was afforded by the approaching festival—a feast generally supposed to be the feast of tabernacles. This, like the other annual feasts, was held in Shiloh, and its celebration was attended with more social hilarity and holiday rejoicings than the rest.

19. on the east side of the highway that goeth up from Beth-el to Shechem. The exact site of the place was described evidently for the direction of the Benjamites, who would know it (see in Josh. xviii. 1). 21. daughters of Shiloh come out to dance in dances. The dance was anciently a part of the religious observance; and it was done on festive occasions, as it is still in the East, not in town, but in the open air, in some adjoining

- his wife in the war: for ye did not give unto them at this time, *that ye*
 23 should be guilty. And the children of Benjamin did so, and took *them*
 wives, according to their number, of them that danced, whom they
 caught: and they went and returned unto their inheritance, and 'repaired
 24 the cities, and dwelt in them. And the children of Israel departed thence
 at that time, every man to his tribe and to his family, and they went out
 from thence every man to his inheritance.
- 25 In ^mthose days *there was* no king in Israel: ⁿevery man did *that which*
was right in his own eyes.

B. C. 1406.

^j ch. 20. 48.^m ch. 17. 6.

ch. 18. 1.

ch. 19. 1.

ⁿ Dent. 12. 8.

ch. 17. 6.

ch. 18. 7.

Lam. 5. 14.

Rom. 13. 3-

6.

field, the women being by themselves. The young women being alone, indulging their light and buoyant spirits, and apprehensive of no danger, facilitated the execution of the scheme of seizing them, which closely resembles the Sabine rape in Roman history. The elders undertook to recon-

cile the families to the forced abduction of their daughters. And thus the expression of their public sanction to this deed of violence afforded a new evidence of the evils and difficulties into which the unhappy precipitancy of the Israelites in this crisis had involved them.

THE
BOOK OF RUTH.

1 **N**OW it came to pass in the days when the ^ajudges ¹ruled, that there was ^ba famine in the land. And a certain man ^cof Beth-lehem-judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he, and his wife, and his two sons. And the name of the man was Elimelech, and the name of his wife Naomi, and the name of his two sons Mahlon and Chilion, Ephrathites ^dof Beth-lehem-judah. And they came ^einto the country of Moab, and ²continued there.

3 And Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died; and she was left, and her two sons. And they took them wives of the women of Moab; the name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth: and they dwelt there about ten years. And Mahlon and Chilion died also both of them; and the woman was left of her two sons and her husband.

6 Then she arose with her daughters-in-law, that she might return from the country of Moab: for she had heard in the country of Moab how that the LORD had ^fvisited his people in ^ggiving them bread. Wherefore she went forth out of the place where she was, and her two daughters-in-law with her; and they went on their way to return unto the land of Judah. And Naomi said unto her two daughters-in-law, ^hGo, return each to her mother's house: ⁱthe LORD deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead, and with me. The LORD grant you that ye may ^jfind rest, each of you in the house of her husband. Then she kissed them: and they lifted up their voice, and wept. And they said unto her, Surely we will return with thee unto thy people.

11 And Naomi said, Turn again, my daughters; why will ye go with me? are there yet *any more* sons in my womb, ^kthat they may be your husband? Turn again, my daughters, go *your way*; for I am too old to have an husband. If I should say, I have hope, ³if I should have an

B C 1799.

CHAP. 1.

^a Judg 2. 16.
1 judged.
^b Gen. 12 10.
Gen 21. 1.
Deut. 18. 38.
1 Ki. 18. 2.
2 Ki 8. 1.
^c Judg 17. 8.
Mic 5. 2.
^d Gen. 55. 19.
^e Judg. 3. 30
^f were.
^g Ex. 4. 31.
Ps. 60. 14.
Jer. 29. 10.
Zeph. 2. 7.
Zech. 10. 3.
Luke 1. 8.
Luke 7. 16.
^h Gen 2. 27.
Gen. 48. 15.
Ex. 16. 4-6.
Ps. 132. 15.
Matt. 6. 11.
ⁱ Josh 21. 15.
^j 2 Tim. 1. 16.
^k ch 3. 1.
^l Gen. 38. 11.
Deut. 25. 5.
³ Or, if I were with an husband.

CHAP. I. 1-5.—ELIMELECH DRIVEN BY FAMINE INTO MOAB, DIES THERE.

1. Now it came to pass in the days when the judges ruled. In the use of this formula the sacred writer has respect to the unwritten history of the transactions with which this episode is connected; whereas in Joshua it refers to the previous record of Moses. The beautiful and interesting story which this book relates belongs to the early times of the judges. The precise date cannot be ascertained. 2. Elimelech—signifies 'My God is king.' Naomi—fair or pleasant; and their two sons, Mahlon and Chilion, are supposed to be the same as Joash and Saraph (1 Chr. iv. 22). Ephrathites. The ancient name of Beth-lehem was Ephrath (Gen. xxxv. 19; xlvii. 7), which was continued after the occupation of the land by the Hebrews, even down to the time of the prophet Micah (Mic. v. 2). Beth-lehem-judah—so called to distinguish it from a town of the same name in Zebulun. The family, compelled to emigrate to Moab through pressure of a famine, settled for several years in that country; and after the death of their father, the two sons married Moabite women. This was a violation of the Mosaic law (Deut. vii. 3; xxiii. 3; Ezra ix. 2; Neh. xiii. 23); and Jewish writers say that the early deaths of both the young men were Divine judgments inflicted on them for those unlawful connections.

6-18.—NAOMI RETURNING HOME, RUTH ACCOMPANIES HER.

6. Then she arose with her daughters-in-law. The aged widow, longing to enjoy the privileges of Israel, resolved to return to her native land as soon as she was assured that the famine had ceased, and made the necessary arrangements with her daughters-in-law. 8. Go, return each to her mother's house. In Eastern countries women occupy apartments separate from those of men, and daughters are most frequently in those of their mother. with the dead—i. e., with my sons, your husbands, while they lived. 9. The Lord grant you that ye may find rest—enjoy a life of tranquility, undisturbed by the cares, incumbrances, and vexatious troubles to which a state of widowhood is peculiarly exposed. Then she kissed them—the Oriental manner when friends are parting.

11. are there yet any more sons, &c. This alludes to the ancient custom (Gen. xxxviii. 26), afterwards expressly sanctioned by the law of Moses (Deut. xxv. 5), which required a younger son to marry the widow of his deceased brother. 12. Turn again, my daughters, go your way. That Naomi should dissuade her daughters-in-law so strongly from accompanying her to the land of Israel may appear strange. But it was the wisest and most prudent course for her to adopt: 1st. Because they might be influenced by hopes which could not be realized; 2d. Because they might be led, under temporary excitement, to take a step they might afterwards regret; and 3d. Because

- 13 husband also to-night, and should also bear sons, would ye ⁴ tarry for them till they were grown? would ye stay for them from having husbands? nay, my daughters; for ⁵ it grieveth me much for your sakes, that ⁶ the hand of the LORD is gone out against me. And they lifted up their voice, and wept again: and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law; but Ruth ^m clave unto her.
- 15 And she said, Behold, thy sister-in-law is gone back unto her people, and unto ⁿ her gods: return thou after thy sister-in-law. And Ruth said, ⁶ Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people *shall be* my people, and thy God my God: where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: ^o the LORD do so to me, and more also, *if ought* but death part thee and me. When ^p she saw that she ⁷ was stedfastly minded to go with her, then she left speaking unto her.
- 19 So they two went until they came to Beth-lehem. And it came to pass, when they were come to Beth-lehem, that ^q all the city was moved about them, and they said, ^r Is this Naomi? And she said unto them, Call me not ^s Naomi, call me ⁹ Mara: for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me. I went out full, ⁸ and the LORD hath brought me home again empty: why *then* call ye me Naomi, seeing the LORD hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me?
- 22 So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitess, her daughter-in-law, with her, which returned out of the country of Moab: and they came to Beth-lehem ^t in the beginning of barley harvest.
- 2 AND Naomi had a ^u kinsman of her husband's, a mighty man of wealth, of the family of Elimelech; and his name was ¹ Boaz. And Ruth the Moabitess said unto Naomi, Let me now go to the field, and glean ^v ears of corn after *him* in whose sight I shall find grace: And she said unto her, Go, my daughter: And she went; and came, and gleaned in the field after the reapers: and her ² hap was to light on a part of the field *belonging* unto Boaz, who was of the kindred of Elimelech.
- 4 And, behold, Boaz came from Beth-lehem, and said unto the reapers,

B. C. 13-2.
⁴ hope.
⁵ I have much bitterness.
⁶ Job 19. 21. Ps. 32. 4.
^m Fro. 17. 17.
ⁿ Josh. 24. 15, 19, 21.
^o Judg. 11. 24.
⁶ Or, Be not against me.
² Ki. 2. 2.
^o 1 Sam. 3. 17.
¹ Sam. 25. 22.
² Ki. 6. 31.
^p Acts 21. 14.
^r strengthened herself.
^q Matt. 21. 10.
^r Isa. 23. 7.
^s Lam. 2. 15.
⁸ That is, Pleasant.
⁹ That is, Bitter.
^o Job 1. 21.
^t Ex. 9. :1.
² Sam. 21. 9.
 CHAP. 2.
^a ch. 3. 2. 12.
¹ That is, Strength is in him.
^b Lev. 19. 9.
² Lev. 23. :2.
³ Dent. 21. 19.
² hap happened.

the sincerity and strength of their conversion to the true religion, which she had taught them, would be thoroughly tested. 13. the hand of the Lord is gone out against me—i. e., I am not only not in a condition to provide you with other husbands, but so reduced in circumstances that I cannot think of your being subjected to privations with me. The arguments of Naomi prevailed with Orpah, who returned to her people and her [עַמִּי וְאֱלֹהֵי] gods. But Ruth clave unto her, and said, 'Thy God shall be my God.' These expressions of Ruth are as much plural as that of Naomi in the preceding verse; and yet our translators have very properly rendered them in the singular, 'God.' The language indicates the most devoted affection; and even in the pages of *Sterne*, that great master of pathos, there is nothing which so calls forth the sensibilities of the reader as the simple effusion he has borrowed from Scripture—of Ruth to her mother-in-law (*Chalmers*). The name Ruth was a Moabite name Hebraicized; or perhaps, as some suppose, that Moabites may, in consequence of their descent from Lot, have spoken a Hebrew dialect.

19-22.—THEY COME TO BETH-LEHEM.

19. all the city was moved about them—the present condition of Naomi, a forlorn and desolate widow, presented so painful a contrast to the flourishing state of prosperity and domestic bliss in which she had been at her departure. 20.

Mara—bitter, bitterness (see on Exod. xv. 23). 21. the Almighty [יְהוָה]. This name of God was employed in the early times after the flood, as we find it in Gen. xlix. 25, in Num. i. 6, and in Job very frequently. But there are not many instances in the sacred books after the time of Moses, and their fewness (amounting only to four, Ps. lxxviii. 14; xci. 1; Isa. xiii. 6; Joel i. 15) show that it was in familiar use. When employed, it was only for the sake of a special significance felt to belong to it (*Kidd* 'On the Divine Names').

22. in the beginning of barley harvest—corresponding to the end of our April.

CHAP. II. 1-3.—RUTH GLEANS IN THE FIELD OF BOAZ.

2. Ruth . . . said . . . Let me now go to the field, and glean. The right of gleanings was conferred by a positive law on the widow, the poor, and the stranger (see on Lev. xix. 9, 10; Dent. xxiv. 19, 21). But liberty to glean *behind* the reapers was not a right that could be claimed: it was a privilege granted or refused according to the good-will or favour of the owner. 3. a part of the field belonging unto Boaz. Fields in Palestine being unenclosed, the phrase signifies that portion of the open ground which lay within the landmarks of Boaz.

4-23.—HE TAKES KNOWLEDGE OF HER, AND SHOWS HER FAVOUR.

^cThe LORD *be* with you. And they answered him, ^dThe LORD bless thee.

5 Then said Boaz unto his servant that was set over the reapers, Whose

6 damsel *is* this? And the servant that was set over the reapers answered and said, *It is* the Moabitish damsel ^ethat came back with Naomi out

7 of the country of Moab: and she said, I pray you, let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves: so she came, and hath continued even from the morning until now, that she tarried a little in the house.

8 Then said Boaz unto Ruth, Hearst thou not, my daughter? Go not to glean in another field, neither go from hence, but abide here fast by

9 my maidens: *let* thine eyes *be* on the field that they do reap, and go thou after them: have I not charged the young men that they shall not touch thee? and when thou art athirst, go unto the vessels, and drink of *that*

10 which the young men have drawn. Then she ^ffell on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, and said unto him, Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I *am* a

11 stranger? And Boaz answered and said unto her, It ^ghath fully been showed me ^hall that thou hast done unto thy mother-in-law since the death of thine husband; and *how* thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which

12 thou knewest not heretofore. The ⁱLORD recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the LORD God of Israel, ^junder whose wings

13 thou art come to trust. Then she said, ^kLet me find favour in thy sight, my lord; for that thou hast comforted me, and for that thou hast spoken ^lfriendly unto thine handmaid, ^mthough I be not like unto one of thine

14 handmaidens. And Boaz said unto her, At meal-time come thou hither, and eat of the bread, and dip thy morsel in the vinegar.

And she sat beside the reapers: and he reached her parched *corn*, and

15 she did eat, and was sufficed, and left. And when she was risen up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men, saying, Let her glean even among

16 the sheaves, and ⁿreproach her not: and let fall also *some* of the handfuls of purpose for her, and leave *them*, that she may glean *them*, and

B C. 1312.

^c Judg. 6. 12.

Ps. 118. 24.

Ps. 119. 7, 8.

Luke 1. 28.

² Thes 3. 16.² Tim. 4. 22.^d Col. 4. 6.^e ch. 1. 22.^f Gen. 18. 2.

1 Sam. 25.

23.

^g Pro. 31. 31.^h ch. 1. 14.

Luke 5. 11.

23.

Luke 14. 23.

Heb. 11. 8.

9, 21-26.

ⁱ 1 Sam. 21.

19.

Ps. 19. 11.

Matt 5. 12.

Luke 6. 25.

Luke 14. 12-

14.

^j Ps. 17. 8.

Ps. 26. 7.

Ps. 57. 1.

Ps. 63. 7.

^k Cr. I find

favour.

Gen 33. 15.

1 Sam. 1. 18.

^l to the

heart.

Gen. 31. 3.

Judg 19. 3.

^m 1 Sam. 25.

41.

ⁿ shame her

not.

4. The Lord be with you. This pious salutation between the master and his labourers strongly indicates the state of religious feeling among the rural population of Israel at that time, as well as the artless, happy, and unsuspecting simplicity which characterized the manners of the people. The same patriarchal style of speaking is still preserved in the East. 5. his servant that was set over the reapers—an overseer, whose special duty was to superintend the operations in the field, to supply provisions to the reapers, and pay them for their labour in the evening. 7. after the reapers among the sheaves. Various modes of reaping are practised in the East. Where the crop is thin and short, it is plucked up by the roots. In other states it is cut with the sickle. Whether reaped in the one way or the other, the grain is cast into sheaves loosely thrown together, to be subjected to the process of threshing, which takes place for the most part immediately after the reaping. Field labours were begun early in the morning, before the day became oppressively hot. she tarried a little in the house—i. e., the field tent, erected for the occasional rest and refreshment of the labourers.

8. abide here fast by my maidens. The reaping was performed by women, while the assortment of sheaves was the duty of men-servants. The same division of harvest labour obtains in Syria still. Boaz not only granted to Ruth the full privilege of gleaning after his reapers, but provided for her personal comforts. 9. go unto

the vessels. Gleaners were sometimes allowed, by kind and charitable masters, to partake of the refreshments provided for the reapers. The vessels alluded to were skin bottles filled with water; and the bread was soaked in vinegar (v. 14), a kind of poor, weak wine, sometimes mingled with a little olive oil, very cooling, as would be required in harvest-time. This grateful refectory is still used in the harvest field (see Robinson's 'Biblical Researches,' ii., p. 394).

14. he reached her parched corn—some of the new grain, roasted on the spot, and fit for use after being rubbed in the hands—a favourite viand in the East. He gave her so much, that after satisfying her own wants she had some (v. 18) in reserve for her mother-in-law. 15. Boaz commanded his young men . . . 16. let fall also some of the handfuls of purpose for her. The gleaners in the East glean with much success; for a great quantity of corn is scattered in the reaping, as well as in their manner of carrying it. One may judge, then, of the large quantity which Ruth would gather, in consequence of the liberal orders given to the servants. These extraordinary marks of favour were not only given from a kindly disposition, but from regard to her good character and devoted attachment to her venerable relative. Besides, the law of Moses directed very liberal treatment of the poor at the seasons of harvest and ingathering of the crops; and Boaz, who was a pious man, had fully imbibed the spirit of the

- 17 rebuke her not. So she gleaned in the field until even, and beat out
 18 that she had gleaned: and it was about an ephah of barley. And she took *it* up, and went into the city; and her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned: and she brought forth, and gave to her that she had reserved after she was sufficed.
- 19 And her mother-in-law said unto her, Where hast thou gleaned to-day? and where wroughtest thou? blessed be he that did 'take knowledge of thee. And she showed her mother-in-law with whom she had wrought,
 20 and said, The man's name with whom I wrought to-day is Boaz. And Naomi said unto her daughter-in-law, ^mBlessed be he of the LORD, who ⁿhath not left off his kindness to the living and to the dead. And Naomi said unto her, The man *is* near of kin unto us, ^oone of our next kinsmen.
- 21 And Ruth the Moabite said, He said unto me also, Thou shalt keep fast
 22 by my young men, until they have ended all my harvest. And Naomi said unto Ruth her daughter-in-law, *It is good*, my daughter, that thou
 23 go out with his maidens, that they ^rmeet thee not in any other field. So she kept fast by the maidens of Boaz to glean unto the end of barley harvest and of wheat harvest; and dwelt with her mother-in-law.
- 3 THEN Naomi her mother-in-law said unto her, My daughter, ^ashall I not seek ^brest for thee, that it may be well with thee? And now *is* not Boaz of our kindred, with ^cwhose maidens thou wast? Behold, he winnoweth barley to-night in the threshing-floor. Wash thyself therefore,
 3 and anoint thee, and put thy raiment upon thee, and get thee down to the floor: *but* make not thyself known unto the man, until he shall have
 4 done eating and drinking. And it shall be, when he lieth down, that thou shalt mark the place where he shall lie, and thou shalt go in, and
 1 uncover his feet, and lay thee down; and he will tell thee what thou
 5 shalt do. And she said unto her, ^eAll that thou sayest unto me I will do.

B. C. 1225.

1 Ps. 41. 1.
2 Cor. 9. 12-1
m ch 3. 10.

2 Sam. 2. 5.

Job 29. 13.

2 Tim. 1. 16.

n Pro. 17. 17.

1 Phil. 4. 10.

6 Or, one

that hath

right to

redeem.

Lev. 25. 25.

ch 3. 9.

ch. 4. 6.

7 Or, fall not

upon thee.

CHAP. 3.

a ch. 1. 9.

1 Cr 7. 20.

1 Tim 5. 8.

b Deut. 4. 40.

ch. 1. 9.

Ps. 123. 2.

Jer. 22. 15.

16.

c ch. 2. 3.

d 2 Sam 14. 2.

1 Or, lift up

the clothes

that are on

his feet.

e Eph. 6. 1.

Col. 3. 20.

law. 17. and beat out that she had gleaned. When the quantity of grain was small, it was beat out by means of a stick. This process is frequently seen at the present day on the same fields by women, who beat out with a stick handfuls of the grain which they have gleaned (*Robinson's 'Biblical Researches,'* i., p. 385). an ephah—supposed to contain about a bushel.

20. The man is . . . one of our next kinsmen—Hebrew, 'one of our redeemers,' on whom it devolves to protect us, to purchase our lands, and marry you, the relic of his next kinsman. She said, 'one of them,' not that there were many in the same close relationship, but that he was a very near kinsman, one other individual only having the precedence. 21. all my harvest—both barley and wheat harvests. The latter was at the end of May or the beginning of June. 22. It is good . . . that thou go out with his maidens—a prudent recommendation to Ruth to accept the generous invitation of Boaz, lest, if she were seen straying into other fields, she might not only run the risk of rude treatment, but displease him by seeming indifferent to his kind liberality. Moreover, the observant mind of the old maon had already discerned, in all Boaz's attentions to Ruth, the germs of a stronger affection, which she wished to increase. 23. she kept fast by the maidens of Boaz to glean unto the end of barley harvest and of wheat harvest. The reaping of barley commenced the harvest (2 Sam. xxi. 9), and that of wheat followed almost without any interval.

CHAP. III. 1-13.—BY NAOMI'S INSTRUCTIONS RUTH LIES AT BOAZ'S FEET, WHO ACKNOWLEDGES THE DUTY OF A KINSMAN.

2. he winnoweth barley to-night in the threshing-floor. The winnowing-process is performed by

throwing up the grain, after being trodden down, against the wind with a shovel. The threshing-floor, which was commonly on the harvest-field, was carefully levelled with a large cylindrical roller, and consolidated with chalk, that weeds might not spring up, and that it might not chop with drought. The farmer usually remained all night in harvest-time on the threshing-floor, not only for the protection of his valuable grain, but for the winnowing. That operation was performed in the evening, to catch the breezes which blow after the close of a hot day, and which continue for the most part of the night. This duty at so important a season the master undertakes himself; and accordingly, in the simplicity of ancient manners, Boaz, a person of considerable wealth and high rank, laid himself down to sleep on the barn-floor, at the end of the heap of barley he had been winnowing. 4. go in, and uncover his feet, and lay thee down. Singular as these directions may appear to us, there was no impropriety in them, according to the simplicity of rural manners in Beth-lehem. In ordinary circumstances these would have seemed indecorous to the world; but in the case of Ruth, it was a method doubtless conformable to prevailing usage, of reminding Boaz of the duty which devolved on him as the kinsman of her deceased husband. Boaz probably slept upon a mat or skin; Ruth lay crosswise as his feet—a position in which Eastern servants frequently sleep in the same chamber or tent with their master; and if they want a covering, custom allows them that benefit from part of the covering on their master's bed. Resting, as the Orientals do at night, in the same clothes they wear during the day, there was no indelicacy in a stranger, or even a woman, putting the extremity of this cover over her.

6 And she went down unto the floor, and did according to all that her
7 mother-in-law bade her. And when Boaz had eaten and drunk, and ¹his
heart was merry, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of corn: and
8 she came softly, and uncovered his feet, and laid her down. And it came
to pass at midnight, that the man was afraid, and ²turned himself; and,
9 behold, a woman lay at his feet. And he said, Who *art* thou? And she
answered, I *am* Ruth thine handmaid: spread ³therefore thy skirt over
10 thine handmaid; for thou *art* ³a near kinsman. And he said, ⁴Blessed
be thou of the LORD, my daughter; for thou hast showed more kindness
in the latter end than ⁴at the beginning, inasmuch as thou followedst not
11 young men, whether poor or rich. And now, my daughter, fear not; I
will do to thee all that thou requirest: for all the ⁴city of my people doth
12 know that thou *art* ⁵a virtuous woman. And now it is true that I *am*
13 *thy* near kinsman: howbeit ⁶there is a kinsman nearer than I. Tarry this
night, and it shall be in the morning, *that* if he will ⁶perform unto thee
the part of a kinsman, well; let him do the kinsman's part: but if he will
not do the part of a kinsman to thee, then will I do the part of a kinsman
to thee, ⁷as the LORD liveth: lie down until the morning.

14 And she lay at his feet until the morning: and she rose up before one
could know another. And he said, ⁸Let it not be known that a woman
15 came into the floor. Also he said, Bring the veil *that thou hast* upon
thee, and hold it. And when she held it, he measured six *measures* of
barley, and laid *it* on her: and she went into the city.

16 And when she came to her mother-in-law, she said, Who *art* thou, my
17 daughter? And she told her all that the man had done to her. And
she said, These six *measures* of barley gave he me; for he said to me, Go
18 not empty unto thy mother-in-law. Then said she, Sit still, my daughter,
until thou know how the matter will fall: for the man will not be in rest
until he have finished the thing this day.

4 THEN went Boaz up to the gate, and sat him down there: and, behold,
⁹the kinsman of whom Boaz spake came by; unto whom he said, Ho,
such a one! turn aside, sit down here. And he turned aside, and sat
2 down. And he took ten men of ¹⁰the elders of the city, and said, Sit ye
3 down here. And they sat down. And he said unto the kinsman, Naomi,
that is come again out of the country of Moab, selleth a parcel of land,

B. C. 13 2.
Judg 19 6.
2 Sam 11.
23.
Esth. 1. 10.
2 Or, took hold on.
Eze. 16. 8.
3 Or, one that hath right to redeem.
4 ch. 2. 10.
4 ch. 1. 8.
4 gate.
Pro. 31. 31.
J Fro. 12. 4.
Fro. 31. 10.
29. 31.
* ch. 4. 1.
Matt 7. 12.
1 Thes. 4. 6.
1 Dent. 25. 5.
ch 2. 20.
ch. 4. 5.
Matt. 22. 24.
** Judg. 8. 19.
Jer. 4. 2.
2 Co. 1. 23.
Heb. 6. 16.
* Ex. 7. 1.
Rom. 12. 17.
Rom. 14. 16.
1 Cor. 10. 32.
2 Cor. 8. 21.
1 Thes. 5. 2.
1 Pet. 2. 12.

CHAP. 4.
* ch. 3. 12.
6 Deut. 16. 18.
Dent. 17. 9.
Dent. 29. 10.
1 Ki. 21. 8.
Pro. 31. 23.
Rom. 12. 1-6.

9. spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid; for thou art a near kinsman. She had already drawn part of the mantle over her; and she asked him now to do it, that the act might become his own. To spread a skirt over one is, in the East, a symbolical action denoting protection. To this day in many parts of the East to say of any one that he put his skirt over a woman is synonymous with saying that he married her; and at all the marriages of the modern Jews and Hindoos one part of the ceremony is for the bridegroom to put a silken or cotton cloak around his bride (see *Roberts's* 'Oriental Customs,' on this passage, where it is shown that the same practice obtains amongst the Hindoos). 10. Blessed be thou of the Lord, my daughter, &c. Continued widowhood was regarded by the Jews as an indication of more than ordinary piety.

15. Bring the veil that thou hast upon thee, and hold it [וְהַעֲלֵמִי]. Eastern veils are large sheets—those of ladies being of red silk; but the poorer or common class of women wear them of blue, or blue and white, striped linen or cotton. They are wrapped round the head, and fall down over the shoulders, enveloping the whole person (see *Rogers's* 'Domestic Life in Palestine,' p. 46; *Graham's* 'Jordan and Rhine,' p. 195).

17. six measures of barley—Hebrew, six seahs;

a seah contained about two gallons and a half, six of which must have been rather a heavy load for a woman.

CHAP. IV. 1-5.—BOAZ CALLS INTO JUDGMENT THE NEXT KINSMAN.

1. Then went Boaz up to the gate—a roofed building, unenclosed by walls; the place where in ancient times, and in many Eastern towns still, all business transactions are made, and where therefore the kinsman was most likely to be found. No preliminaries were necessary in summoning one before the public assemblage; no writings and no delay were required. In a short conversation the matter was stated and arranged—probably in the morning, as people went out, or at noon, when they returned from the field. 2. ten men of the elders of the city—as witnesses. In ordinary circumstances two or three were sufficient to attest a bargain; but in cases of importance, such as matrimony, divorce, conveyancing of property, it was the Jewish practice to have ten (1 Ki. xxi. 8). 3. Naomi . . . selleth a parcel—*i. e.*, entertains the idea of selling. In her circumstances she was at liberty to part with it (Lev. xxv. 25). Both Naomi and Ruth had an interest in the land during their lives; but Naomi alone was mentioned, not only because she directed all the negotiations, but because the introduction of

- 4 which *was* our brother Elimelech's; and ¹I thought to advertise thee, saying, 'Buy *it*' before the inhabitants, and before the elders of my people. If thou wilt redeem *it*, redeem *it*; but if thou wilt not redeem *it*, then tell me, that I may know: '*for there is none to redeem it besides thee; and I*
- 5 *am* after thee. And he said, I will redeem *it*. Then said Boaz, What day thou buyest the field of the hand of Naomi, thou must buy *it* also of Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead, ⁷to raise up the name of the
- 6 dead upon his inheritance. And ⁹the kinsman said, I cannot redeem *it* for myself, lest I mar mine own inheritance: redeem thou my right to
- 7 thyself; for I cannot redeem *it*. Now ^hthis *was the manner* in former time in Israel concerning redeeming, and concerning changing, for to confirm all things; a man plucked off his shoe, and gave *it* to his
- 8 neighbour: and this *was* a testimony in Israel. Therefore the kinsman said unto Boaz, Buy *it* for thee. So he drew off his shoe.
- 9 And Boaz said unto the elders, and unto all the people, Ye *are* witnesses this day, that I have bought all that *was* Elimelech's and all that *was*
- 10 Chilion's and Mahlon's, of the hand of Naomi. Moreover Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of Mahlon, have I purchased to be my wife, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance, '*that the name of the dead*
- 11 *be not cut off from among his brethren, and from the gate of his place: ye are* witnesses this day. And all the people that *were* in the gate, and the elders, said, *We are* witnesses. ^jThe LORD make the woman that is come into thine house like Rachel and like Leah, which two did ^kbuild the house of Israel: and ²do thou worthily in ^lEphratah, and be ³famous
- 12 in Beth-lehem: and let thy house be like the house of Pharez, ^mwhom Tamar bare unto Judah, of ⁿthe seed which the LORD shall give thee of this young woman.
- 13 So Boaz took Ruth, and she was his wife: and when he went in unto
- 14 her, ^othe LORD gave her conception, and she bare a son. And ^pthe women said unto Naomi, Blessed *be* the LORD, which hath not ⁴left thee this day
- 15 without a ⁵kinsman, that his name may be famous in Israel. And he shall be unto thee a restorer of *thy* life, and ⁶a nourisher of ⁷thine old

B. C. 1312.

¹ I said I will reveal in thine ear.

² Jer 32. 7, 8.

³ Gen. 23. 18.

⁴ Lev. 25. 25.

⁵ Gen. 38. 8.

⁶ Deut. 25. 5.

⁷ ch. 3. 13.

⁸ Matt. 22. 21.

⁹ ch. 3. 12, 13.

^h Deut. 25. 7, 9.

ⁱ Deut. 25. 6.

^j Ps. 127. 3.

^k Deut. 25. 9.

^l Or, get thee riches, or power.

^m Gen. 35. 16.

ⁿ proclaim thy name.

^o Gen. 34. 29.

^p 1 Chr. 2. 4.

^q Matt. 1. 3.

^r 1 Sam. 2. 20.

^s Gen. 29. 31.

^t Gen. 33. 5.

^u Luke 1. 58.

^v Rom. 12. 15.

^w caused to cease unto thee.

^x Or, redeemer.

^y to nourish.

^z Gen. 45. 11.

^{aa} thy grey hairs.

Ruth's name would awaken a suspicion of the necessity of marrying her, before the first proposition was answered. 4. *there is none to redeem it besides thee; and I am after thee*—(see on Deut. xxv. 5-10.) The redemption of the land, of course, involved a marriage with Ruth, the widow of the former owner.

6-8.—HE REFUSETH THE REDEMPTION.

6. *I cannot redeem it . . . lest I mar mine own inheritance.* This consequence would follow, either, first, from his having a son by Ruth, who, though heir to the property, would not bear his name: his name would be extinguished in that of her former husband; or, secondly, from its having to be subdivided amongst his other children, which he had probably by a previous marriage. This right, therefore, was renounced and assigned in favour of Boaz, in the way of whose marriage with Ruth the only existing obstacle was now removed. 7. *a man plucked off his shoe.* Where the kinsman refused to perform his duty to the family of his deceased relation, his widow was directed to pull off the shoe, with some attendant circumstances of contemptuous disdain. But as in this case there was no refusal, the usual ignominy was spared, and the plucking off the shoe the only ceremony observed, as a pledge of the transaction being completed. The symbolical import of the observance was, that the party surrendered his interest in the land by giving another his shoe, wherein he used himself to walk, in order that he to whom he gave it might enter in and take possession of it.

The use of the shoe as a token of right or conveyancing is very prevalent still in Hindostan and many parts of the East (*Roberts's 'Oriental Customs'*). In mediæval times the right-hand glove was used instead of a shoe.

9-12.—HE MARRIES RUTH.

9. *all that was Chilion's and Mahlon's, of the hand of Naomi.* Although the widow of Chilion was still living, no regard was paid to her in the disposal of her husband's property. From her remaining in Moab she was considered to have either been married again, or to have renounced all right to an inheritance with the family of Elimelech. 10. *Ruth the Moabitess . . . have I purchased to be my wife.* This connection Boaz not only might form, since Ruth had embraced the true religion, but he was under a legal necessity of forming it. 11. *all the people . . . and the elders, said, We are witnesses.* A multitude, doubtless, from curiosity or interest, were present on the occasion. There was no signing of deeds; yet was the transfer made, and complete security given, by the public manner in which the whole matter was carried on and concluded. *The Lord make the woman . . . like Rachel and like Leah.* This was the usual bridal benediction. 12. *let thy house be like the house of Pharez—i. e., as honourable and numerous as his.* He was the ancestor of the Beth-lehem people, and his family one of the five from which the tribe of Judah sprang.

13-18.—SHE BEARS OBED.

age: for thy daughter-in-law, which loveth thee, which is ⁹ better to thee
 16 than seven sons, hath born him. And Naomi took the child, and laid it
 17 in her bosom, and became nurse unto it. And the women her neighbours
 gave it a name, saying, There is a son born to Naomi; and they called
 his name Obed: he *is* the father of Jesse, the father of David.
 18, Now these *are* the generations of Pharez: ⁷ Pharez begat Hezron, and
 19, Hezron begat Ram, and Ram begat Amminadab, and Amminadab begat
 20 ⁶ Nahshon, and Nahshon begat ⁸ Salmon, and Salmon begat Boaz, and
 22 Boaz begat Obed, and Obed begat Jesse, and Jesse begat David.

B. C..1313.

² 1 Sam. 1. 8.

Pa. 18. 21.

⁷ 1 Chr 2. 4.

Matt 1. 3.

⁶ Num 1. 7.

Matt 1. 4.

⁸ Or,

Salmah.

1 Chr 2. 11,

51, 54.

17. Obed—means 'servant.'

18. these are the generations of Pharez—*i. e.*, his descendants. This appendix shows that the special object contemplated by the inspired author of this little book was to preserve the memory of an interesting domestic episode, and to trace the

genealogy of David. There was an interval of 380 years between Salmon and David. It is evident that whole generations are omitted; the leading personages only are named, and grandfathers are said, in Scripture language, to beget their grandchildren, without specifying the intermediate links.

THE
FIRST BOOK OF SAMUEL,

OTHERWISE CALLED,
THE FIRST BOOK OF THE KINGS.

1 NOW there was a certain man of Ramathaim-zophim, of mount Ephraim, and his name was ^aElkanah, the son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph, ^ban Ephrathite: and he had two wives; the name of the one was Hannah, and the name of the other Peninnah: and Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children.

3 And this man went up out of his city ¹yearly ^cto worship and to sacrifice unto the LORD of hosts in ^dShiloh. And the two sons of Eli, 4 Hophni and Phinehas, the priests of the LORD, were there. And when the time was that Elkanah offered, he gave to Peninnah his wife, and to 5 all her sons and her daughters, portions: but unto Hannah he gave ²a worthy portion; for he loved Hannah: ^ebut the LORD had shut up her 6 womb. And her adversary also ³provoked her sore, for to make her fret, 7 because the LORD had shut up her womb. And as he did so ^fyear by year, ⁴when she went up to the house of the LORD, so she provoked her;

B. C. 1171.
CHAP. 1.
^a 1 Chr. 6. 27.
^b Ruth 1. 2.
^c 1 from year to year.
^d Deut. 12. 5.
^e Josh. 18. 1.
² Or, a double portion.
^f Gen. 31. 2.
³ angered her.
⁴ Ex. 23. 14.
⁵ from her going up, or, from the time that she, etc.

CHAP. I. 1-8.—OF ELKANAH AND HIS TWO WIVES.

1. a certain man of Ramathaim-zophim [רַמַּתַּיִם צוֹפִים], with the article; Septuagint, 'Ραμαθαιμ Σοφά. The first word, being in the dual number, signifies the double city—the old and new town of Ramah (v. 19). There were five cities of this name, all on high ground. This city had the addition of Zophim attached to it, because, as some think, it was founded by Zuph or Zophai (1 Chr. vi. 26, 35), "an Ephrathite," that is, a native of Ephratha. Beth-lehem, and the expression of Ramathaim-zophim, must, on the assumption that the conjecture as to its founder is correct, be understood as Ramah in the land of Zuph (cf. ch. ix. 5), Ramathaim-zophim signifying Ramah of the Zophites, or descendants of Zuph. Others, considering "mount Ephraim" as pointing to the locality in Joseph's territory, regard "Zophim" not as a proper but a common noun, signifying watchtowers or watchmen, with reference either to the height of its situation (cf. Num. xxiii. 14; *Reland's* 'Palestina,' pp. 694, 695) or its being the residence of prophets who were watchmen (Ezek. iii. 17). Its exact site is unknown. It is said to be on "mount Ephraim;" and, on the assumption that the mountain range called "the hills of Ephraim" retained their name, even in their extension south of Benjamin, *Robinson* ('Biblical Researches,' ii., p. 334) identifies this Ramah with Sela (Zuph). Elkanah, the son of Jeroham, &c. This genealogy is given at length in 1 Chr. vi. 22, 23, 33, 34. Though of the Levitical order, and a good man, he practised polygamy, which, though contrary to the original law, seems to have been prevalent among the Hebrews in those days, when "there was no king in Israel, and every man did what seemed right in his own eyes." 2. the name of the one was Hannah [חַנָּה], grace; Septuagint, 'Αννα], and the name of the other Peninnah [פְּנִינָה] (in some MSS., פְּנִינָה), ruby: so called, as *Harmer*

suggests, from a florid complexion (cf. Sam. iv. 7); Septuagint, φερύβαλα].

3. this man went up out of his city yearly to worship . . . in Shiloh. In that place was the 'earth's one sanctuary,' and thither he repaired at the three solemn feasts, accompanied by his family at one of them—probably the passover. Although a Levite, he could not personally offer a sacrifice, —that was exclusively the office of the priests; and his piety in maintaining a regular attendance on the Divine ordinances is the more worthy of notice, that the character of the two priests who administered them was notoriously bad. But doubtless he believed and acted on the belief, that the ordinances were 'effectual means of salvation, not from any virtue in them, or in those who administered them, but from the grace of God being communicated through them.' 4. when . . . Elkanah offered, he gave . . . portions. The offerer received back the greater part of the peace-offerings, which he and his family or friends were accustomed to eat at a social feast before the Lord (see on Lev. iii. 7; Deut. xii. 12). It was out of these consecrated viands Elkanah gave portions to all the members of his family; but "unto Hannah he gave a worthy portion" [חֵסֶד חַנָּה, a portion of two persons; i. e., a double portion], according to the Eastern fashion of showing regard to beloved or distinguished guests (see on ch. ix. 23, 24; also Gen. xliii. 34). 6. her adversary also provoked her sore [רִיבָהּ, her rival]. The conduct of Peninnah was most unbecoming. But domestic broils in the houses of polygamists are of frequent occurrence, and the most fruitful cause of them has always been jealousy of the husband's superior affection, as in this case of Hannah. 'Disagreements frequently arise also from jealousy about offspring: the wife who has no children (cf. Gen. xxx. 1), or who has only daughters, looks with hatred and envy on the mother rejoicing over an infant boy; and I

8 therefore she wept, and did not eat. Then said Elkanah her husband to her, Hannah, why weepest thou? and why eatest thou not? and why is thy heart grieved? *am* not I ⁹ better to thee than ten sons?

9 So Hannah rose up after they had eaten in Shiloh, and after they had drunk. Now Eli the priest sat upon a seat by a post of ^h the temple of the LORD. And ⁱ she *was* ⁵ in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the LORD, and wept sore. And she ^j vowed a vow, and said, O LORD of hosts, if thou wilt indeed ^k look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and ^l remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid ⁶ a man child, then I will give him unto the LORD all the days of his life, and ^m there shall no razor come upon his head.

12 And it came to pass, as she ⁷ continued praying before the LORD, that Eli marked her mouth. Now Hannah, she spake in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard: therefore Eli thought she had been drunken. And Eli said unto her, How long wilt thou be drunken? ¹⁴ put away thy wine from thee. And Hannah answered and said, No, my lord; I *am* a woman ⁸ of a sorrowful spirit: I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but have ⁿ poured out my soul before the LORD. Count not thine handmaid for a daughter of ^o Belial: for out of the abundance of my ⁹ complaint and grief have I spoken hitherto. Then Eli answered and said, ^p Go in peace: and ^q the God of Israel grant *thee* thy petition that thou hast asked of him. And she said, ^r Let thine handmaid find grace in thy sight. So the woman went ^s her way, and did eat, and her countenance was no more *sad*.

19 And they rose up in the morning early, and worshipped before the LORD, and returned, and came to their house to Ramah: and Elkanah knew Hannah his wife; and the ^t LORD remembered her. Wherefore it came to pass, ¹⁰ when the time was come about after Hannah had conceived, that she bare a son, and called his name ¹¹ Samuel, *saying*, Because I have asked him of the LORD.

21 And the man Elkanah, and all his house, went up to offer unto the LORD the yearly sacrifice, and his vow. But Hannah went not up; for she said unto her husband, *I will not go up until the child be weaned,*

B. C. 1171.

⁹ Ruth 4. 15.^h ch 3. 3.ⁱ Job 7. 11.

Job 10. 1.

⁶ bitter of soul.

Num 31. 3.

^j Gen. 23. 20.

Num. 21. 2.

^k Gen 29. 32.

Ex. 4. 31.

² Sam. 16. 12.^l Gen. 8. 1.

Gen. 33. 22.

Ps. 132. 1, 2.

⁶ seed of men.^m Num 6. 5.⁷ multiplied to pray.⁸ hard of spirit.ⁿ Ps. 62. 8.^o 2 Sam. 16. 17.⁹ Or, meditation.^p ch. 25. 35.

Judg 15. 6.

Luke 8. 43.

^q Ps. 20. 4. 5.^r Gen. 33. 15.

Ruth 2. 13.

⁶ Eccl. 9. 7.

John 16. 24.

^t Gen. 30. 22.¹⁰ in revolution of days.¹¹ That is, Asked of God

can fully realize the passionate despair of Hannah when provoked by Peninnah' (*Rogers's 'Domestic Life in Palestine,'* p. 106).

9-18.—HANNAH'S PRAYER.

9. **Eli the priest sat upon a seat by a post of the temple of the Lord** [שֵׁנָה לְעֵלִי, upon the throne, the cathedra, or elevated seat of the high priest; מִצֵּדָה לְעֵלִי, by a door-post of the sanctuary]. The seats of high functionaries were commonly placed close to posts or pillars (cf. 2 Ki. xi. 14, Ezek. xlv. 8). 10. **she (Hannah) . . . prayed . . . 11. And . . . vowed a vow.** Here is a specimen of the intense desire that reigned in the bosoms of the Hebrew women for children. This was the burden of Hannah's prayer; and the strong preference she expressed for a male child originated in her purpose of dedicating him to the tabernacle service. The circumstance of his birth bound him to this; but his residence within the precincts of the sanctuary would have to commence at an earlier age than usual, in consequence of the Nazarite vow. Sterile women in the East to this day perform pilgrimages to holy places, and often make a vow, that, in case they should be blessed with a son, he shall become a monk (see *Joseph Wolff, 'Researches and Missionary Labours,'* p. 492).

12. **Eli marked her mouth.** The suspicion of the aged priest seems to indicate that the vice of intemperance was neither uncommon nor confined

to one sex in those times of disorder. This mistaken impression was immediately removed; and in the words, "God grant," or rather, 'will grant,' was followed by an invocation which, as Hannah regarded it in the light of a prophecy pointing to the accomplishment of her earnest desire, dispelled her sadness, and filled her with confident hope. The character and services of the expected child were sufficiently important to make his birth a fit subject for prophecy.

20.—SAMUEL BORN.

20. **called his name Samuel** [שְׁמוּאֵל (Shemuel, 1 Chr. vi. 33); Septuagint, Σαμουὴλ]—doubtless with her husband's consent. The names of children were given sometimes by the fathers, and sometimes by the mothers (see on Gen. iv. 1, 26; v. 29; xix. 37; xxi. 3); and among the early Hebrews were commonly compound names, one part including the name of God.

21. **the man Elkanah . . . went up to offer . . . his vow.** The solemn expression of his concurrence in Hannah's vow was necessary to make it obligatory, (see on Num. xxx.) 22. **But Hannah went not up.** Men only were obliged to attend the solemn feasts (Exod. xxiii. 17). But Hannah, like other pious women, was in the habit of going, only she deemed it more prudent and becoming to defer her next journey till her son's age would enable her to fulfil her vow. **for she said unto her husband, I will not go up.** These words are

and then I will ^abring him, that he may appear before the LORD, and
23 there ^babide for ever. And ^cElkanah her husband said unto her, Do
what seemeth thee good; tarry until thou have weaned him; ^donly the
LORD establish his word. So the woman abode, and gave her son suck
until she weaned him.

24 And when she had weaned him, she took ^ehim up with her, with three
bullocks, and one ephah of flour, and a bottle of wine, and brought him
25 unto the house of the LORD in Shiloh: and the child *was* young. And
26 they slew a bullock, and brought the child to Eli. And she said, Oh
my lord, as thy soul liveth, my lord, I *am* the woman that stood by thee
27 here, praying unto the LORD. For ^fthis child I prayed; and the LORD
28 hath given me my petition which I asked of him: therefore also I have
^glent him to the LORD; as long as he liveth ^hhe shall be lent to the
LORD. And he worshipped the LORD there.

2 AND Hannah ^aprayed, and said,

^bMy heart rejoiceth in the LORD;—mine horn is exalted in the LORD;
My mouth is enlarged over mine enemies;
Because ^cI rejoice in thy salvation.

2 *There* ^dis none holy as the LORD:—for *there is* ^enone besides thee;
Neither *is there* any rock like our God.

3 Talk no more so exceeding proudly;

^fLet not ^garrogancy come out of your mouth:

For the LORD *is* a God of knowledge,
And by him actions are weighed.

B. C. 1171.

^a Luke 2. 22.

^b ch. 2. 11.

^c Num. 30. 7.

^d 2 Sam. 7. 25.

^e Deut. 12. 5.

^f Matt. 7. 7.

^g Or,

returned

him, whom

I have ob-

tained by

petition,

to the

LORD.

^h Or, he

whom I

have ob-

tained by

petition

shall be

returned

CHAP. 2.

^a Phil. 4. 6.

^b Luke 1. 46.

^c Ps. 13. 5.

^d Ex. 15. 11.

^e Deut. 4. 35.

^f Ps. 73. 25.

^g Mal. 3. 13.

^h hard.

supplemented by our translators. The Hebrew original might be rendered, as the Syriac version does render it, 'She said unto her husband, When the child is weaned, then I will bring him,' &c. 23. Elkanah . . . said . . . only the LORD establish his word [עֲשֵׂה לִי מִשְׁפָּט]—his matter or thing; viz., the business concerning the child involved in thy vow. So the woman abode, and gave her son suck until she weaned him. This might be after he had attained his third year (see on Gen. xxi. 8).

24. She took him up with her, with three bullocks [שְׁלֹשָׁה בָּקָרִים], with bullocks (a word used, with few exceptions, only of bullocks for sacrifice); Septuagint, ἐν μέσῳ θριπίζοντι, with a bullock or calf of three years old, which is probably the true rendering (cf. v. 25). This, including the other articles enumerated here, constituted [שְׁלֹשָׁה] the Khagigah, a festive thank offering made by families or private individuals in connection with the passover, but distinct from the appointed public offerings of the sanctuary. These private sacrifices or freewill offerings were often connected with the public festivals, both in honour of the sacred season and for the sake of convenience (ch. ii. 12-16, 19; Num. x. 10; Deut. xiv. 26; xvi. 11, 14). They might be eaten in any clean place within the city (Lev. x. 14; Deut. xvi. 11, 14), but only by those who were ceremonially clean (Num. ix. 10-13; xviii. 11, 13; 2 Chr. xxx. 18; John xi. 55; cf. Josephus, 'Jewish Wars,' b. vi., ch. ix., sec. 3). 26. And she said, Oh my lord [אֲדֹנָי]; Septuagint, κύριε, sir), as thy soul liveth—a strong asseveration in familiar use among the Hebrews (ch. xvii. 55; xx. 3; cf. Gen. xlii. 15), and employed by Hannah on this occasion to recall to the remembrance of the aged priest an incident of some years before, in which she was the principal actor. 28. Therefore also I have lent him to the Lord [וְעַתָּה אֶשְׂאֵלֶיךָ ה']—I have not lent him for a time, to be recalled, but given him (cf. Exod. xii.

36). he shall be lent to the Lord—i. e., given as asked for. And he worshipped . . . there—viz., the child Samuel, who was at an age capable of some external service; otherwise he must have been an incumbrance and a burden (cf. ii. 11).

CHAP. II. 1-11.—HANNAH'S SONG IN THANKFULNESS TO GOD.

1. Hannah prayed, and said. Praise and prayer are inseparably conjoined in Scripture (Col. iv. 2; 1 Tim. ii. 1). This beautiful song was her tribute of thanks for the divine goodness in answering her petition.

mine horn is exalted in the Lord [קַרְנִי]; Septuagint, κέρας μου. Allusion is commonly supposed to be here made to a peculiarity in the dress of Eastern females, still to be found in the districts about Lebanon, which seems to have obtained anciently among the Israelite women, that of wearing a tin or silver horn on the forehead, on which their veil is suspended. Wives who have no children wear it projecting in an oblique direction; while those who become mothers forthwith raise it a few inches higher, inclining towards the perpendicular; and by this slight but observable change in their head-dress make known wherever they go the maternal character which they now bear. This view of the origin of the custom, however, has been called in question; and strong proofs are adduced to show that, as anciently used, it was totally different from that worn by the Druses and the Maronites in modern Syria. It was the recognized symbol of power and strength before the Israelites entered into the promised land (Deut. xxxiii. 17); it was used by men as well as women; and there is a beauty and dignity in all the Scripture allusions to it which are totally inapplicable to the unnatural and ungraceful head-dress of the Druse females. Moreover, the term by which the Druse horn is designated is 'tantûr,' the head-covering; whereas the Hebrew 'keren' has no reference to the head (see Osborn's 'Palestine, Past and Present,' pp. 86, 87).

- 4 The bows of the mighty men *are* broken,
And they that stumbled are girded with strength.
- 5 *They^q that were* full have hired out themselves for bread;
And *they that were* hungry ceased:—so that ^hthe barren hath born seven;
And ⁱshe that hath many children is waxed feeble.
- 6 The ^jLORD killeth, and maketh alive:
He bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up.
- 7 The LORD ^kmaketh poor, and maketh rich:
^lHe bringeth low, and lifteth up.
- 8 He ^mraiseth up the poor out of the dust,
And lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill,
ⁿTo set *them* among princes,
And to make them inherit the throne of glory:
For the ^opillars of the earth *are* the LORD's,
And he hath set the world upon them.
- 9 He ^pwill keep the feet of his saints,
And the wicked shall be silent in darkness;
For by ^qstrength shall no man prevail.
- 10 The adversaries of the LORD shall be broken to pieces;
Out of heaven shall he thunder upon them:
^rThe LORD shall judge the ends of the earth;
And he shall give strength unto his king,
And exalt the horn of his anointed.

B. C. 1166.

^o Luke 1. 53.
^h Ps. 113. 9.
ⁱ Isa. 54. 1.
Gal. 4. 27.
^j Job 5. 18.
Hos. 6. 1.
John 5. 25-29.
John 11. 25.
^k Job 1. 21.
Job. 5. 11.
Ps. 102. 10.
^l Ps. 75. 7.
Isa. 2. 12.
^m Dan. 4. 17.
Luke 1. 51, 52.
ⁿ Gen. 41. 14, ch. 15. 17.
Job 36. 7.
Jas. 2. 6.
^o Heb. 1. 3.
^p Job 5. 24.
Ps. 37. 23, 21.
Ps. 91. 11.
1 Pet. 1. 5.
^q 1 Sam 11. 6.
^r 1's. 96. 13.

5. *They that were full have hired out themselves for bread* [עָרְבָה]—satisfied, having abundance. *they that were hungry ceased*—*i. e.*, to hunger. *the barren hath born seven*—*i. e.*, many children.

6. *He bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up*—*i. e.*, he reduces to the lowest state of degradation and misery, and restores to prosperity and happiness. 8. *He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill*. This alludes to a form of wretchedness known in the East, and indicating the lowest degree of poverty and humiliation. The dunghill—a pile of horse, cow, or camel offal, heaped up to dry in the sun, and serve as fuel—was and is piled up in the huts of the poor; and sometimes, from necessity, is the haunt of wandering mendicants, who, finding it in some outhouse out of the city, lodge there for want of better accommodation: so that the change that had been made in the social position of Hannah appeared to her grateful heart as auspicious and as great as the elevation of a poor despised beggar to the highest and most dignified rank (see *Harmer*, i., p. 515). *inherit the throne of glory*—*i. e.*, possess seats of honour. *for the pillars of the earth are the Lord's*—*i. e.*, the princes or governors (cf. xiv. 33; Jndg. xx. 2; Zeph. iii. 6, where they are called *corner-stones*: also Jer. i. 18; Rev. iii. 12). *and he hath set the world upon them* [עָלָה]. This is a poetic word,

used to denote the habitable world, or, as some think, the globe. "He hath set the world upon them" would thus mean that the visible world, in its globular form, was built upon or over the earth. We are inclined to take "the world" as used here synonymously with "the earth" in the preceding parallelism, and the import of the whole verse to be this:—"The pillars of the earth are the Lord's"—the rulers of the earth are the Lord's, because He not only created and preserves them, but in His providence raised them to their places of dignity and influence; "and He hath set the world upon them"—*i. e.*, He laid the

government of the world-kingsdoms upon their shoulders. 9. *He will keep the feet of his saints*—a poetical figure, meaning, 'He will preserve them from error or sin.' and *the wicked shall be silent in darkness*—*i. e.*, when reduced to misery, they will see in their degradation a punishment of their misdeeds, and in silent submission only the justice of the divine dispensation. [The Septuagint substitutes for this clause the following:—*διδοὺς εὐχὴν τῷ ἐνχομένῳ, καὶ εὐλόγησεν ἔτη δικαίου*, giving the object of his petition to him that prayeth, He also blessed the years of a righteous man.]

10. *the Lord shall judge the ends of the earth . . . exalt the horn of his anointed*. This is the first place in Scripture where the word "anointed," or Messiah, occurs; and as there was no king in Israel at the time, it seems the best interpretation to refer it as pointing prophetically to Christ. There is, indeed, a remarkable resemblance between the song of Hannah and that of Mary (Luke i. 46); and the language of Hannah, pointing evidently to the same great and ardently-expected event, was as if she had said, 'God shall make the Messiah great and honourable, and cause Him to triumph over all His enemies.' This song, independently of, and apart from, its highly poetical character, contains expressions which, it has been justly remarked, 'savour richly of spiritual religion. Though much earlier than the Psalms, it betokens an advance in such exercises beyond what we should have looked for at such an ancient stage of a dispensation confessedly ruder and grosser than that under which we now live. Joy in the Lord; joy in His salvation; the ascription to Him of unrivalled holiness, of creative power and greatness, of His guardianship over those who fear Him, of such strength as will bear down all opposition, and of a judgment that reaches over the whole earth;—these are the conceptions, couched, too, in adequate language, of a pure and high theology, and might be adopted in the loftiest strains of the most enlightened devotion' (*Chalmers*, 'Daily Scripture Readings').

- 11 And Elkanah went to Ramah to his house. ^s And the child did minister unto the LORD before Eli the priest.
- 12 Now the sons of Eli were 'sons of Belial; " they knew not the LORD.
- 13 And the priest's custom with the people was, that, when any man offered sacrifice, the priest's servant came, while the flesh was in seething, with a flesh-hook of three teeth in his hand; and he struck it into the pan, or kettle, or caldron, or pot; all that the flesh-hook brought up the priest took for himself. So they did in Shiloh unto all the Israelites that came
- 15 thither. Also before they burnt the fat, the priest's servant came, and said to the man that sacrificed, Give flesh to roast for the priest; for he will not have sodden flesh of thee, but raw. And if any man said unto him, Let them not fail to burn the fat ² presently, and then take as much as thy soul desireth; then he would answer him, Nay; but thou shalt
- 17 give it me now: and if not, I will take it by force. Wherefore the sin of the young men was very great ^v before the LORD; for men abhorred ^w the offering of the LORD.
- 18 But Samuel ministered before the LORD, being a child, ^x girded with a
- 19 linen ephod. Moreover his mother made him a little coat, and brought it to him from year to year, when she came up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice. And Eli blessed Elkanah and his wife, and said, The LORD give thee seed of this woman, for the ³ loan which is lent to the
- 21 LORD. And they went unto their own home. And the LORD ^y visited Hannah, so that she conceived, and bare three sons and two daughters. And the child Samuel ^z grew before the LORD.
- 22 Now Eli was very old, and heard all that his sons did unto all Israel; and how they lay with the women that ⁴ assembled at the door of the

B. C. 1165.

- ^s ch. 1. 28,
ch 3. 1
^t Deut 13. 13.
ch. 19. 27.
ch. 15. 17.
Judg. 19, 22.
1 Ki 21. 4, 13.
² 2 Cor. 6. 15.
^u Judg 2. 10,
ch. 3. 7.
Jer. 2. 8.
Jer. 22. 16.
John 8. 55.
John 16. 3.
John 17. 3.
Rom. 1. 29
^v as on the day.
^w Gen. 6. 11.
^x Mal. 2. 8.
Rom 2. 21.
^y Ex. 28. 4.
^z Or.
petition which she asked, etc.
³ G-n. 21. 1.
ch 1. 19, 20.
Luke 1. 65.
⁴ Luke 2. 40.
⁴ assembled by troops.

11. the child did minister unto the Lord before Eli the priest. He must have been engaged in some occupation suited to his tender age, as in playing upon the cymbals, or other instruments of music; in lighting the lamps, or similar easy and interesting services.

12-17.—THE SIN OF ELI'S SONS.

12. Now the sons of Eli were sons of Belial [בְּעִיָּוֹת בְּנֵי, sons of worthlessness (cf. Deut. xiv. 13; Judg. xix. 22; xx. 13, where the phrase occurs in a slightly altered form)]—not only careless and irreligious, but men loose in their actions, and vicious and scandalous in their habits. Though professionally engaged in sacred duties, they were not only strangers to the power of religion in the heart, but they had thrown off its restraints, and even ran, as is often done in similar cases by the sons of eminent ministers, to the opposite extreme of reckless and open profligacy. 13. the priest's custom with the people. When persons wished to present a sacrifice of peace offering on the altar (see on ch. i. 24), the offering was brought in the first instance to the priest; and as the Lord's part was burnt, the parts appropriated respectively to the priests and offerers were to be sodden. But Eli's sons, unsatisfied with the breast and shoulder, which were the perquisites appointed to them by the divine law (Exod. xxix. 27; Lev. vii. 31, 32), not only claimed part of the offerer's share, but rapaciously seized them previous to the sacred ceremony of heaving or waving (see on Lev. vii. 34); and, moreover, committed the additional injustice of taking up with their fork those portions which they preferred, whilst raw, in order to their being roasted. 14. struck it into the . . . caldron. The antiquity and use of the caldron are proved by Job xli. 10, and references in Ezek. xi. 3 (cf. Wilkinson's 'Ancient Egyptians,' ii., p. 380). The most common way, however, of cooking flesh was by roasting or broiling ('Iliad,' i., 560; ii., 480;

'Odyssey,' ii., 383). Pious people were revolted by such rapacious and profane encroachments on the dues of the altar, as well as what should have gone to constitute the family and social feast of the offerer. The truth is, the priests having become haughty, and unwilling in many instances to accept invitations to those feasts, presents of meat were sent to them; and this, though done in courtesy at first, being in course of time established into a right, gave rise to all the rapacious keenness of Eli's sons.

18-26.—SAMUEL'S MINISTRY.

18. But Samuel ministered before the Lord, being a child. This break in the historical notice of Eli's sons was made, not for the purpose of exhibiting a contrast advantageous to the character of Samuel, but of noticing his early services in the outer courts of the tabernacle, and thereby to pave the way for the remarkable prophecy regarding the high priest's family. girded with a linen ephod—a small shoulder-garment or apron, used in the sacred service by the inferior priests and Levites, sometimes also by judges or eminent persons, and hence allowed to Samuel, who, though not a Levite, was devoted to God from his birth. 19. his mother made him a little coat, and brought it to him from year to year. Aware that he could not yet render any useful service to the tabernacle, she undertook the expense of supplying him with wearing apparel. All weaving stuffs, manufacture of cloth, and making of suits were anciently the employment of women. 20. Eli blessed Elkanah and his wife. This blessing, like that which he had formerly pronounced, had a prophetic virtue, which ere long appeared in the increase of Hannah's family (v. 21: the word "visited" is generally significant of a blessing, Gen. xxi.; Exod. xiii. 19; Jer. xv. 15) and the growing qualifications of Samuel for the service of the sanctuary.

22. the women that assembled at the door of

- 23 tabernacle of the congregation. And he said unto them, Why do ye such
 24 things? for ⁵I hear of your evil dealings by all this people. Nay, my
 sons; for *it is* no good report that I hear: ye make the LORD's people ⁶to
 25 transgress. If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him;
 but if a man ⁶sin against the LORD, who shall entreat for him? Notwith-
 standing they hearkened not unto the voice of their father, ^bbecause the
 LORD would slay them.
- 26 And the child Samuel grew on, and was in ^cfavour both with the LORD,
 and also with men.
- 27 And ^dthere came a man of God unto Eli, and said unto him, Thus
 saith the LORD, ^eDid I plainly appear unto the house of thy father, when
 28 they were in Egypt, in Pharaoh's house? And did I ^fchoose him out of
 all the tribes of Israel *to be* my priest, to offer upon mine altar, to burn
 incense, to wear an ephod before me? and ^gdid I give unto the house of
 29 thy father all the offerings made by fire of the children of Israel? Where-
 fore ^hkick ye at my sacrifice and at mine offering, which I have commanded
in my ⁱhabitation; and honourest thy sons above me, to make yourselves
 30 fat with the chiefest of all the offerings of Israel my people? Wherefore
 the LORD God of Israel saith, I said indeed, *that* thy house, and the house
 of thy father, should walk before me for ever: but now the LORD saith,
^jBe it far from me; for them that honour me ^kI will honour, and ^lthey
 31 that despise me shall be lightly esteemed. Behold, ^mthe days come, that
 I will cut off thine arm, and the arm of thy father's house, that there

B. C. 1165.
⁵ Or, I hear evil words of you.
⁶ Or, to cry out.
^a Num. 15. 30.
^b Deut. 2. 30.
^c Fro. 15. 10.
^d Fro 3. 4.
^e 1 Kl 13. 1.
^f Ex. 4. 14.
^g Ex. 23. 1.
^h Lev. 2. 3.
ⁱ Deut. 32. 13.
^j Mal. 1. 12.
^k Deut. 12. 5.
^l Josh. 18. 1.
^m 2 Chr. 15. 2.
ⁿ Jer. 18. 9.
^o Ps. 18. 20.
^p Ps. 91. 14.
^q John 5. 44.
^r John 12. 23.
^s 1 Pet. 1. 7.
^t Num. 11. 20.
^u 2 Sam. 12. 9, 10.
^v Mal. 2. 9.
^w ch. 4. 11.

the tabernacle [בְּמִשְׁכַּן אֱלֹהִים, that assembled at the door of the congregation as a regularly-organized band of attendants]. This was an institution of holy women of a strictly ascetic order, who had relinquished worldly cares and devoted themselves to the Lord—an institution which continued from the age of Moses (see on Exod. xxxviii. 8) down to the time of Christ (Luke ii. 37) (*Hengstenberg*, 'Genuineness of the Pentateuch,' ii., pp. 110, 111). Eli was on the whole a good man, but unhappy in the moral and religious training of his family. He erred on the side of parental indulgence; and though he reprimanded them (see on Dent. xxi. 18-21), yet, from fear or indolence, shrunk from laying on them the restraints, or subjecting them to the discipline, their gross delinquencies called for. In his judicial capacity he winked at their flagrant acts of maladministration, and suffered them to make reckless encroachments on the constitution, by which the most serious injuries were inflicted both on the rights of the people and the laws of God. 25. they hearkened not unto the voice of their father, because (it should be *therefore*) the Lord would slay them. It was not God's pre-ordination, but their own wilful and impenitent disobedience, which was the cause of their destruction.

27. And there came a man of God unto Eli (see on Judg. vi. 8), and said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Did I plainly appear, &c. [בְּגִלְיָי]. The interrogative particle *he* is used here in the same sense as *halo*. 'Did I not plainly appear unto the house of thy father?'—viz., Aaron, his ancestor, the founder of his father's house (cf. 2 Sam. xxiii. 17, where our translators give it this negative signification). 28. did I choose him out of all the tribes of Israel to be my priest—(see on Exod. xxviii.) 29. Wherefore kick ye at my sacrifice and at mine offering?—viz., by tolerating the irreverent and profane behaviour of your sons, both on common occasions and in the discharge of the priestly functions, so that

the sacred rites were exposed to public contempt, and the cherished feelings of devout worshippers outraged. 30. I said indeed, *that* thy house, and the house of thy father, should walk before me for ever—(see on Exod. xxviii. 43; xxix. 9.) It is true that this promise was made to Aaron and his house generally, and was verified by the permanent possession of the priestly dignity by his descendants during the subsistence of the Jewish dispensation. The bestowment of that honour upon Phinehas and his descendants (Num. xxvi. 12) was in token of the Divine approval of his holy zeal on a memorable occasion, and the continuance of the privilege in that elder branch of the Aaronic family depended on the condition, plainly understood, of their unbroken fidelity in their office. That they had been guilty of some heinous offence, which involved a forfeiture of their sacerdotal status, is evident, though no mention of it occurs in Scripture, from the fact that the priesthood was transferred to the younger branch of Aaron's house; and how it was declared that, in consequence of the flagrant dereliction of duty on the part of Eli, it should be withdrawn from the line of Ithamar (Lev. x. 1, 2, 12), and reverted to that of Eleazar. 31. Behold, the days come, that I will cut off thine arm, and the arm of thy father's house [יָדְךָ, the arm; also strength, power; and hence the phrase, 'to cut off,' or 'break' one's arm, is equivalent to destroy his power (cf. Job xxii. 9; xxxviii. 15; Ps. x. 15; xxxvii. 17)]. The "arm" of Eli was either his priestly pre-eminence or his children, to whom the tenor of the subsequent context evidently points (cf. Gen. xlix. 3; Deut. xxi. 17; Ps. cxviii. 4, 5). [The Septuagint takes it in this latter sense: for, having apparently read *נְדָר*, seed, they render the clause, *εξολοθρευσω το σπέρμα σου και το σπέρμα οικου*; and so also the Chaldee version, 'I will cut off the strength of thy seed.'] Eli was the first in his branch of the family who was made high priest (*Josephus*, b. viii., ch. i., sec. 3). This judgment did not fall upon Eli's house im-

32 shall not be an old man in thine house. And thou shalt see ⁷an enemy
in my habitation, in all *the wealth* which God shall give Israel: and there
 33 shall not be an ⁸old man in thine house for ever. And the man of thine,
whom I shall not cut off from mine altar, *shall be* to consume thine eyes,
 and to grieve thine heart: and all the increase of thine house shall die
 34 ⁹in the flower of their age. And this *shall be* a sign unto thee, that shall
 come upon thy two sons, on Hophni and Phinehas; in one day they shall
 35 die both of them. And I will raise me up a faithful priest, *that* shall do
 according to *that* which *is* in mine heart and in my mind: and I will
 build him a sure house; and he shall walk before mine Anointed for ever.
 36 And it shall come to pass, *that* every one that is left in thine house shall
 come *and* crouch to him for a piece of silver and a morsel of bread, and
 shall say, ⁹Put me, I pray thee, into ¹⁰one of the priest's offices, that I
 may eat a piece of bread.

B. C. 1165.

⁷ Or, the affliction of the tabernacle, for all the wealth which God would have given Israel.
⁸ Zech. 8. 4.
⁹ men.
⁹ Jcin.
¹⁰ Or, somewhat ab ut the priest-hood.

mediately, but after the lapse of a considerable time; for his grandson, Ahitub (1 Sam. xiv. 3), and Abiathar (1 Ki. i. 23; ii. 26), Ahitub's grandson, successively held the office of high priest, that there shall not be an old man in thine house. So much importance has always in the East been attached to old age, that it would be felt to be a great calamity, and sensibly lower the respectability of any family which could boast of few or no old men. Or, perhaps, as the people are taught universally to connect age with respectability and honour, the meaning of the words may be only this, not only that all the family should die comparatively young, but that they should die without public respect. The prediction of this prophet was fully confirmed by the afflictions, degradation, poverty, and many untimely deaths with which the house of Eli was visited after this announcement (ch. iv. 2; xiv. 3; xxii. 18-23; 1 Ki. ii. 27; 1 Chr. xxiv. 4: cf. Prov. xv. 10: see *Pyé Smith's* 'Scripture Testimony,' vol. ii., pt. i., 76). 32. And thou shalt see an enemy in my habitation, in all the wealth which God shall give Israel. Eli's family were not thrust out from the priesthood till the accession of Solomon, which he did not live to see. The margin of the English Bible has, 'And thou shalt see the affliction of the tabernacle, for all the wealth which God would give Israel.' Agreeably to which announcement Eli did see the tabernacle bereft of the ark, which was his glory, and captured by the Philistines (ch. iv. 4, 11, 22). [*Gesenius* takes יָרֵךְ in the accusative; and the translation would then be, 'thou shalt see straitness (calamity) at home (*i. e.*, in the land) in every respect in which God hath prospered Israel.'] The Septuagint omits this verse entirely. 33. And the man of thine, whom I shall not cut off from mine altar, &c.—*i. e.*, those of your descendants who shall be permitted to perform official duties in the sanctuary will be so degraded and miserable that you would be overwhelmed with grief were you to be a living witness of their distress (cf. Jer. xxxi. 13). and all the increase of thine house (*i. e.*, all thy children) shall die in the flower of their age [עַלְפָּרִי , men]—say about thirty, the legal age for admission into the full discharge of the priestly functions (Num. iv. 3). 34. And this shall be a sign unto thee. It was not unusual for the prophets to foretell the occurrence of some remarkable event which was soon to happen, that its being an *accomplished fact* might be a "sign" or pledge of the certainty of their predictions as to the remote future (cf. ch. x. 7; 1 Ki. xiii. 3; 2 Ki. xix. 29; Isa. vii. 2; Jer. xiv. 29; Matt. xxi. 1-3; Luke xix. 20-34). Hophni [חֹפְנִי , fighter; Septuagint, 'Οφνι] and Phinehas

[פִּינְחָס , mouth of brass; Septuagint, Φινέας]; in one day they shall die both of them—(see on ch. iv. 2.) 35. I will raise me up a faithful priest. Although not expressed, it is plainly implied that this priest should be in another line, which was fulfilled in the person of Zadok, who was eminent for his fidelity both to God and to the king (1 Ki. ii. 27, 35; 1 Chr. xxix. 22). and I will build him a sure house—*i. e.*, give him a numerous posterity (cf. Exod. i. 21; 2 Sam. vii. 2) [the Septuagint renders, $\text{οικοδομήσω αὐτῷ οἶκον πιστόν}$], and ratify the covenant of a perpetual priesthood formerly made with the house of Aaron (Num. xxv. 13: cf. Ezek. xliv. 15). and he shall walk before mine Anointed for ever [יִשְׁכַּחֲמֵךְ ; Septuagint, $\text{ἐνώπιον χριστοῦ μου}$]. The kings of Israel were, from the time of their consecration, called 'the Lord's anointed.' In this view the permanent elevation to the supreme power, to be conferred by the prophets' unction above that of the high priesthood, must be considered as announced to Eli by the man of God, though it was reserved for David to be informed that this awful dignity should attain an indefinite duration in his family, and should be connected with the final establishment of Israel in a state of peace and happiness. But as the high priest is never said to walk before the kings of Judah or Israel, the phrase must be considered here as = to walking before the Lord—*viz.*, the Messiah (cf. Acts vii. 35; 1 Cor. x. 4; Heb. iii. 3-6, with Mal. iii. 1). 36. every one that is left . . . shall . . . crouch to him for a piece of silver, and a morsel of bread. What a striking contrast to the superabundance enjoyed by Eli's two sons! The punishment was suited to the nature of the sin. Put me, I pray thee, into one of the priest's offices—*viz.*, some inferior or menial situation (cf. Ezek. xliv. 10, 11). It has been objected that there is an inconsistency in these statements; for if the posterity of Eli, though deprived of the high priesthood, should still be employed in the common offices of the priests, they would have a legal right to the abundant provision with which the tribe of Levi was endowed. But the answer is, that a deep-seated feeling of jealousy and rancour, as appears both from the sacred history and that of *Josephus*, long existed between the rival houses of Eleazar and Ithamar; so that, when the elder branch was restored to the ascendancy, some of the high priests of that line might exercise such tyranny and violence towards those who had been so long their competitors as to deprive them of the offices they held; or they might exhibit such a spirit of insubordination and enmity to the occupiers of the high priesthood that they forfeited their

3 AND the child Samuel ministered unto the LORD before Eli. And
 4 the word of the LORD was precious in those days; *there was no open*
 5 vision. And it came to pass at that time, when Eli *was* laid down in
 6 his place, and his eyes began to wax dim, *that* he could not see; and
 7 ere ^b the lamp of God went out in the temple of the LORD, where
 8 the ark of God *was*, and Samuel was laid down to sleep; that the
 9 LORD called Samuel: and he answered, Here *am* I. And he ran
 10 unto Eli, and said, Here *am* I; for thou calledst me. And he said,
 11 I called not; lie down again. And he went and lay down. And the
 12 LORD called yet again, Samuel. And Samuel arose and went to Eli,
 13 and said, Here *am* I; for thou didst call me. And he answered, I
 14 called not, my son; lie down again. ¹ Now Samuel ^c did not yet know
 15 the LORD, neither was the word of the LORD yet revealed unto him.
 16 And the LORD called Samuel again the third time. And he arose and
 17 went to Eli, and said, Here *am* I; for thou didst call me. And Eli
 18 perceived that the LORD had called the child. Therefore Eli said unto
 19 Samuel, Go, lie down: and it shall be, if he call thee, that thou shalt
 20 say, Speak, LORD; for thy servant heareth. So Samuel went and lay
 21 down in his place. And the LORD came, and stood, and called as at
 22 other times, Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel answered, ^d Speak; for thy
 23 servant heareth.

B. C. 1141.

CHAP. 3.
 a 1's. 74. 9.
 Isa. 13. 12.
 Amos 8. 11.
 12.
 b Ex. 27. 21.
 Ex. 30. 7, 8.
 Lev. 24. 3.
 2 Chr. 13.
 11.
 1 Or. Thus
 did
 Samuel
 before he
 knew the
 LORD, and
 before the
 word of
 the LORD
 was
 revealed
 unto him.
 c Jer. 9. 24.
 Acts 19. 2.
 d Ps. 55. 8.
 Act's 9. 6.

privileges. In either case they might be compelled by the pressure of poverty to "crouch for a piece of silver and a morsel of bread."

CHAP. III. 1-10. — THE LORD APPEARS TO SAMUEL IN A VISION.

1. the child Samuel ministered unto the Lord before Eli. His ministry consisted, of course, of such duties in or about the sanctuary as were suited to his age, which is supposed now to have been about twelve years. Whether the office had been specially assigned him, or it arose from the interest inspired by the story of his birth, Eli kept him also as his immediate attendant (*Michaelis*); and he resided not in the sanctuary, but in one of the tents or apartments around it, assigned for the accommodation of the priests and Levites, his being near to that of the high priest, who seems to have been particularly attached to the boy. the word of the Lord was precious in those days [רָצָה], rare, and therefore precious. "In those days" implies a contrast between the scarcity of that period and the fulness of revelation at other times, either before or after; and in point of fact only two prophets are mentioned as having appeared during the whole administration of the judges (Judg. iv. 4; vi. 8). there was no open vision [רָצָה], spread abroad, common; רָצָה, a vision from God respecting future events, a prophetic vision (Ps. lxxxix. 19; Lam. ii. 6; Mic. iii. 6; Dan. i. 17)—words communicated to a person in a dream (Isa. xxix. 7). So powerful was the impression made upon the mind by an illusion of the senses, that Samuel thought the sound proceeded from an external voice. And it is evident that the historian considered the voice was wholly the effect of an internal vision, both from the manner in which he introduces the narrative and from v. 15. "There was no open vision" [Septuagint, *ὅτι ἦν θάσις διαστρέλλουσα*—no publicly recognized prophet whom the people could consult, and from whom they might learn the will of God. There must have been certain indubitable evidences by which a communication from heaven could be distinguished. Eli knew them, for he may have received them, though not so frequently as is implied in the idea of an "open vision." 3. ere the lamp of God went out in the temple of the

Lord. The "temple" seems to have become the established designation of the tabernacle, and the time indicated was towards the morning twilight, as the lamps were extinguished at sunrise (see on Exod. xxvii. 20, 21; Lev. xxiv. 2, 3; 2 Chr. xiii. 11).

"Lamp" [נֵר], the candelabrum, or golden candlestick; Septuagint, *ὁ λύχνος τοῦ θεοῦ πρὶν ἐπικεκοσμηθῆναι*. *Kimchi* gives the following gloss upon the words,—If this be spoken concerning the lamps in the candlestick, the communication was made to Samuel *somewhat before day*; for the lamps burnt from even till morning; yet did they sometimes some of them go out in the night. They put oil into them by such a measure as should keep them burning from even till morning, and many times they did burn till morning; and they always found the western lamp burning. Now it is said that this prophecy came to Samuel "before the lamp went out"—i. e., while it was not yet light, about the time of cock-crowing; for it is said afterwards that Samuel lay till morning. Allegorically, it speaks of the lamp of prophecy: as it is said, the sun arises and the sun sets: before the holy, blessed God cause the sun of one righteous to set, he causeth that of another righteous man to rise. Before Moses' sun set, Joshua's sun arose; before Eli's sun set, Samuel's sun arose; and this is that which is said, "before the lamp of God went out." 5. he ran unto Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou calledst me. It is evident that his sleeping chamber was close to that of the aged high priest, and that he was accustomed to be called during the night. 7. Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord—i. e., by the extraordinary prophetic revelations of His Spirit. The three successive calls addressed to the boy convinced Eli, there being no human person in the chamber, of the Divine character of the speaker; and he therefore exhorted the child to give a reverential attention to the message. 10. the Lord came, and stood. In the previous calls the voice appeared to proceed from a distance; now the sound was as if the speaker stood beside him, and remained in the same close contiguity until the communication was finished. Samuel, Samuel. The repetition of his name was intended to arrest the boy's attention.

11 And the LORD said to Samuel, Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, at
 12 which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle. In that
 day I will perform against Eli all ^ethings which I have spoken concerning
 13 his house: ²when I begin, I will also make an end. ³For I have told him
 that I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth;
 because ^fhis sons made themselves ⁴vile, and he ⁵restrained them not.
 14 And therefore I have sworn unto the house of Eli, that the iniquity of
 Eli's house shall ^gnot be purged with sacrifice nor offering for ever.
 15 And Samuel lay until the morning, and opened the doors of the house
 16 of the LORD. And Samuel feared to show Eli the vision. Then Eli called
 17 Samuel, and said, Samuel, my son. And he answered, Here am I. And
 he said, What is the thing that the LORD hath said unto thee? I pray
 thee hide it not from me: ^hGod do so to thee, and ⁶more also, if thou
 18 hide any ⁷thing from me of all the things that he said unto thee. And
 Samuel told him ⁸every whit, and hid nothing from him. And he said,
ⁱIt is the LORD: let him do what seemeth him good.
 19 And Samuel grew, and ^jthe LORD was with him, ^kand did let none of
 20 his words fall to the ground. And all Israel, from Dan even to Beer-sheba,
 21 knew that Samuel was ⁹established to be a prophet of the LORD. And
 the LORD appeared again in Shiloh: for the LORD revealed himself to

B. C. 1111.
^a ch. 2. 50.
² beginning and ending.
³ Or, And I will tell him.
^f ch. 2. 12.
⁴ Or, accursed.
⁵ frowned not upon them.
^g Num 15. 20.
^h Ruth 1. 17.
⁶ so add.
⁷ Or, word.
⁸ all the things, or, words.
ⁱ Job 1. 21.
^j Gen. 31. 2.
^k ch. 8. 6.
⁹ Or, faithful.

11. I will do a thing in Israel. The reference is to the national disasters detailed in the following chapter, and the awful nature of which would strike with astonishment and horror all who should hear of them. the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle. This phrase was a familiar and favourite mode of speaking amongst the Hebrews (cf. 2 Ki. xxi. 12; Jer. xix. 3). 12. In that day I will perform against Eli all things which I have spoken concerning his house—i. e., at the time appointed; and in the course of Providence, which was between twenty and thirty years of this prophetic denunciation, the judgments threatened by the man of God (ch. ii. 27) began to be inflicted. when I begin, I will also make an end. Judgment being God's strange work, He long delays it, and in the exercise of long-suffering patience affords ample time for repentance. But when the period of grace expires, the judicial infliction commences, and will be carried on till the vial of Divine wrath is emptied. 13. I will judge his house—i. e., I will punish (cf. Gen. xv. 14) his posterity (cf. 2 Sam. vii. 2; 1 Ki. xxi. 29). for ever—or, for a long time, as the phrase generally signifies in the early historical books. for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile [אֲשֶׁר יָדָעוּ בְּנָיָו כִּי יָדָעוּ לְמַעַן יִשְׁפֹּטוּ אֱלֹהִים בְּבָנָיו]—because he knew that his sons were bringing a curse upon themselves [the verb is used reflectively with ?]. and he restrained them not [וְלֹא נָקְרָה בָּם]—and he rebuked them not. 14. therefore I have sworn—or, I do swear concerning the house of Eli. 15. Samuel lay until the morning, and opened the doors of the house of the Lord [בְּלִיְלָיִם, doors]. At first the tabernacle was closed simply by [בְּצִפְרָי] a hanging drawn across (Exod. xxxvi. 37). But in the Holy Land it was furnished with doors. And Samuel feared to show Eli the vision [וְשָׁמַע לֹא יָדַע לְעֵלִי]—This word signifies a vision from God (Num. xii. 6; Ezek. i. 1; Dan. x. 7) in the night season (Gen. xvi. 2). 'It is always used,' says *Hengstenberg*, 'of internal visions; sights. When the indirect and incidental references to the subjective character of the incident cannot come into notice, then it is certain that the author, without further

observation, narrates internal incidents in the series of the external;' and the sacred historian does so in this context by representing 'the Lord as coming, and standing, and calling' (v. 10). 16. Then Eli called Samuel. The burden of this communication to Samuel was an extraordinary premonition of the judgments that impending over Eli's house; and the aged priest, having drawn the painful secret from the simple child, exclaimed, "It is the Lord; let him do what seemeth to him good." Such is the spirit of meek and un murmuring submission in which we ought to receive the dispensations of God, however severe and afflictive. But, in order to form a right estimate of Eli's language and conduct on this occasion, we must consider the overwhelming accumulation of judgments denounced against his person, his sons, his descendants, his altar, and nation. With such a threatening prospect before him, his piety and meekness were wonderful. In his personal character he seems to have been a good man, but his relative conduct was flagrantly bad; and though his misfortunes claim our sympathy, it is impossible to approve or defend the weak and unfaithful course which, in the retributive justice of God, brought these adversities upon him. 19. And Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him—i. e., he advanced not only in age and physical stature, but in the acquirements of wisdom and piety; and the spiritual gifts with which he was so eminently endowed, showing as they did that he enjoyed the favour and blessing of God, secured him in consequence great influence with the people. and did let none of his words fall to the ground—a metaphor derived from water being spilt on the ground (cf. Josh. xxi. 45; Esth. vi. 10), and signifying that none of Samuel's judgments were falsified by the event, but that all his predictions were fulfilled. 20. all Israel, from Dan even to Beer-sheba, knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the Lord [וְכָל יִשְׂרָאֵל יָדָעוּ כִּי שָׁמַע נָבִיא לַיהוָה]—accredited, verified for a prophet of the Lord. [נָבִיא, a prophet (see on ch. ix. 9; cf. Gen. xx. 7; Exod. vii. 1; Num. xi. 25-29).] 21. And the Lord appeared again in Shiloh [וַיֵּרָא יְהוָה לְשָׁמַע בְּשִׁילוֹ], and the Lord added to the seeing—i. e., Jehovah (the revealer of God to man) continued to appear to

4 Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the LORD. AND the word of Samuel¹ came to all Israel.

Now Israel went out against the Philistines to battle, and pitched² beside Eben-ezer: and the Philistines pitched in Aphek. And the Philistines put themselves in array against Israel: and when³ they joined battle, Israel was smitten before the Philistines: and they slew of⁴ the army in the field about four thousand men.

3 And when the people were come into the camp, the elders of Israel said, Wherefore hath the LORD smitten us to-day before the Philistines? Let us⁴ fetch the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of Shiloh unto us, that, when it cometh among us, it may save us out of the hand of our enemies.

4 So the people sent to Shiloh, that they might bring from thence the ark of the covenant of the LORD of hosts,⁵ which dwelleth between⁶ the cherubim: and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were there with the ark of the covenant of God.

5 And when the ark of the covenant of the LORD came into the camp, all Israel shouted with a great shout, so that the earth rang again.

B. C. 1141.

CHAP. 4.

¹ was, or, came to pass.
ch. 3. 11.
^a Gen. 28. 48.
ch. 5. 1.
ch. 7. 12.
² the battle was spread
³ the array.
⁴ take unto us.
^b 2 Sam. 6. 2.
2 Ki. 19. 15.
Ps. 10. 1.
Ps. 91. 1.
^c Ex. 25. 15-22.
Num. 7. 82.

Samuel in Shiloh; viz., in visions, or by mental revelation; for it deserves notice that the verb here used is that from which *Roeh*, 'the seer,' comes. for the LORD revealed himself to Samuel . . . by the word of the LORD. The ancient Jews understood "the word of the LORD" in a personal sense, (*Paulis's* 'Great Mystery,' part iii.) But the phrase cannot bear this meaning; for in that case the LORD would be said to reveal himself by himself. It must signify His word of command or prophecy.

CHAP. IV. 1-II.—ISRAEL OVERCOME BY THE PHILISTINES.

1. the word of Samuel came to all Israel. The character of Samuel as a prophet was now fully established. The want of an "open vision" was supplied by him, for 'none of his words were let fall to the ground' (ch. iii. 19); and to his residence in Shiloh all the people of Israel repaired, to consult him as an oracle, who, as the medium of receiving the Divine command, or by his gift of a prophet, could inform them what was the mind of God. It is not improbable that the rising influence of the young prophet had alarmed the jealous fears of the Philistines, who, having kept the Israelites in some degree of subjection ever since the death of Samson, were determined, by a further crushing, to prevent the possibility of their being trained by the counsels, and under the leadership, of Samuel to re-assert their national independence. At all events, the Philistines were the aggressors (v. 2): But, on the other hand, the Israelites were rash and inconsiderate in rushing to the field without obtaining the sanction of Samuel as to the war, or having consulted him as to the subsequent measures they took.

Israel went out against the Philistines to battle—i. e., to resist this new incursion. Eben-ezer [עֵבֶן עֶזְרָא] . . . Aphek [אֶפְעַק]. Both words are preceded by the definite article. Aphek, which means 'strength,' 'firmness,' is a name applied to any fort or fastness. There were several Apheks in Palestine. Many consider this Aphek to have occupied the site of the modern village el-Fuleh, the Castellum Foba of the Crusaders, or its neighbour, el-'Afuleh, in the plain of Esdraelon (the valley of Jezreel) (*Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' iii., p. 176; *Wilson's* 'Lands of the Bible,' ii., p. 89; *Drew's* 'Scripture Lands,' part iii.); but the mention of Eben-ezer determines this "Aphek" to be in the south, near the western entrance of

the pass of Beth-horon, and consequently on the borders of the Philistine territory. The first encounter at Aphek being unsuccessful, the Israelites determined to renew the engagement in better circumstances.

3. Let us fetch the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of Shiloh unto us. Strange that they were so blind to the real cause of the disaster, and that they did not discern, in the great and general corruption of religion and morals (ch. ii.; vii. 3; Ps. lxxviii. 58), the reason why the presence and aid of God were not extended to them. Their first measure for restoring the national spirit and energy ought to have been a complete reformation—a universal return to purity of worship and manners. But instead of cherishing a spirit of deep humiliation and sincere repentance—instead of resolving on the abolition of existing abuses and the re-establishing of the pure faith, they adopted what appeared an easier and a speedier course,—they put their trust in ceremonial observances, and doubted not but that the introduction of the ark into the battle-field would ensure their victory. In recommending this extraordinary step, the elders might recollect the confidence it imparted to their ancestors (Num. x. 35; xiv. 44), as well as what had been done at Jericho. But it is more probable that they were influenced by the heathenish ideas of their idolatrous neighbours, who, in order to animate their soldiers and ensure victory, carried the statuettes of their gods in shrines, or their sacred symbols, to their wars, believing that the power of those divinities was inseparably associated with, or residing in, their images. In short, the shout raised in the Hebrew camp, on the arrival of the ark, indicated very plainly the prevalence amongst the Israelites at this time of a belief in national deities, whose influence was local, and whose interest was especially exerted in behalf of the people who adored them. The joy of the Israelites was an emotion springing out of the same superstitious sentiments as the corresponding dismay of their enemies, for they evidently trusted in the material ark instead of in God; and to afford them a convincing though painful proof of their error was the ulterior object of the discipline to which they were now subjected—a discipline by which God, while punishing them for their apostasy by allowing the capture of the ark, had another end in view, that of signally vindicating His supremacy over all the gods of the nations.

6 And when the Philistines heard the noise of the shout, they said, What *meaneth* the noise of this great shout in the camp of the Hebrews? And
 7 they understood that the ark of the LORD was come into the camp. And the Philistines were afraid: for they said, God is come into the camp. And they said, Woe unto us! for there hath not been such a thing
 8 ⁵ heretofore. Woe unto us! who shall deliver us out of the hand of these mighty Gods? these *are* the Gods that smote the Egyptians with
 9 all the plagues in the wilderness. Be ^d strong, and quit yourselves like men, O ye Philistines! that ye be not servants unto the Hebrews, ^e as they have been to you: ⁶ quit yourselves like men, and fight.
 10 And the Philistines fought, ^f and Israel was smitten, and they fled every man into his tent: and there was a very great slaughter; for there fell
 11 of Israel thirty thousand footmen. And ^g the ark of God was taken; ^h and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, ⁷ were slain.
 12 And there ran a man of Benjamin out of the army, and came to Shiloh the same day, with his clothes rent, and ⁱ with earth upon his head.
 13 And when he came, lo, Eli sat upon ^j a seat by the way-side watching: for his heart trembled for the ark of God. And when the man came
 14 into the city, and told *it*, all the city cried out. And when Eli heard the noise of the crying, he said, What *meaneth* the noise of this tumult?
 15 And the man came in hastily, and told Eli. Now Eli was ninety and
 16 eight years old; and his eyes ^s were dim, that he could not see. And the man said unto Eli, I *am* he that came out of the army, and I fled to-day out of the army. And he said, ^k What ⁹ is there done, my son?
 17 And the messenger answered and said, Israel is fled before the Philistines, and there hath been also a great slaughter among the people, and thy two sons also, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead, and the ark of God is

B C. 1141.
 5 yesterday, or the third day.
 d 2 Sam 10. 12.
 1 Chr. 19. 13.
 1 Cor. 16. 13.
 Eph. 6. 10. 11.
 e Deut. 28. 47.
 Judg. 10. 7.
 Judg 13. 1.
 Isa. 14. 2. ch. 12. 9.
 f be men.
 Lev. 26. 17.
 Deut 23. 25.
 Deut 32. 30.
 Ps. 78. 9. 62.
 g ch. 2. 32.
 Ps. 78. 61.
 h Ps. 78. 64.
 i died.
 j Josh. 7. 6.
 2 Sam. 13. 19.
 2 Sam 15. 32.
 Neh. 9. 1.
 Job 2. 12.
 k ch. 1. 9.
 l stood.
 m 2 Sam. 1. 4.
 n Is the thing?

7. God is come into the camp . . . Woe unto us! for there hath not been such a thing heretofore. The ark was always carried by the priests in the van (Num. x. 33; Josh. iii. 14): and, with one solitary exception, when the attack upon the Amalekites and Canaanites was made in spite of an express prohibition of Moses, it was invariably carried with them in their early wars. But when they had become settled in Canaan, and the ark was established in Shiloh, the practice of carrying it to the battle-field had been discontinued, till now that ignorance and superstitious fear revived it. 8. who shall deliver us out of the hands of

these mighty Gods [הַאֱלֹהִים הַגִּבּוֹרִים הָאֵלֶּיךָ]? This word is connected, not with plural verbs only, but with participles, adjectives, and pronouns in the plural; and though frequently translated Gods in our English version, is really and in all respects the same as what in other instances is translated God. Though here rendered "Gods," it is "God" in the preceding verse (cf. *Pye Smith's* 'Scripture Testimony,' i., pp. 379, 380: see 'Introduction').

10. there fell of Israel thirty thousand footmen. The slaughter in ancient warfare seems, from the records of profane as well as sacred history, to have been often immensely greater than in modern times, since the introduction of gunpowder and artillery. And in the nature of the case it must have been, when the soldiers of opposing armies met in close combat, man engaged in mortal strife with man; and when the weapons, too, were tipped with poison, the result could not be otherwise than a fearful carnage. The great numbers, then, of the Israelites who are recorded in this passage, as well as in similar ones, to have fallen in battle, and which have called forth the sneers of the infidels as gross exaggerations, are, from the character of the context, perfectly credible; and

the statements of the sacred historian are not only in the present instance corroborated by the testimony of *Josephus*, but harmonize with the recital of *Herodotus* and other historians, as to the vast mortality that frequently marked the battles of antiquity.

12-22.—ELI HEARING THE TIDINGS.

13. Eli sat upon a seat by the way-side. The aged priest, as a public magistrate, used, in dispensing justice, to seat himself daily in a spacious recess at the entrance gate of the city; and in his intense anxiety to learn the issue of the battle, he took up his usual place as the most convenient for meeting with passers-by. His seat was an official chair, similar to those of the ancient Egyptian judges, richly carved, superbly ornamented, high, and *without a back*. The calamities announced to Samuel as about to fall upon the family of Eli were now inflicted by the death of his two sons, and after his own death, by that of his daughter-in-law, whose infant son received a name that perpetuated the fallen glory of the Church and nation. The public disaster was completed by the capture of the ark, which made God, according to heathen nations, the captive of the victorious Philistines (cf. 2 Chr. xxv. 14). The images of the heathen gods were in the portable shrines they carried with them to the battle; and although the ark had no image, yet God was believed peculiarly to inhabit it, so that the capture of the ark was regarded as the conquest of Him. Poor Eli! he was a good man, in spite of his unhappy weaknesses. So strongly were his sensibilities enlisted on the side of religion, that the news of the capture of the ark proved to him a knell of death; and yet his over-indulgence or sad neglect of his family—the main cause of all the evils that led to its fall—has been recorded as a beacon to warn all heads of Christian families against making ship-

8 taken. And it came to pass, when he made mention of the ark of God, that he fell from off the seat backward by the side of the gate, and his neck brake, and he died; for he was an old man, and heavy. And he had judged Israel forty years.

19 And his daughter-in-law, Phinehas' wife, was with child, *near* ¹⁰ to be delivered: and when she heard the tidings that the ark of God was taken, and that her father-in-law and her husband were dead, she bowed herself and travailed; for her pains ¹¹ came upon her. And about the time of her death ¹ the women that stood by her said unto her, Fear not; for thou hast born a son. But she answered not, ¹² neither did she regard it.

21 And she named the child ¹³ I-chabod, saying, ^m The glory is departed from Israel: because the ark of God was taken, and because of her father-in-law and her husband. And she said, The glory is departed from Israel; for the ark of God is taken.

5 AND the Philistines took the ark of God, and brought it from Eben-ezer unto Ashdod. When the Philistines took the ark of God, they brought it into the house of Dagon, and set it by Dagon. And when they of Ashdod arose early on the morrow, behold, ^a Dagon was ^b fallen

B. C. 1141.
¹⁰ Or, to cry out.
¹¹ were turned.
¹ Gen. 35. 17.
¹² set not her heart
¹³ That is, Where is the glory?
 cr, There is no glory.
 ch 14. 3.
^m Ps. 26. 8.
 Ps 78. 61.
 Jer. 2. 11.
 Hos. 9. 12.
 CHAP. 5.
^a Judg. 10. 23.
^b Isa. 19. 1.
 Isa. 46. 1, 2.
 Nah 1. 14.

wreck on the same rock. 18. he had judged Israel forty years. In the margin of the authorized translation it is stated, 'He seems to have been a judge to do justice only, and that in south-west Israel.' On what grounds this assertion was made does not appear. But it is destitute of foundation; for nowhere are we informed that Eli was invested, as preceding judges, with a merely limited or local jurisdiction,—while his filling the office of high priest gave him an authority and influence over the whole country.

19. his daughter-in-law, Phinehas' wife . . . bowed herself and travailed. While in some parts of the East parturient women anciently gave birth to their offspring in a standing posture (see on Gen. xxv. 26), in others they are accustomed to bring forth kneeling, as is still the custom in Abyssinia (*Ludolph*, 'History of Ethiopia,' i, 15). 21. she named the child I-chabod [אִי־כָבוֹד, unglorious].

CHAP. V. 1, 2.—THE PHILISTINES BRING THE ARK INTO THE HOUSE OF DAGON.

1. Ashdod—or Azotus, one of the five Philistine satrapies, and a place of great strength. That it was always a fortified place is evident from its name, which signifies power, like the Arabic *shedeed*, 'strong' (*Wilkinson* in *Rawlinson's* 'Herodotus'). It was an inland town, thirty-four miles north of Gaza, now called Esdūd. 2. the house of Dagon. Stately temples were erected in honour of this idol, who was the principal deity of the Philistines, but whose worship extended over all Syria, as well as Mesopotamia and Chaldea, his name being found among the Assyrian gods on the cuneiform inscriptions (*Rawlinson*). He was represented under a monstrous combination of a human head, breast, and arms, joined to the belly and tail of a fish. The captured ark was placed in the temple of Dagon, right before this image of the idol. "Dagon" [דָּגוֹן, from דָּג, a fish, and נָ, the abbreviated form of the name of the god]—the maritime Aon, or Oannes, as he was called in Chaldean. 'There is in the British museum an ancient coin which represents Dagon on one side, and a ship on the other. The god has a human head and arms, and the tail of a dolphin. In his right hand he holds a fish, with its head upwards; in his left another, with its head downwards. This ingenious hieroglyphic signifies that in the land over which Aon, the enlightener of men, ruled and guided the sun, it began its

course on land in the east (the *front*), figured by the human forepart, and ended it in the sea in the west (the *back*), figured by the hind part of a maritime creature. It reaches its greatest elevation at the *right hand* of the god—*i. e.*, the south; this is implied by the fish looking upward: and it sank below the horizon at his *left*, the north; this is expressed by the fish going down. Such an emblem must have been designed in a country of which it accurately described the geographical bearings,—one with the continent eastward, and a western sea; and, moreover, for the emblem to be intelligible, it requires that the Oriental mode of reckoning, and which refers the east to the *front*, the west to the *back*, &c., should be customary in the language of the country. These conditions are fulfilled in Palestine alone, in the region of the maritime proto-Phœnicians, where we find the Scriptural Philistines, worshippers of Dagon' (*Corbœux*, 'Journal of Sacred Literature,' Oct., 1852, p. 114). *Bunsen* ('Egypt's Place,' iv., p. 244) gives a totally different view of the Philistine deity. According to him, 'Dagon = Dagan, corn; and the Shephelah, the plain of Philistia, was pre-eminently a wheat-field. Dagon, then, is both linguistically and documentally the god or Zeus of agriculture.' But this view of *Bunsen's* is, like many other of his opinions, paradoxical, and contradicted by history and modern discoveries. The form in which, according to the united testimony of ancient Jewish and heathen writers, the Dagon of Phœnicia and the Philistines was worshipped was a combination of the human figure with that of a fish (*Selden*, 'De Diis Syris; *Kenrick's* 'Phœnicia; *Beyer's* and *Abaranel's* 'Commentaries'). The ancient historian *Berosus* describes ten reigns, filled with accounts of monsters, half men, half fishes, who passed the night in the sea and the day-time on land, prototypes of Dagon (*Cory's* 'Fragments,' p. 30). A sculptured figure of Dagon, the fish god, was found in the palace of Kouyunjik, dressed in Assyrian costume (see plate, *Layard's* 'Nineveh and Babylon,' p. 343), it having been introduced into Chaldea, Assyria, and Babylon by the Phœnician merchants; and his name, as *Rawlinson* states, is frequently met with in the cuneiform inscriptions. set it by Dagon [שָׁתַּתְּ—by the side of, near Dagon; deposited in his temple as a prize of war.

3-5.—DAGON FALLS DOWN.

3. they of Ashdod arose early. They were

upon his face to the earth before the ark of the LORD. And they took
 4 Dagon, and set ^chim in his place again. And when they arose early on
 the morrow morning, behold, Dagon *was* fallen upon his face to the
 ground before the ark of ^dthe LORD; and ^ethe head of Dagon and both
 the palms of his hands *were* cut off upon the threshold; only ¹the stump
 5 of Dagon was left to him. Therefore neither the priests of Dagon, nor
 any that come into Dagon's house, tread ^fon the threshold of Dagon in
 Ashdod unto this day.
 6 But ^gthe hand of the LORD was heavy upon them of Ashdod, and he
^hdestroyed them, and smote them with ⁱemerods, *even* Ashdod and the
 7 coasts thereof. And when the men of Ashdod saw that *it was so*, they
 said, The ark of the God of Israel shall not abide with us: for his hand
 8 is sore upon us, and upon Dagon our god. They sent therefore, and
 gathered all the lords of the Philistines unto them, and said, What shall
 we do with the ark of the God of Israel? And they answered, Let the
 ark of the God of Israel be carried about unto Gath. And they carried
 9 the ark of the God of Israel about *thither*. And it was *so*, that, after
 they had carried it about, ^jthe hand of the LORD was against the city
 with a very great destruction: and ^khe smote the men of the city, both
 small and great, and they had emerods in their secret parts.
 10 Therefore they sent the ark of God to Ekron. And it came to pass, as
 the ark of God came to Ekron, that the Ekronites cried out, saying, ^lThey
 have brought about the ark of the God of Israel to ²us, to slay us and
 11 our people. So they sent and gathered together all the lords of the
 Philistines, and said, Send away the ark of the God of Israel, and let it
 go again to his own place, that it slay ³us not, and our people: for there
 was a deadly destruction throughout all the city; the hand of God was
 12 very heavy there. And the men that died not were smitten with the
 emerods: and ^lthe cry of the city went up to heaven.
 6 AND the ark of the LORD was in the country of the Philistines seven
 2 months. And the Philistines ^ocalled for the priests and the diviners,

B. C. 1141.

^o Isa. 41. 7.
 Isa. 44. 17-20.
^d Isa. 40. 13.
^e Jer. 50. 2.
 Eze. 6. 4, 6.
 Mic. 1. 7.
¹ Or, the fishy part
 The upper part of Dagon resembled a man, and the lower a fish.
^f Zeph. 1. 9.
^g Ex. 9. 3.
 Ps. 32. 4.
 Ps. 75. 8.
 Isa. 31. 3.
 Dan. 4. 37.
 Acts 13. 11.
^h ch. 6. 5.
ⁱ Deut. 23. 27.
 Ps. 78. 61.
^j Deut. 2. 15.
 ch. 7. 13.
 ch. 12. 15.
^k Ps. 78. 66.
² me, to slay me and my
³ me not, and my.
^l Isa. 15. 3.
 CHAP. 6.
^o Gen. 41. 8.
 Ex. 7. 11.
 Dan. 2. 2.

filled with consternation when they found the object of their stupid veneration prostrate before the symbol of the Divine presence. Though set up, it fell again, and lay in a state of complete mutilation. His head and arms, severed from the trunk, were lying in distant and separate places, as if violently cast off, and only [תִּשְׁבָּע] the fishy part remained. The degradation of their idol, though concealed by the priests on the former occasion, was now more manifest and infamous. He lay in the attitude of a vanquished enemy and a suppliant; and this picture of humiliation significantly declared the superiority of the God of Israel. 5. Therefore neither the priests . . . nor any . . . tread on the threshold of Dagon. A superstitious ceremony crept in, and in the providence of God was continued, by which the Philistines contributed to publish this proof of the helplessness of their god. unto this day. The usage continued in practice at the time when this history was written, probably in the later years of Samuel's life.

6.12.—THE PHILISTINES ARE SMITTEN WITH EMERODS.

6. the hand of the Lord was heavy upon them of Ashdod. The presumption of the Ashdodites was punished by a severe judgment that overtook them in the form of a pestilence. smote them with emerods [מַצְרִיחַיִם]—tumors, bleeding piles, hemorrhoids (Ps. lxxviii. 66), in a very aggravated form. As the heathens generally regarded diseases affecting the secret parts of the body as punishments from the gods for trespasses commit-

ted against themselves, the Ashdodites would be the more ready to look upon the prevailing epidemic as demonstrating the anger of God already shown against their idol. 7. The ark of . . . God . . . shall not abide with us. It was removed successively to several of the large towns of the country; but the same pestilence broke out in every place, and raged so fiercely and fatally that the authorities were forced to send the ark back into the land of Israel.

11. they sent—i. e. the magistrates of Ekron. 12. the cry of the city went up to heaven. The disease is attended with acute pain, and it is far from being a rare phenomenon in the Philistian plain, though on the occasion referred to in the text it appeared in a malignant form, and prevailed to an alarming extent (*Van de Velde*, vol. ii., p. 174).

CHAP. VI. 1.9.—THE PHILISTINES COUNSEL HOW TO SEND BACK THE ARK.

1. the ark . . . was in the country of the Philistines seven months [שִׁבְעָה חֳדָשִׁים]—in the field or cultivated plain of the Philistines. Notwithstanding the calamities which its presence had brought on the country and the people, the Philistine lords were unwilling to relinquish such a prize, and tried every means to retain it with peace and safety, but in vain. 2. the Philistines called for the priests and the diviners [וַיִּקְרָאוּ]—(see on Josh. xiii. 22.) The designed restoration of the ark was not, it seems, universally approved of, and many doubts were expressed whether the prevailing pestilence was really a judgment of

saying, What shall we do to the ark of the LORD? tell us wherewith we shall send it to his place. And they said, If ye send away the ark of the God of Israel, send it not ^b empty; but in any wise return him ^c a trespass offering: then ye shall be healed, and it shall be known to you why his hand is not removed from you. Then said they, What shall be the trespass offering which we shall return to him? They answered, Five golden emerods, and five golden mice, ^d according to the number of the lords of the Philistines: for one plague was on ^e you all, and on your lords. Wherefore ye shall make images of your emerods, and images of your mice that mar ^f the land; and ye shall ^g give glory unto the God of Israel: peradventure he will ^h lighten his hand from off you, and from off your gods, and from off your land. Wherefore then do ye harden your hearts, ⁱ as the Egyptians and Pharaoh hardened their hearts? when he had wrought ^j wonderfully among them, ^k did they not let ^l the people go, and they departed? Now therefore make ^m a new cart, and take two milch kine, ⁿ on which there hath come no yoke, and tie the kine to the cart, and bring their calves home from them: and take the ark of the LORD, and lay it upon the cart; and put the jewels of gold, which ye return him for a trespass offering, in a coffer by the side thereof; and send it away, that it may go. And see, if it goeth up by the way of his own coast to ^o Beth-shemesh, then ^p he hath done us this great evil: but if not, then we shall know that it is not his hand that smote us; it was a chance that happened to us.

B. C. 1140.
 6 Ex 13. 15.
 Deut. 16. 16.
 Lev. 5. 15.
 Lev. 6. 6.
 Lev. 7. 1-7.
 4 Josh. 13. 3.
 Judg. 3. 3.
 1 them,
 ch. 5. 6.
 7 Josh. 7. 19.
 Isa. 42. 12.
 Jer. 13. 14.
 Mal. 2. 2.
 John 9. 24.
 Rev. 14. 7.
 9 ch. 5. 6. 11.
 Ps. 39. 10.
 4 Ex 7. 13.
 Ex. 8. 15.
 Ex. 14. 17.
 2 Cr.
 reproach-
 fu ly.
 4 Ex. 12. 31.
 3 them.
 7 2 Sam 6. 3.
 8 Num 19. 2.
 1 Josh 15. 0.
 4 Or, it.

heaven. The priests and diviners united all parties by recommending a course which would enable them easily to discriminate the true character of the calamities, and at the same time to propitiate the incensed Deity for any acts of disrespect which might have been shown to His ark. 4. Five golden emerods. Votive or thank offerings were commonly made by the heathen in prayer for, or gratitude after, deliverance from lingering or dangerous disorders, in the form of metallic (generally silver) models or images of the diseased parts of the body. This is common still in Roman Catholic countries, as well as in the temples of the Hindoos and other modern heathen. five golden mice. This animal is supposed by some to be the jerboa, or jumping mouse of Syria and Egypt (*Bochar't*); by others, to be the short-tailed field-mouse, which often swarms in prodigious numbers, and commits great ravages in the cultivated fields of Palestine. Images of the destroyers were also formed to protect against the thing injuring; just as may be seen in Palestine at the present day, images of the eye to protect against 'the evil eye.' For the same reason, images of emerods and mice were made by the Philistines and sent with the ark. Apollonius ('Tyanæus') is said to have swept off the flies from Antioch and storks from Byzantium by figures (images) of these objects made while certain constellations were in the ascendant. In many cases *Pliny* ('Maimonides,' translated by *Townley*, p. 118) notices the images of eagles and beetles carved on emeralds; and *Marcellus Empiricus* ('Maimonides,' translated by *Townley*, p. 118) speaks of the virtue of these beetles for diseases of the eye ('Palestine, Past and Present,' p. 201). 5. give glory unto the God of Israel. By these propitiatory presents the Philistines would acknowledge His power, and make reparation for the injury done to His ark. lighten his hand . . . from off your gods—Elohim for god. 6. Wherefore then do ye harden your hearts, as the Egyptians and Pharaoh hardened their hearts. The memory of the appalling judgments that had been inflicted on Egypt was not yet obliterated. Whether pre-

served in written records or in floating tradition, they were still fresh in the minds of men, and being extensively spread, were doubtless the means of diffusing the knowledge and fear of the true God. 7. make a new cart [כֶּרֶבֶת]—a wain, or wagon; an ox-cart. Such carts were the ordinary vehicles in times of peace, as appears from the monuments of Egypt. A Hindoo epic of great antiquity, called the *Ramayana*, describes vehicles covered with woollen cloth, drawn by white oxen, for the conveyance of great and opulent ladies. Their object in making a new one for the purpose seems to have been, not only for cleanliness and neatness, but from an impression that there would have been an impropriety in using one that had been applied to meaner or more common service. It appears to have been a covered wagon (see on 2 Sam. vi. 3). two milch kine. Such untrained heifers, wanton and vagrant, would pursue no certain and regular path, like those accustomed to the yoke, and therefore were most unlikely, of their own spontaneous motion, to prosecute the direct road to the land of Israel. bring their calves home. The strong natural affection of the dams might be supposed to stimulate their return homewards, rather than direct their steps in a foreign country. 8. take the ark . . . and lay it upon the cart. This mode of carrying the sacred symbol was forbidden; but the ignorance of the Philistines made the indignity be overlooked (see on 2 Sam. vi. 6). put the jewels . . . in a coffer by the side thereof. The way of securing treasure in the East is still in a chest, chained to the house-wall or some solid part of the furniture. 9. Beth-shemesh—i. e., 'house of the sun,' now Ain Shems (*Robinson*), a city of the priests (*Josh.* xxi. 16) in Judah, in the south-east border of Dan, lying in a beautiful and extensive valley. *Josephus* says they were set agoing near a place where the road divided into two—the one leading back to Ekron, where were their calves; and the other to the sacerdotal city, Beth-shemesh, a distance from Ekron (Akir) of somewhat more than twelve

10 And the men did so; and took two milch kine, and tied them to the
 11 cart, and shut up their calves at home: and they laid the ark of the LORD
 upon the cart, and the coffer with the mice of gold, and the images of
 12 their emerods. And the kine took the straight way to the way of Beth-
 shemesh, and ⁵ went along the highway, lowing as they went, and turned
 not aside to the right hand or to the left; and the lords of the Philistines
 13 went after them unto the border of Beth-shemesh. And *they of* Beth-
 shemesh were reaping their wheat harvest in the valley: and they lifted
 14 up their eyes, and saw the ark, and rejoiced to see it. And the cart came
 into the field of Joshua, a Beth-shemite, and stood there, where *there was*
 a great stone: and they clave the wood of the cart, and ^m offered the kine a
 15 burnt offering unto the LORD. And the Levites took down the ark of the
 LORD, and the coffer that *was* with it, wherein the jewels of gold were, and
 put *them* on the great stone: and the men of Beth-shemesh offered burnt
 16 offerings and sacrificed sacrifices the same day unto the LORD. And when
ⁿ the five lords of the Philistines had seen *it*, they returned to Ekron the
 same day.
 17 And these *are* the golden emerods which the Philistines returned for a
 trespass offering unto the LORD: for ^o Ashdod one, for Gaza one, for Askelon
 18 one, for Gath one, for Ekron one; and the golden mice, according to the
 number of all the cities of the Philistines *belonging* to the five lords, both
 of fenced cities, and of country villages, even unto the ⁶ great stone of Abel,
 whereon they set down the ark of the LORD; *which stone remaineth* unto
 this day in the field of Joshua, the Beth-shemite.
 19 And ^p he smote the men of Beth-shemesh, because they had looked into
 the ark of the LORD, even he smote of the people fifty thousand and three-
 score and ten men. And the people lamented, because the LORD had

B. C. 1140.

⁵ in a street they went, ch. 7. 9, 17, ch. 11. 15, ch. 20. 29, Ex. 20. 21, Judg. 6. 28, Judg. 21. 4, 2 Sam. 21. 18, 22. 25, K1. 18. 30.
ⁿ Josh. 13. 3, Judg. 3. 3, Judg. 11. 23, ch. 29. 2, Zeph. 2. 5.
^o ch. 5. 1, 2 Chr. 26. 6, Jer. 25. 20, Zech. 9. 6.
⁶ Or, great Abel, that is, mourning, Gen. 50. 11, Ex. 19. 21, Lev. 10. 1-3, Num. 4. 6, 15. 20, Deut. 29. 29, 2 Sam. 6. 7, 1 Chr. 13. 10, Col. 2. 18, 1 Pet. 4. 17.

miles, and situated on the Israelitish border. Their frequent lowings attested their ardent longing for their young, and at the same time the supernatural influence that controlled their movements in a contrary direction.

12. the lords of the Philistines went after them—to give their tribute of homage, to prevent imposture, and to obtain the most reliable evidence of the truth. The result of this journey tended to their own deeper humiliation, and the greater illustration of God's glory. 14. they clave—i. e., the Beth-shemites, in an irrepressible outburst of joy, offered the kine. Though contrary to the requirements of the law (Lev. 1. 3; xxii. 19), these animals might properly be offered, as consecrated by God Himself; and though not beside the tabernacle, there were many instances of sacrifices offered by prophets and holy men on extraordinary occasions in other places. 16. when the five lords of the Philistines had seen it, they returned to Ekron the same day. 'After this transaction,' says Bishop Warburton ('Divine Legation,' b. i., sec. 2), 'we hear no more of any attempts among the Gentile nations to join the Jewish worship with their own. They considered the God of Israel as a tutelary Deity, absolutely unsociable, who would have nothing to do with any but His own people, or with such, particularly, as would worship Him alone, and therefore, in this respect, different from all other tutelary gods, each of which was willing to live in community with the rest.'

17. these are the golden emerods . . . 18. And the golden mice. There were five representative images of the emerods, corresponding to the five principal cities of the Philistines. But the number of the golden mice must have been greater, for they were sent from the walled towns as well as the country villages—*lit.*, 'villages of

the Perizzites.' unto the great stone of Abel. *Abel* or *Aben* means "stone;" so that, without resorting to *italics*, the reading should be, 'the great stone' [Septuagint, λίθος μέγας]. 'We may understand,' says Taylor, editor of *Calmet*, 'the passage as implying that the ark was placed on a spare piece of ground, on a rising unproductive (waste) of corn. To this agree the circumstances of the story.—The men of Beth-shemesh were reaping in the corn-fields; they therefore took the ark aside to a place not occupied by growing corn, but where the surface was bare—that is, a rock; and this height, thus sanctified by the reception of the ark, was easily distinguished by future generations, because it formed no part of the cultivated land.'

19. he smote the men of Beth-shemesh, because they had looked into the ark. In the ecstasy of delight at seeing the return of the ark, the Beth-shemesh reapers pried into it beneath the wagon cover; and instead of covering it up again, as a sacred utensil, they let it remain exposed to common inspection, wishing it to be seen, in order that all might enjoy the triumph of seeing the votive offerings presented to it, and gratify curiosity with the sight of the sacred shrine. This was the offence of those Israelites (Levites as well as common people), who, being priests of the family of Aaron, and Israelites, had treated the ark with less reverence than the Philistines themselves; and by opening the sacred chest, committed a grave offence, on account of which a destructive pestilence was sent upon the city and adjoining district, smote of the people fifty thousand and threescore and ten men. Beth-shemesh being only a village, this translation must be erroneous, and should be, 'he smote fifty out of a thousand,' being only 1,400 in all who indulged this curiosity. God, instead of decimat-

- 20 smitten *many* of the people with a great slaughter. And the men of Beth-shemesh said, Who is able to stand before this holy LORD God? and
- 1 to whom shall he go up from us? And they sent messengers to the inhabitants of Kirjath-jearim, saying, The Philistines have brought again
- 7 the ark of the LORD; come ye down, and fetch it up to you. AND the men of ^aKirjath-jearim came, and fetched up the ark of the LORD, and brought it into the house of ^bAbinadab in the hill, and sanctified Eleazar his son to keep the ark of the LORD.
- 2 And it came to pass, while the ark abode in Kirjath-jearim, that the time was long; for it was twenty years: and all the house of Israel
- 3 lamented after the LORD. And Samuel spake unto all the house of Israel, saying, If ye do ^creturn unto the LORD with all your hearts, *then* ^dput away the strange gods and ^eAshtaroth from among you, and ^fprepare your hearts unto the LORD, and ^gserve him only; and he will deliver you out
- 4 of the hand of the Philistines. Then the children of Israel did put away Baalim ^hand Ashtaroth, and served the LORD only.
- 5 And Samuel said, ⁱGather all Israel to Mizpeh, and I will pray for you
- 6 unto the LORD. And they gathered together to Mizpeh, and ^jdrew water, and poured *it* out before the LORD, and ^kfasted on that day, and said there, ^lWe have sinned against the LORD. And Samuel judged the children of Israel in Mizpeh.
- 7 And when the Philistines heard that the children of Israel were gathered together to Mizpeh, the lords of the Philistines went up against Israel. And when the children of Israel heard *it*, they were afraid of the Philistines.
- 8 And the children of Israel said to Samuel, ^mCease not to cry unto the LORD our God for us, that he will save us out of the hand of the Philistines.

B. C. 1140.
 CHAP. 7.
^a Pa. 132. 6.
^b 2 Sam. 6. 4.
^c Deut. 30. 2.
^d 1 Ki. 8. 48.
^e Isa. 55. 7.
^f Hos. 6. 1.
^g Joel 2. 12.
^h Gen. 35. 2.
ⁱ Josh. 24. 14.
^j Judg. 2. 13.
^k 2 Chr. 30. 19.
^l Job 11. 13.
^m Deut. 6. 13.
 Deut. 10. 20.
 Josh. 24. 14.
ⁿ Judg. 2. 11.
^o Judg. 10. 17.
^p 2 Ki. 23. 23.
^q 2 Sam. 14.
 14.
^r Neh. 9. 1, 2.
 Dan. 9. 3.
 Joel 2. 12.
^s Judg. 10. 10.
 1 Ki. 8. 47.
 Job 33. 27.
 Ps. 106. 6.
^t be not silent from us from crying.
 Isa. 37. 4.

ing, according to an ancient usage, slew only a twentieth part—i. e., according to *Josephus*, 70 out of 1,400 (see on Num. iv. 18-22). 21. they sent messengers to the inhabitants of Kirjath-jearim—the city of woods, called also Kirjath-baal (Josh. xv. 60; xviii. 14; 1 Chr. xiii. 6, 7). This was the nearest town to Beth-shemesh, and being a place of strength, was a fitter place for the residence of the ark. The inhabitants belonging to the Hivite tetrapolis were the sacred servants of the sanctuary, and therefore the proper parties to whom, in the emergency, the custody of the ark should be committed. What a sad degeneracy for the Levitical house of Aaron in Beth-shemesh to be less fitted, from their ignorance and irreligion, to act as the servants of Jehovah than the Hivites of Kirjath-jearim! Beth-shemesh being in a low plain, and Kirjath-jearim on a hill, explains the message, “Come ye down, and fetch it up to you.”

CHAP. VII. 1, 2.—THE ARK AT KIRJATH-JEARIM.

1. brought it into the house of Abinadab. Why it was not transported at once to Shiloh, where the tabernacle and sacred vessels were remaining, is difficult to conjecture. sanctified Eleazar his son. He was not a Levite, and was therefore only set apart or appointed to be keeper of the place.

2. the ark abode . . . twenty years. It appears in the subsequent history that a much longer period elapsed before its final removal from Kirjath-jearim, (2 Sam. vi.; 1 Chr. xiii.) But that length of time had passed when the Israelites began to revive from their sad state of religious decline. The capture of the ark had produced a general indifference either to its loss or its recovery. all the house of Israel lamented after the Lord. They were then brought, doubtless by the influence of Samuel's exhortations, to renounce idolatry, and returned to the national worship of the true God.

3-6.—THE ISRAELITES, BY SAMUEL'S MEANS, SOLEMNLY REPENT AT MIZPEH.

3. Samuel spake unto all the house of Israel. A great national reformation was effected through the influence of Samuel. Disgusted with their foreign servitude, and panting for the restoration of liberty and independence, they were open to salutary impressions; and, convinced of their errors, they renounced idolatry [Septuagint, *τὰς βααλῖμ*. Baal is here represented as a goddess; but it is the masculine in the original text, the Hebrew having no name signifying a goddess, because the Israelites owned no sex in the Deity], and the re-establishment of the faith of their fathers was inaugurated at a great public meeting held at Mizpeh in Judah, and hallowed by the observance of impressive religious solemnities. The ‘drawing water, and pouring it out before the Lord,’ seems to have been a symbolical act, by which, in the people's name, Samuel testified their sense of national corruption, their need of that moral purification of which water is the emblem, and their sincere desire to pour out their hearts in repentance before God.

6. Samuel judged . . . Israel in Mizpeh. At the time of Eli's death he could not have much exceeded twenty years of age; and although his character and position must have given him great influence, it does not appear that hitherto he had done more than prophets were wont to do. Now he entered on the duties of a civil magistrate.

7-14.—WHILE SAMUEL PRAYS, THE PHILISTINES ARE DISCOMFITED.

7. when the Philistines heard, &c. The character and importance of the national convention at Mizpeh were fully appreciated by the Philistines. They discerned in it the rising spirit of religious patriotism among the Israelites, that was prepared to throw off the yoke of their domination; and, anxious to crush it at the first, they made a sudden incursion while the Israelites were in the midst of

9 And Samuel took a sucking lamb, and offered it for a burnt offering wholly unto the LORD: and Samuel cried unto the LORD for Israel; and the LORD heard him. And as Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, the Philistines drew near to battle against Israel: but the LORD thundered with a great thunder on that day upon the Philistines, and discomfited them; and they were smitten before Israel. And the men of Israel went out of Mizpeh, and pursued the Philistines, and smote them, until they came under Beth-car. Then Samuel took a stone, and set it between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it Eben-ezer, saying, Hitherto hath the LORD helped us.

13 So the Philistines were subdued, and they came no more into the coast of Israel: and the hand of the LORD was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel. And the cities which the Philistines had taken from Israel were restored to Israel, from Ekron even unto Gath; and the coasts thereof did Israel deliver out of the hands of the Philistines. And there was peace between Israel and the Amorites.

15, 16 And Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life. And he went from year to year in circuit to Beth-el, and Gilgal, and Mizpeh, and judged Israel in all those places. And his return was to Ramah; for there was his house; and there he judged Israel; and there he built an altar unto the LORD.

8 AND it came to pass, when Samuel was old, that he made his sons

B. C. 1110.
 Ps. 99. 6.
 Jer 15. 1.
 Or.
 answered.
 Josh. 10. 10
 Judg. 4. 15.
 ch. 2. 10
 2 Sam. 22.
 14, 15.
 That is.
 The stone
 of help.
 ch. 4. 1.
 Judg. 13. 1.
 ch. 13. 5.
 ch. 12. 11.
 Judg. 2. 10.
 and he
 circuitied.
 Judg. 21. 4.
 CHAP. 8.
 Deut 16. 18.
 Judg. 10. 4.
 Judg 12. 14.
 compared
 with
 Judg 5. 10.

their solemn celebration. Unprepared for resistance, they besought Samuel to supplicate the Divine interposition to save them from their enemies. 9. Samuel took a sucking lamb, and offered it for a burnt offering wholly unto the LORD. Samuel was not a priest, nor of the priestly tribe; yet, as the priesthood lay at that time prostrate, he offered sacrifices, no doubt with the Divine sanction: the sacrifices were not offered at the altar of the tabernacle, but at Mizpeh, in that as in other things exempting himself from the law in a troublous and corrupt age (*Delitzsch*). This fact will serve to explain several anomalies in the life of Samuel,—not only his offering sacrifices, but his wearing an ephod, consecrating kings, and being classed (Ps. xcix. 6) with persons of the priestly order. He was only a Levite, and therefore, by an unalterable statute in the divine law, which guaranteed the priesthood to Aaron's family, incapable of being appointed to the sacerdotal office, as there was probably no need—for Hophni and Phinehas might have sons old enough to enter upon the priestly functions. The other acts, such as sacrificing away from the sanctuary, wearing an ephod, and anointing kings, were performed by other commissioned servants of God (Judg. viii. 27; ch. vi. 14; 1 Ki. xviii.; xix. 16; 2 Ki. ix. 6); while the association of his name with those of Moses and Aaron, by the Psalmist, is done in a manner that shows him to have been only in the common order of the Levites. The prophet's prayers and sacrifice were answered by such a tremendous storm of thunder and lightning that the assailants, panic-struck, were disordered, and fled. The Israelites, recognizing the hand of God, rushed courageously on the foe they had so much dreaded, and committed such immense havoc, that the Philistines did not for long recover from this disastrous blow. This brilliant victory secured peace and independence to Israel for twenty years, as well as the restitution of the usurped territory. 12. Samuel took a stone, and set it between Mizpeh and Shen—on an open spot between the town and 'the crag' (some well-known rock in the neighbourhood). A huge stone pillar was erected, as a monument of their victory (Lev. xxvi. l.),

the name . . . Eben-ezer—i. e., stone of help [Septuagint, Ἀβενέζεφ, λίθος τοῦ βοηθοῦ]; a memorial of the signal and seasonable deliverance granted by Jehovah. "Set it between Mizpeh and Shen" [מִצְפֶּה וְשֵׁן], the watch-tower—a conspicuous height a few miles north of Jerusalem [שֵׁן], the tooth or crag, not yet identified. *Josephus* ('Antiquities,' b. vi., ch. ii., sec. 2) says, 'The place was called Beth-car, where Samuel set up a stone as a boundary of their victory and the enemy's flight, and called it the stone of power, as a monument of that power which God had given them against their enemies,' saying, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us [מִצְפֶּה]. All large stones in the East receive names, of which there are several instances in Scripture (cf. ch. xx. 19; 1 Ki. i. 9).

14. the cities which the Philistines had taken from Israel were restored . . . from Ekron even unto Gath [Septuagint, ἀπο Ἀσκαλωνος (Alexandrian, ἀκκαρων) ἕως Ἀζόβ].

15. Samuel judged Israel . . . 16. in all those places [Septuagint, ἐν παντι τοις ἁγιασμενοις τοιτοις, in all these consecrated (holy) places]. He voluntarily performed the functions of an itinerant judge, for the convenience of the people residing in different districts of the country, and for the adjustment of all controversies. 17. his return was to Ramah—not at Nabi-Samuel; the site uncertain (*Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' ii., pp. 40, 141, 331-334; *Wilson's* 'Lands of the Bible,' ii., p. 36). [But the expression, לְרַמְתָּה (with the article), shows it is the same as Ramathaim-zophim (see on 1 Sam. i. 1: cf. *Josephus*, 'Antiquities,' b. vi., ch. iv., sec. 6; also ch. xiii., sec. 5).] there he built an altar unto the Lord. Here is another instance of his deviation from the prescribed ordinance of the law (Deut. xii. 5, 13). The reason probably was, that at that period of public disorder the tabernacle and its altar were both destroyed; and as Samuel, being a pious man, was desirous of animating his devotions by prayer and sacrifice, Jehovah sanctioned the erection, by accepting the person and services of the worshipper.

CHAP. VIII. 1-18.—BY THE OCCASION OF THE

- 2 judges over Israel. Now the name of his first-born was ¹Joel, and the
 3 name of his second, Abiah: *they were* judges in Beer-sheba. And his
 sons ^cwalked not in his ways, but turned aside after ^dlucre, and ^etook
 bribes, and perverted judgment.
- 4 Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to
 5 Samuel unto Ramah, and said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy
 sons walk not in thy ways: now ^fmake us a king to judge us like all the
 nations.
- 6 But the thing ²displeased Samuel, when they said, Give us a king to
 7 judge us. And Samuel ^gprayed unto the LORD. And the LORD said
 unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say
 unto thee: for ^hthey have not rejected thee, but ⁱthey have rejected me,
 8 that I should not reign over them. According to all the works which
 they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt even
 unto this day, wherewith they have forsaken me, and served other gods,
 9 so do they also unto thee. Now therefore ³hearken unto their voice:
⁴howbeit yet protest solemnly unto them, and show them the manner of
 the king that shall reign over them.
- 10 And Samuel told all the words of the LORD unto the people that asked
 11 of him a king. And he said, ^jThis will be the manner of the king that
 shall reign over you: ^kHe will take your sons, and appoint *them* for
 himself, for his chariots, and *to be* his horsemen; and *some* shall run
 12 before his chariots. And he will appoint him captains over thousands,

B. C. 1112.

- 1 Vashni,
 1 Chr. 6 23.
 2 Eccl. 2. 19.
 Jer. 22. 15.
 3 Ex. 18. 21.
 4 1 Tim. 3. 3.
 5 Deut. 16. 19.
 Ps. 15. 5.
 6 Hos. 13. 10.
 7 2 was evil in
 the eyes of
 Samuel.
 8 1 Pro. 3. 5.
 9 Ex. 16. 8.
 10 ch. 19. 19.
 11 Cr. obey.
 12 Or. not-
 withstand-
 ing when
 thou hast
 solemnly
 protested
 against
 them, then
 thou shalt
 show, etc.
 j Deut. 17. 6.
 ch. 10. 25.
 k ch. 14. 52.

ILL-GOVERNMENT OF SAMUEL'S SONS THE ISRAELITES ASK A KING.

1. when Samuel was old. He was now about fifty-four years of age, having discharged the office of sole judge for twelve years. Unable, from growing infirmities, to prosecute his circuit journeys through the country, he at length confined his magisterial duties to Ramah and its neighbourhood (ch. vii. 15-17), delegating to his sons as his deputies the administration of justice in the southern districts of Palestine, their provincial court being held at Beer-sheba. He appointed them to this high and responsible office, not like Eli, from the fondness of doating partiality, but, from the careful training they had received under his direction, as well as from the paternal authority and the good example he had set them, he hoped and believed that they would prove faithful and impartial in the execution of their trust. The arrangement was a good one; and, considering the distance of Beer-sheba from Ramah, where Samuel still exercised the office of judge, it might have been expected to conduce to the convenience and comfort of the people. 3. his sons walked not in his ways. The question may arise in the mind of a reader, Why Samuel was not punished, as Eli, for the misconduct of his sons. But the answer is obvious. Not only was the offence of Samuel's sons of a far less heinous criminality than the unblushing and daring profanity of Eli's, but Samuel might not know, owing to the distance of Beer-sheba, anything of the delinquency of his sons; whereas Eli not only knew, but tolerated the iniquitous courses of his. The young men, however, did not inherit the high qualities of their father; and, they having, at their distant post of duty, where were temptation and opportunity for concealment, unawed by the presence of their father, corrupted the fountains of justice for their own private aggrandizement, a deputation of the leading men in the country lodged a complaint against them in headquarters, accompanied with a formal demand for a change in the government.

4. Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together. This was evidently the general

council or assembly of the nation, which is, ch. v. 7, 10, 19, 21, called "the people," as represented by the elders as their heads (cf. ch. x. 17, 19; xi. 14; xii. 1). The limited and occasional authority of the judges, the disunion and jealousy of the tribes under the administration of those rulers, had been creating a desire for a united and permanent form of government; while the advanced age of Samuel, together with the risk of his death happening in the then unsettled state of the people, was the occasion of calling forth an expression of this desire now.

6. the thing displeased Samuel. Personal and family feelings might affect his views of this public movement. But his dissatisfaction arose principally from the proposed change being revolutionary in its character. Though it would not entirely subvert their theocratic government, the appointment of a visible monarch would necessarily tend to throw out of view their unseen King and Head. 7. they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them. They could not by their requisition have rejected the Lord if he had not stood in the relation of a supreme political head to Israel; for they made no proposal of renouncing subjection to Him in any other respect. They did not desire a change in their worship, nor ask a new code of civil laws. Their demand was limited to an alteration in the executive form of government (see *Jamieson's 'Sacred History,'* i., p. 312). God intimated, through Samuel, that their request would, in anger, be granted, while at the same time he apprised them of some of the evils that would result from their choice.

11. This will be the manner of the king. The following is a very just and graphic picture of the despotic governments which anciently and still are found in the East, and into conformity with which the Hebrew monarchy, notwithstanding the restrictions prescribed by the law, gradually slid. He will take your sons, and appoint them for himself. Oriental sovereigns claim a right to the services of any of their subjects at pleasure, some shall run before his chariots. The royal

and captains over fifties; and will set them to ear his ground, and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war, and instruments of his chariots. And he will take your daughters to be confectionaries, and to be cooks, and to be bakers. And he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your oliveyards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants. And he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give to his officers, and to his servants. And he will take your men-servants, and your maid-servants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put them to his work. He will take the tenth of your sheep: and ye shall be his servants. And ye shall cry out in that day because of your king which ye shall have chosen you; and the LORD will not hear you in that day.

Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel: and they said, Nay; but we will have a king over us; that we also may be like all the nations; and that our king may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles. And Samuel heard all the words of the people, and he rehearsed them in the ears of the LORD. And the LORD said to Samuel, Hearken unto their voice, and make them a king. And Samuel said unto the men of Israel, Go ye every man unto his city.

NOW there was a man of Benjamin, whose name was Kish, the son

B. C. 1095.
 1 Ki 21. 7.
 19.
 Eze. 46. 18.
 5 curuchs.
 m Job 27. 9.
 1's 15. 41.
 Fro. 1. 25.
 28.
 Fro. 21. 13.
 Isa 1. 15.
 Mic 3. 4.
 Luke 13. 25.
 n Ps. 81. 11.
 Isa 66. 4.
 Jer. 7. 13.
 Jer. 44. 16.
 Eze. 33. 31.
 o Hos 13. 11.
 CHAP. 9.
 a ch. 14. 51.
 1 Chr. 8. 30.
 33.
 1 Chr. 9. 33.
 Acts 13. 21.

equipages were generally, throughout the East (see 2 Sam. xv. 1; 1 Ki. i. 5), as in Persia they still are, preceded and accompanied by a number of attendants who run on foot. 12. he will appoint him captains. In the East a person must accept any office to which he may be nominated by the king, however irksome it may be to his taste or ruinous to his interests. 13. he will take your daughters to be confectionaries. Cookery, baking, and the kindred works, are, in Eastern countries, female employment, and numbers of young women are occupied with these offices in the palaces even of petty princes. 14. he will take your fields, &c. The circumstances mentioned here might be illustrated by exact analogies in the conduct of many Oriental monarchs in the present day. 18. ye shall cry out in that day because of your king. Samuel showed them, by these samples of oppression and heavy exaction, the political servitude to which they would be reduced under a regal government; and he concluded his expostulation and protest by warning them to desist ere it was too late, otherwise they would assuredly have cause to repent of their rashness.

19. Nevertheless the people refused. They sneered at Samuel's description as a bugbear to frighten them. Nay; but we will have a king over us; 20. That we also may be like all the nations. The first part of this energetic answer implies that they were perfectly aware of the peculiarity of their civil government, by which their governors were only God's vicegerents—officers chosen and appointed by an unseen Power—and they desiderated a visible head. The second part of it, in which they specified the appointment of a king, expressed a strong preference for a permanent rather than an occasional or temporary magistrate, to consult their interests by his domestic administration, and, with regard to their foreign relations, to keep a standing army, ready at all times, under his command, to repel the encroachments or insults of neighbouring states. Perhaps, too, the corruptions that had prevailed to so great an extent under the judges had originated a secret but strong desire to be freed from the government of the priesthood, and they probably expected that, if released from the authority of sacerdotal judges, they would find a regal

government less austere and rigid than the old régime. Determined at all hazards to gain their object, they insisted on being made like all the other nations, though it was their glory and happiness to be unlike other nations in having the Lord for their King and Lawgiver (Num. xxiii. 9; Dent. xxxiii. 28). 'This fickle and criminal disposition God exposes and reprobates. Yet the Divinity would not exercise such a resistless control as totally to disregard the choice of His people, and chain down their free-will: this would have been inconsistent with His character as a moral Governor. He, indeed, commands the prophet solemnly to protest, declaring to them His condemnation of their criminal desires, and warning them of the various inconveniences which should attend the kingly government. But on their persisting in their demand, the prophet is commanded to gratify their humour' (Graves, ii., p. 155). Their demand was conceded; for the government of a king had been foreseen as well as provided for in the law, and they were dismissed to wait the appointment, which God had reserved to Himself (Deut. xvii. 14-20: cf. *Michaelis*, 'Laws of Moses,' i., pp. 188-196; iii., p. 141; iv., p. 1). They did wait; and such was their reverence for God, and their confidence in His prophet, that, instead of proceeding further to claim the right of popular election, they departed in full and patient reliance on God's time and way of granting their request.

CHAP. IX. 1-14.—SAUL, DESPAIRING TO FIND HIS FATHER'S ASSES, COMES TO SAMUEL.

1. Now there was a man of Benjamin, whose name was Kish, &c. This is only a very abridged account of Saul's descent; and it is only by a combination of several isolated passages that a complete list of his ancestors can be obtained. The following table exhibits a full view of the information Scripture gives upon the subject:—

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Benjamin. | 6. Zoror. |
| 2. Becher (Gen. xlv. 2; 1 Chr. vii. 6). | 7. Abiel, or Jehiel (cf. ch. xiv. 51 with 1 Chr. ix. 35). |
| 3. Abiah, or Aphiah (1 Chr. vii. 8). | 8. Ner. |
| 4. Bechorath. | 9. Kish. |
| 5. Meter, or Matri (ch. x. 21). | 10. Saul. |

(See *Hervey's* 'Genealogies,' pp. 213, 214; *Jackson's*

of Abiel, the son of Zeror, the son of Bechorath, the son of Aphiah, ¹a
 2 Benjaminite, a mighty man of ²power. And he had a son, whose name was
 Saul, a choice young man, and a goodly: and *there was* not among the
 children of Israel a goodlier person than he: ^bfrom his shoulders and
 upward *he was* higher than any of the people.
 3 And the asses of Kish, Saul's father, were lost. And Kish said to Saul
 his son, Take now one of the servants with thee, and arise, go seek the asses.
 4 And he passed through mount Ephraim, and passed through the land of
^cShalisha, but they found *them* not: then they passed through the land
 of Shalim, and *there they were* not: and he passed through the land of
 5 the Benjaminites, but they found *them* not. And when they were come to
 the land of ^dZuph, Saul said to his servant that *was* with him, Come,
 and let us return; lest my father leave *caring* for the asses, and take
 6 thought for us. And he said unto him, Behold now, *there is* in this city
^ea man of God, and *he is* an honourable man; ^fall that *he saith* cometh
 surely to pass: now let us go thither; peradventure he can show us our
 7 way that we should go. Then said Saul to his servant, But, behold, *if*
 we go, ^gwhat shall we bring the man? for the bread ³is spent in our
 vessels, and *there is* not a present to bring to the man of God: what
 8 ⁴have we? And the servant answered Saul again, and said, Behold, ⁵I
 have here at hand the fourth part of a shekel of silver: *that* will I give
 9 to the man of God to tell us our way. (Beforetime in Israel, when a
 man ^hwent to enquire of God, thus he spake, Come, and let us go to the
 seer: for *he that is* now called a Prophet was beforetime called ⁱa Seer.)

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¹ Or, the son
of a man of
Jemini.² Or,
substance.^b ch. 10. 23.^c 2 Ki. 4. 42.^d ch. 1. 1.^e Deut. 33. 1.^f 1 Ki. 13. 1.^g ch. 3. 19.^h Judg. 6. 18.

Judg. 13. 17.

1 Ki. 14. 3.

2 Ki. 4. 42.

2 Ki. 8. 8.

³ is gone out
of, etc.⁴ is with us.⁵ there is
found in
my hand.^h Gen. 25. 22.ⁱ 2 Sam. 24.
11.

2 Ki. 17. 13.

1 Chr. 9. 29.

2 Chr. 16. 7.

10.

Isa. 30. 10.

'Chronologies,' i., p. 144.) a mighty man of power
—i. e., of great wealth and substance. The family
was of high consideration in the tribe of Benjamin,
and therefore Saul's words (v. 21) must be set
down amongst the common forms of affected
humility which Oriental people are wont to use.
2. Saul, a choice young man, and a goodly [שׂוֹפֵר;
Septuagint, Σαούλ]. He had a presence; for it is
evident that he must have been only a little under
seven feet high. A gigantic stature and an athletic
frame must have been a popular recommendation
at that time in that country.

3. the asses of Kish, Saul's father, were lost.
The probability is that the family of Kish, accord-
ing to the immemorial usage of Oriental shepherds
in the purely pastoral regions, had let the animals
roam at large during the grazing season, at the
close of which messengers were despatched in
search of them. Such travelling searches are
common; and as each owner has his own stamp
marked on his cattle, the mention of it to the shep-
herds he meets gradually leads to the discovery of
the strayed animals. This ramble of Saul's had
nothing extraordinary in it, except its *superior*
directions and issue, which turned its uncertainty
into certainty. 4. he passed through mount
Ephraim. This being situated on the north of
Benjamin indicates the direction of Saul's journey.
The district explored means the whole of the
mountainous region, with its valleys and defiles,
which belong to Ephraim. Turning apparently
southwards, probably through the verdant hills
between Shiloh and the vales of Jordan (Shalisha
and Shalim), he approached again the borders of
Benjamin, scoured the land of Zuph, and was pro-
posing to return, when his servant recollected that
they were in the immediate neighbourhood of the
man of God, who would give them counsel. 6. *there is*
in this city a man of God. Ramah was the usual
residence of Samuel; but several circum-
stances, especially the mention of Rachel's
sepulchre, which lay in Saul's way homeward, lead
to the conclusion that "this city" was not the

Ramah where Samuel dwelt. peradventure he
can show us our way that we should go. It
seems strange that a dignified prophet should be
consulted in such an affair. But it is probable
that at the introduction of the prophetic office the
seers had discovered things lost or stolen, and thus
their power for higher revelations was gradually
established. 7. what shall we bring the man?
According to Eastern notions, it would be con-
sidered a want of respect for any person to go into
the presence of a superior man of rank, or of official
station, without a present of some kind in his hand,
however trifling in value. the bread is spent in
our vessels. Shepherds going in quest of their
cattle put up in a bag as much flour for making
bread as will last sometimes for thirty days. It
appears that Saul thought of giving the man of
God a cake from his travelling bag, and this would
have been sufficient to render the indispensable
act of civility—the customary tribute to official
dignity. 8. the fourth part of a shekel of silver
—rather more than sixpence. Contrary to our
Western notions, money is in the East the most
acceptable form in which a present can be made to
a man of rank. 9. seer [שׂוֹפֵר; Septuagint, ὁ βλεπων]

.... Prophet [שׂוֹפֵר; Septuagint, ὁ πρόφητης]. The
recognized distinction in latter times was, that a
seer was one who was favoured with visions of
God—a view of things invisible to mortal sight;
and a prophet foretold future events. There has
been much discussion as to the distinction between
these words; and it is not easy to decide the ques-
tion, for in some passages, as here, they appear to
be used synonymously, or as applied to the same
individuals, whereas in others they are contrasted
(1 Chr. xxix. 29; Isa. xxix. 10; xxx. 10). The
first, from the verb *to see*, sufficiently shows that
the power of the person arose from mental vision.
The second, from a verb *to bubble up*, as a spring
or fountain, signifies that the message which the
Nabi delivered was derived from God; and hence it
is always rendered a "prophet." Accordingly
Havernick ('Introduction to the Old Testament,

- 10 Then said Saul to his servant, ⁶Well said; come, let us go. So they went unto the city where the man of God *was*.
- 11 *And* as they went up ⁷the hill to the city, ⁷they found young maidens going out to draw water, and said unto them, Is the seer here? And they answered them, and said, He is; behold, *he is* before you: make haste now, for he came to-day to the city; for *there* ⁸is a ⁸sacrifice of the people to-day in ⁹the high place. As soon as ye be come into the city, ye shall straightway find him, before he go up to the high place to eat: for the people will not eat until he come, because he doth bless the sacrifice; *and* afterwards they eat that be bidden. Now therefore get you up; for about ⁹this time ye shall find him. And they went up into the city: *and* when they were come into the city, behold, Samuel came out against them, for to go up to the high place.
- 15 Now ¹⁰the LORD had ¹⁰told Samuel in his ear a day before Saul came, saying, To-morrow, about this time, I will send thee a man out of the land of Benjamin, and ¹¹thou shalt anoint him to be captain over my people Israel, that he may save my people out of the hand of the Philistines: for I have ¹¹looked upon my people, because their cry is come unto me. And when Samuel saw Saul, the LORD said unto him, ¹²Behold the man whom I spake to thee of! this same shall ¹¹reign over my people.
- 18 Then Saul drew near to Samuel in the gate, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, where the seer's house *is*. And Samuel answered Saul, and said, I *am* the seer: go up before me unto the high place; for ye shall eat with me to-day; and to-morrow I will let thee go, and will tell thee all that *is* in thine heart. And as for thine asses that were lost ¹²three days ago,

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⁶ Thy word is good.
⁷ in the ascent of the city.
⁷ Gen. 24. 11.
⁸ Ex. 2. 15.
⁸ Gen. 3. 154.
⁸ ch. 16. 2.
⁸ Or. feast.
⁹ 1 Ki. 3. 2.
⁹ to-day.
¹⁰ ch. 15. 1.
¹⁰ Ps. 25. 14.
¹⁰ Mark 11. 2.
¹⁰ Acts 13. 1.
¹⁰ revealed the ear of Samuel.
¹¹ ch. 20. 2.
¹¹ ch. 10. 1.
¹¹ ch. 15. 1.
¹¹ ch. 16. 3.
¹¹ 1 Ki. 19. 5.
¹² Ex. 2. 25.
¹² Ex. 3. 7. 9.
¹² ch. 16. 12.
¹² Hos. 13. 11;
¹² restrain in.
¹² to-day three days.

p. 51, and to the 'Pentateuch,' p. 170) considers the first term as marking the receptive act of revelation, and the second as describing the office of the prophets—that of communicating the Word of God. Hence, after the institution of the schools by Samuel, it became the official title of the prophets; and the two functions were united in, or performed by, the same person (see *Professor Lee's* 'Lectures on Job,' p. 369; *Dr. Lee's* (Archdeacon of Dublin) 'Inspiration of Holy Scriptures,' Appendix K., p. 543; *Professor Payne Smith's* 'Messianic Interpretation of the Prophecies of Isaiah,' Introduction, p. 29; *Pusey's* 'Lectures on Daniel,' p. 243; *Dr. McCaul's* 'Aids to Faith,' pp. 84, 85; *Henderson's* 'Isaiah,' i., note 1). *Le Clerc* explains the meaning of this verse to be this, that the word prophet, which was used in the age of Moses, fell into desuetude in the times of the judges, being supplanted by the more restricted term *seer* (ch. iii. 1), and then was revived at a later period, when the spirit of prophecy was more frequently conferred and more extensively diffused (see Introduction to Samuel).

11. as they went up the hill to the city—now er-Rameh, lying on an eminence; and on their way they met a band of young maidens going out to the well, which, like all similar places in Palestine, was beyond the precincts of the town. From these damsels they learned that the day was devoted to a festival occasion, in honour of which Samuel had arrived in the city; that a sacrifice had been offered, which was done by prophets in extraordinary circumstances, at a distance from the place in which alone offerings could be presented—viz., the front court of the national sanctuary, first the tabernacle, afterwards the temple (Lev. xvii. 1-9; Deut. xii. 5-7). 12. in the high place [רָאֵזָה, on the height. The Septuagint considers it a proper name, rendering it *ἐν Βαυά*]. In some instances sacrifices were allowed, without reprehension, in certain other places, especially in trou-

bled times, as were those of the judges (ch. vii. 17; Judg. ii. 5; 1 Ki. xviii. 19, 32). *Professor Lee* says that the word Bamah was never recognized as connected with the Mosaic ritual, though the word is sometimes applied to places where the worship of Jehovah was celebrated (1 Ki. iii. 4; 2 Ki. xiii. 4; Isa. xxxvi. 7). A feast was to follow, implying that it had been a peace offering, and that, according to the venerable practice of the Israelites, the man of God was expected to ask a special blessing on the food, in a manner becoming the high occasion. 14. Samuel came out against them, for to go up to the high place. Such were the simple manners of the times, that this prophet—the chief man in Israel—was seen going to preside at a high festival, undistinguished, either by his dress or equipage, from any ordinary citizen.

15-27.—GOD REVEALS TO SAMUEL SAUL'S CHANGING, AND HIS APPOINTMENT TO THE KINGDOM.

15. Now the Lord had told Samuel in his ear a day before [שָׁמַעְתִּי בְּאָזְנוֹי אֶת־יְהוָה, uncovered the ear]—i. e., caused him to know, imparted to him the knowledge of His intended purpose (cf. 2 Sam. vii. 27). The description of Saul, the time of his arrival, and the high office to which he was destined, had been secretly intimated to Samuel from heaven. The future king of Israel was to fight the battles of the Lord, and protect His people. It would appear that they were at this time suffering great molestation from the Philistines, and that this was an additional reason of their urgent demands for the appointment of a king (see on ch. x. 5; xiii. 13). 16. thou shalt anoint him to be captain [וְנִסְּתָהּ]—to go in front, to be leader.

15. Tell me, I pray thee, where the seer's house *is*. Satisfying the stranger's enquiry, Samuel invited him to the feast, as well as to sojourn till the morrow; and in order to reconcile him to the delay, assured him that the strayed asses had

- set not thy mind on them; for they are found. And on whom is all the desire of Israel? *Is it* not on thee, and on all thy father's house? And Saul answered and said, *Am* not I a Benjamite, of the ²smallest of the tribes of Israel? and ⁷my family the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin? wherefore then speakest thou ¹³so to me?
- 22 And Samuel took Saul and his servant, and brought them into the parlour, and made them sit in the chiefest place among them that were bidden, which *were* about thirty persons. And Samuel said unto the cook, Bring the portion which I gave thee, of which I said unto thee, Set it by thee. And the cook took up ⁸the shoulder, and *that* which *was* upon it, and set *it* before Saul. And *Samuel* said, Behold that which is ¹⁴left! set *it* before thee, and eat: for unto this time hath it been kept for thee since I said, I have invited the people. So Saul did eat with Samuel that day.
- 25 And when they were come down from the high place into the city, Samuel communed with Saul upon ⁴the top of the house. And they arose early: and it came to pass, about the spring of the day, that Samuel called Saul to the top of the house, saying, Up, that I may send thee away. And Saul arose, and they went out both of them, he and Samuel, abroad.
- 27 And as they were going down to the end of the city, Samuel said to Saul, Bid the servant pass on before us, (and he passed on,) but stand thou still ¹⁵a while, that I may ¹⁶show thee the word of God. **THEN** ⁹Samuel took a vial of oil, and poured *it* upon his head, and kissed him, and said, *Is it* not because the LORD hath anointed thee *to be* captain over ²his inheritance? When thou art departed from me to-day, then thou shalt find two men by Rachel's ⁶sepulchre, in the border of Benjamin,

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⁹ Judg. 21. 48.

Ps. 68. 27.

⁷ Judg. 6. 16.

ch. 10. 27.

ch. 15. 17.

ch. 18. 18,

23.

Luke 14. 11.

Eph. 3. 8.

¹³ accord'g

to this

word.

⁶ Lev. 7. 32.

Eze. 21. 4.

¹⁴ Or,

reserved.

¹ Deut. 22. 8.

2 Sam. 11. 2.

Neh. 8. 16.

Jer. 19. 13.

Matt. 10. 17.

Acts 10. 9.

¹⁵ to-day¹⁶ Or, cause

thee to

hear.

CHAP. 10.

^a ch. 16. 13.

2 Ki. 9. 3.

^b Ex. 19. 5. 6.

Deut. 32. 9.

Jer. 19. 16.

^c Gen. 55. 19.

been recovered. 20. on whom is all the desire of Israel? This was a covered and indirect premonition of the royal dignity that awaited him; and though Saul's answer shows that he fully understood it, he affected to doubt that the prophet was in earnest. 21. Am not I a Benjamite, &c. By selecting a king from this least and nearly extinct tribe (Judg. xx.), Divine wisdom designed to remove all grounds of jealousy amongst the other tribes.

22. Samuel took Saul . . . and brought them into the parlour. The toil-worn but noble-looking traveller found himself suddenly seated amongst the principal men of the place, and treated as the most distinguished guest. 24. the shoulder [שׁוֹמֵר], the leg of an animal, including the thigh] . . . that which is left—i. e., reserved (see on Gen. xviii. 6; xliii. 34). This was most probably the right shoulder, which, as the perquisite of the sacrifice, belonged to Samuel, and which he had set aside for his expected guest. In the sculptures of the Egyptian shambles, also, the first joint taken off was always the right shoulder, for the priest. The meaning of those distinguished attentions must have been understood by the other guests.

25. Samuel communed with Saul upon the top of the house. Saul was taken to lodge with the prophet for that night. Before retiring to rest, they communed on the flat roof of the house, the couch being laid there (Josh. ii. 6), when, doubtless, Samuel revealed the secret, and described the peculiar duties of a monarch in a nation so related to the Divine King as Israel. Next morning early Samuel roused his guest, and conveying him on his way towards the skirts of the city, sought, before parting, a *private* interview, the object of which is narrated in the next chapter.

CHAP. X. 1-27.—SAMUEL ANOINTS SAUL, AND

CONFIRMS HIM BY THE PREDICTION OF THREE SIGNS.

1. Then Samuel took a vial of oil. This was the ancient (Judg. ix. 8) ceremony of investiture with the royal office among the Hebrews and other Eastern nations. But there were two unctions to the kingly office—the one in private by a prophet (ch. xvi. 13), which was meant to be only a prophetic intimation of the person attaining that high dignity; the more public and formal inauguration (2 Sam. ii. 4; v. 3) was performed by the high priest, and perhaps with the holy oil; but that is not certain. The first of a dynasty was thus anointed, but not his heirs, unless the succession was disputed (1 Ki. i. 39; 2 Ki. xi. 12; xxiii. 30; 2 Chr. xxiii. 11). The import of this symbolical act is explained by Zechariah, ch. iv. The oil symbolized the Spirit of God. 'The former,' as *Hengstenberg* ('Christology,' iii., p. 125) remarks, 'typified what the latter secured.' kissed him. This salutation, as explained by the words that accompanied it, was an act of respectful homage, a token of congratulation to the new king (Ps. ii. 12), and said . . . the Lord hath anointed thee to be captain over his inheritance. The anointing did not constitute Saul a ruler in general, but a theocratic ruler, who was furnished by God with the requisite gifts for the discharge of his duties as His representative (see *Hengstenberg*, 'Christology,' iii., p. 135). 2. When thou art departed from me to-day. The design of these specific predictions of what should be met with on the way, and the number and minuteness of which would arrest attention, was to confirm Saul's reliance on the prophetic character of Samuel, and lead him to give full credence to what had been revealed to him as the word of God (see on ch. ii. 34: cf. 1 Ki. xiii. 3; 2 Ki. xix. 29; Isa. vii. 2; Jer. xlv. 29). *Rachel's sepulchre*—near Beth-lehem (see on Gen. xxxv. 16). 'After the allotment of

- ⁴ at Zelzah; and they will say unto thee, The asses which thou wentest to seek are found: and, lo, thy father hath left ¹ the care of the asses, and **3** sorroweth for you, saying, What shall I do for my son? Then shalt thou go on forward from thence, and thou shalt come to the plain of ^e Tabor, and there shall meet thee three men going up ^f to God to Beth-el, one carrying three kids, and another carrying three loaves of bread, and **4** another carrying a bottle of wine: and they will ² salute thee, and give **5** thee two *loaves* of bread; which thou shalt receive of their hands. After that thou shalt come to the hill of God, ^g where is the garrison of the Philistines: and it shall come to pass, when thou art come thither to the city, that thou shalt meet a company of prophets coming down from ^h the high place with a psaltery, and a tabret, and a pipe, and a harp, before **6** them; ⁱ and they shall prophesy: and ^j the Spirit of the LORD will come upon thee, and ^k thou shalt prophesy with them, and shalt be turned into **7** another man. And ³ let it be, when these ^l signs are come unto thee, ⁴ that **8** thou do as occasion serve thee; for ^m God is with thee. And thou shalt go down before me ⁿ to Gilgal; and, behold, I will come down unto thee, to offer burnt offerings, and to sacrifice sacrifices of peace offerings: ^o seven days shalt thou tarry, till I come to thee, and show thee what thou shalt do.
- 9** And it was so, that, when he had turned his ⁵ back to go from Samuel, God ⁶ gave him another heart: and all those signs came to pass that day.
- 10** And when they came thither to the hill, behold, ^p a company of prophets met him; and the Spirit of God came upon him, and ^q he prophesied **11** among them. And it came to pass, when all that knew him beforetime saw that, behold, he prophesied among the prophets, then the people said

B. C. 1096.

- ⁴ Josh. 15. 23.
¹ the business.
⁵ Josh. 19. 12.
⁷ Gen. 28. 12.
¹ Gen. 35. 1
² ask thee of peace
⁴ Judg. 13. 15.
⁷ ch. 13. 3.
^h ch. 9. 12.
^l Ex. 15. 20.
^j Num. 11. 25.
¹ ch. 16. 11.
¹ ch. 19. 21.
⁴ ch. 19. 23.
³ it shall come to pass, that when these signs, etc
¹ Ex. 4. 8.
⁴ do for thee as thine hand shall find.
^m Judg. 6. 12.
ⁿ ch. 11. 14.
^o ch. 13. 8.
⁵ should-r.
⁶ turned.
^p ch. 14. 10.
^q Matt. 7. 21.

the country to the several tribes, the territory of the Benjamites was extended by a long strip far into the south, to include the sepulchre of their beloved ancestress' (*Stanley*, 'Jewish Church,' p. 72). Zelzah—in the neighbourhood of these places; but the exact site is unknown. Zelzah (i. e., shade, rejoicing) was a different place from Zela' (a rib or side). **3.** the plain—or the oak of Tabor; not the celebrated mount, for that was far distant. **three men going up to God to Beth-el**—apparently to offer sacrifices there at a time when the ark and the tabernacle were not in a settled abode, and God had not yet declared the permanent place which He should choose. The kids were for sacrifice, the loaves for the offering, and the wine for the libations. **5. the hill of God**—probably Geba (ch. xiii. 3), so called from a school of the prophets being established there. The company of prophets were, doubtless, the pupils at this seminary, which had probably been instituted by Samuel, and in which the chief branches of education taught were a knowledge of the law, and of psalmody, with instrumental music, which is called 'prophesying' (here and in 1 Chr. xxv. 1, 7). **a psaltery** [קַנַּת]—a species of harp or lyre, having, according to *Josephus* ('Antiquities,' b. vii., ch. xii., sec. 13), twelve strings, and being played with the fingers, and not a plectrum; according to *Jerome* ('N. Vitruv.' vi., 1), it was triangular in form, resembling an inverted Delta, ∇ (cf. *Wilkinson's* 'Ancient Egyptians,' ii., pp. 280-287). and a **tabret** [תַּבְרֵת]—and a hand drum, tymbrel, or tambourine (see on Exod. xv. 21). and a **pipe** [פִּיפֵי]—an instrument of music, so called from being perforated (בְּנִינָה, a lyre); the modern guitar (*Josephus*, 'Antiquities,' b. vii., ch. xii., sec. 3), as having ten strings, and being struck with a plectrum (but see on ch. xvi. 23; xviii. 10; xix. 9). It was of great antiquity (Gen. iv. 21), used by the Hebrews chiefly, as here,

in their sacred music (cf. 1 Sam. xvi. 23; 1 Ki. x. 12); and hence it became the national and favourite musical instrument of that people. *Joseph Wolf* ('Researches and Missionary Labours,' p. 492) says, that 'the external form of these prophets is still existing among the dancing Fakeers of Constantinople, and those in the valley of Cashmeer.' **6. the spirit of the Lord will come upon thee**—*lit.*, rush upon thee. This phrase is used of those who, under the influence of Divine inspiration, uttered truths supernaturally revealed to them, in a lofty, poetic style, or who celebrated in exalted strains of praise the glorious deeds of Jehovah to His Church. In this latter sense it is applied to Miriam (Exod. xv. 20, 21), to the seventy elders (Num. xi. 29), and to the choir of young prophets, to which Saul joined himself, and in whose sacred employment he participated (cf. Luke i. 65, end). 'The Spirit of the Lord came upon him.' It was the seal and pledge of the blessings which the Lord bestowed upon the rulers of the nation for the people's benefit, suddenly endowing him with a capacity and disposition to act in a manner far superior to his previous character and habits; so that, instead of the simplicity, ignorance, and sheepishness of a peasant, he would display an energy, wisdom, and magnanimity worthy of a prince. **8. thou shalt go down before me to Gilgal**. This, according to *Josephus*, was to be a standing rule for the observance of Saul while the prophet and he lived, that in every great crisis, as a hostile incursion on the country, he should repair to Gilgal, where he was to remain seven days, to afford time for the tribes on both sides Jordan to assemble, and Samuel to reach it.

9. when he had turned his back . . . God gave him another heart. Influenced by the words of Samuel, as well as by the accomplishment of these signs, Saul's reluctance to undertake the onerous office was overcome. The fulfilment of the two

- ⁷one to another, What *is* this *that* is come unto the son of Kish? ⁷Is 12 Saul also among the prophets? And one ⁸of the same place answered and said, But ⁸who *is* their father? Therefore it became a proverb, *Is* 13 Saul also among the prophets? And when he had made an end of prophesying, he came to the high place.
- 14 And Saul's ²uncle said unto him and to his servant, Whither went ye? And he said, To seek the asses: and when we saw that *they were* no where, 15 we came to Samuel. And Saul's uncle said, Tell me, I pray thee, what 16 Samuel said unto you. And Saul said unto his uncle, He told us plainly that the asses were found. But of the matter of the kingdom, whereof Samuel spake, he told him not.
- 17 And Samuel called the people together "unto the LORD" to Mizpeh; 18 and said unto the children of Israel, Thus ¹⁰saith the LORD God of Israel, I brought up Israel out of Egypt, and delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of all kingdoms, *and* of them that 19 oppressed you: and ²ye have this day rejected your God, who himself saved you out of all your adversities and your tribulations; and ye have said unto him, *Nay*, but set a king over us. Now therefore present yourselves before the LORD by your tribes, and by your thousands.
- 20 And when Samuel had ⁹caused all the tribes of Israel to come near, the 21 tribe of Benjamin was taken. When he had caused the tribe of Benjamin to come near by their families, the family of Matri was taken, and Saul the son of Kish was taken: and when they sought him, he could not be found.
- 22 Therefore they ²enquired of the LORD further, if the man should yet come thither. And the LORD answered, Behold, he hath hid himself 23 among the stuff. And they ran and fetched him thence: and when he stood among the people, he was higher than any of the people from his shoulders and upward.
- 24 And Samuel said to all the people, See ye him whom the LORD hath chosen, that *there is* none like him among all the people? And all the 25 people shouted, and said, ⁹God save the king. Then Samuel told the people "the manner of the kingdom, and wrote *it* in a book, and laid *it* up before the LORD.

B. C. 1035.

- ⁷ a man to his neighbour.
- ⁸ ch. 19. 24.
- Matt. 13. 54.
- John 7. 15.
- Acts 4. 13.
- ⁸ from thence.
- ⁹ Isa. 54. 13.
- John 3. 8.
- ¹⁰ Judg. 21. 1. ch. 14. 50.
- ¹¹ Judg. 11. 11.
- Judg. 20. 1. ch. 11. 15.
- ¹² ch. 7. 5.
- ¹³ Ex. 3. 7. 9.
- Ex. 14. 11.
- Ex. 20. 2.
- Deut. 4. 24.
- Judg. 2. 1.
- Judg. 6. 8.
- Neh. 9. 9-12, 27, 28.
- ¹⁴ ch. 8. 7.
- ch. 9. 19.
- ch. 12. 12.
- ch. 17. 19.
- Luke 10. 16.
- ¹⁵ Josh. 7. 14-16.
- ch. 14. 41.
- Acts 1. 24-26.
- ¹⁶ ch. 23. 2.
- ¹⁷ Let the king live.
- ¹⁸ Deut. 17. 11.
- ch. 8. 11.
- Rom. 13. 1-7.
- 1 Tim. 2. 2.

first sign is passed over, but the third is specially described. The spectacle of a man, thought fitter to look after his father's cattle than to take part in the sacred exercises of the young prophets—a man without any previous instruction, or any known taste—entering with ardour into the spirit, and skilfully accompanying the melodies, of the sacred band, was so extraordinary a phenomenon that it gave rise to the proverb, "Is Saul also among the prophets?" (see on ch. xix, 24.) The prophetic spirit had come upon him; and to Saul it was as personal and experimental an evidence of the truth of God's word that had been spoken to him as converts to Christianity have in themselves from the sanctifying power of the Gospel. 12. But who is their father? The Septuagint reads [τῆς πατρὸς αὐτοῦ], 'Who is his father?' referring to Saul the son of Kish.

17. Samuel called the people together . . . to Mizpeh—a shaft like hill near Hebron, 500 feet in height. The national assemblies of the Israelites were held there. A day having been appointed for the election of a king, Samuel summoned a public convention, and, after having charged the people with a rejection of God's institution, and a superseding of it by one of their own, proceeded to the nomination of the new monarch. As it was of the utmost importance for the preservation of the established theocracy that the appointment should be under the Divine direction and control, the determination was made through the miraculous lot,

by the people, as represented by their heads or delegates, tribes, families, and individuals, being successively passed, not *en masse*, but by their representatives, until Saul was found. His concealment of himself must have been the result either of innate modesty or a sudden nervous excitement under the circumstances. When dragged into view, he was seen to possess all those corporeal advantages which a rude people desire in their sovereigns, and the exhibition of which gained for the prince the favourable opinion of Samuel also. "Thus a king was elected by the express declaration of the divine oracle, raised from an obscure family (ch. ix. 21), in a mode so remarkable that he himself, as well as the entire nation, should know and feel that he derived his authority solely from that appointment' (*Graves*, ii., p. 156). In the midst of the national enthusiasm, however, the prophet's deep piety and genuine patriotism took care to explain "the manner of the kingdom"—*i. e.*, the royal rights and privileges, together with the limitations to which they were to be subjected; and in order that the constitution might be ratified with all due solemnity, the charter of this constitutional monarchy was recorded and laid up "before the Lord"—*i. e.*, deposited in the custody of the priests, along with the most sacred archives of the nation. The same safeguard against royal usurpation, by the deposit of the charter limiting the royal prerogative, was taken in the case of his

- 26 And Samuel sent all the people away, every man to his house. And Saul also went home to Gibeah; and there went with him a band of men, whose hearts God had touched. But ^bthe children of Belial said, How shall this man save us? And they despised him, ^cand brought him no presents. But he ¹⁰held his peace.
- 11 THEN Nahash the Ammonite came up, and encamped against ^aJabesh-gilead: and all the men of Jabesh said unto Nahash, ^bMake a covenant with us, and we will serve thee. And Nahash the Ammonite answered them, On this *condition* will I make a *covenant* with you, that I may thrust out all your right eyes, and lay it *for* ^ca reproach upon all Israel.
- 3 And the elders of Jabesh said unto him, ¹Give us seven days' respite, that we may send messengers unto all the coasts of Israel: and then, if ⁴there be no man to save us, we will come out to thee. Then came the messengers ^ato Gibeah of Saul, and told the tidings in the ears of the ⁵people: and ^call the people lifted up their voices, and wept. And, behold, Saul came after the herd out of the field; and Saul said, What *avileth* the people that they weep? And they told him the tidings of the men of ⁶Jabesh. And ^fthe Spirit of God came upon Saul when he heard those ⁷tidings, and his anger was kindled greatly. And he took a yoke of oxen, and ^dhewed them in pieces, and sent *them* throughout all the coasts of

B. C. 1015.
^b Deut. 13. 13.
 ch. 2. 12.
^c 2 Sam. 8. 2.
 Matt. 2. 11.
¹⁰ Or, he was
 as though
 he had
 been deaf.
 CHAP. 11.
^a Judg 21. 8.
^b Ex. 23. 32.
 Job 41. 4.
^c Gen. 31. 14.
 ch. 17. 26.
¹ Forbear
 us.
^d ch 10. 23.
 ch. 15. 31.
^e Judg 2. 4.
 Judg 21. 2.
^f Judg 3. 10.
 Judg 6. 34.
 ch. 10. 10.
 ch. 15. 17.
^g Judg. 19. 22.

successors (cf. 2 Sam. v. 3; 1 Ki. xii. 4; 2 Ki. xi. 17). It is evident from all this that the Hebrews were only the vicegerents of Jehovah: the executive power only was committed to them, while Jehovah reserved to Himself all legislative authority.

26. Saul also went home to Gibeah. This was his place of residence (see on Judg. xx. 20), about five miles north of Jerusalem; and, from its being the capital during his reign, whence it was called "Gibeah of Saul" (ch. xi. 4; xv. 34; 2 Sam. xxi. 6; Isa. x. 29), supposed to be identified in Tel-el-Fulil, is distinguished by its curiously knobbed and double top (*Stanley*, 'Sinai and Palestine,' p. 210; *Porter's* 'Handbook,' pp. 215, 325). *Robinson*, however, thinks that Gibeah is represented by the present Jeba ('Biblical Researches,' ii., p. 114). Gibeah corresponds in meaning to *Dun* or *Bury*, a fortified height, whose hearts God had touched—who feared God, and regarded allegiance to their king as a conscientious duty. They are opposed to "the children of Belial," the worthless portion of the people, though perhaps some of them might be persons of rank and influence. 27. brought him no presents. In Eastern countries the honour of the sovereign and the splendour of the royal household are upheld, not by a fixed rate of taxation, but by presents brought at certain seasons, particularly on the accession of a new sovereign, by officials and men of wealth, from all parts of the kingdom, according to the means of the individual, and of a customary registered value. Such was the tribute which Saul's opponents withheld, and for want of which he was unable to set up a kingly establishment for a while. But 'biding his time,' he bore the insult with a prudence and magnanimity which was of great use in the beginning of his government.

CHAP. XI. 1-4.—NAHASH OFFERS THEM OF JABESH-GILEAD A REPROACHFUL CONDITION.

1. Then Nahash the Ammonite came up—Nahash, serpent (see on Judg. viii. 3), and encamped against Jabesh-gilead—on the east of the Jordan; now ed-Deir, on the south bank of Wady Yâbes, not far to the north of Helâweli, near the ancient road that leads to Beisan. The Ammonites had long claimed the right of original possession in Gilead. Though repressed by Jephthah (Judg. xi. 33), they now, after ninety years, renew their pretensions; and it was the report of their threat-

ened invasion that hastened the appointment of a king (ch. xii. 12). Make a covenant with us, and we will serve thee. In the then scattered and separated state of the nation they saw no prospect of aid from the western Israelites, who were not only remote, but scarcely able to repel the incursions of the Philistines from themselves. 2. thrust out all your right eyes—*lit.*, scoop or hollow out the ball. This barbarous mutilation is the usual punishment of usurpers in the East—inflicted on chiefs; sometimes also, even in modern history, on the whole male population of a town. Nahash meant to keep the Jabeshites useful as tributaries, whence he did not wish to render them wholly blind, but only to deprive them of their right eye, which would disqualify them for war. Besides, his object was, through the people of Jabesh-gilead, to insult the Israelitish nation.

3. the elders of Jabesh said unto him, Give us seven days' respite. It may appear surprising that this barbarian chief allowed them such an interval. But *Josephus* informs us ('Antiquities,' b. vi., ch. v., sec. 2) that it arose from the contempt he entertained for them. that we may send messengers unto all the coasts of Israel. The usual way for a people besieged to implore assistance was by raising a dense smoke during the day, and kindling a fire on a conspicuous height at night, or by waving lighted torches (Jer. vi. 1). At other times they sent messengers to inform their friends and allies (see on Josh. x. 6). But the Gileadites did not send to Saul—a curious proof of the general dissatisfaction that prevailed as to his appointment as king. Those Gileadites deemed him capable neither of advising nor succouring them; and even in his own town the appeal was made to the people, not to the prince.

5-11.—THEY SEND MESSENGERS, AND ARE DELIVERED.

5. Saul came after the herd out of the field. [The Septuagint, mistaking רָעָא , an ox, for רָעָא , morning, has $\text{Σαὺλ ἤρχετο μετὰ τὸ πρωὶ ἐξ ἀγροῦ.}]$
 7. he took a yoke of oxen, and hewed them in pieces—(see on Judg. xix.) This particular form of war-summons was suited to the character and habits of an agricultural and pastoral people. Solemn in itself, the denunciation that accompanied it carried a terrible threat to those that

- Israel by the hands of messengers, saying, ^aWhosoever cometh not forth after Saul and after Samuel, so shall it be done unto his oxen. And ^tthe fear of the LORD fell on the people, and they came out ²with one consent.
- 8 And when he numbered them in ^jBezek, the children ^kof Israel were three hundred thousand, and the men of Judah thirty thousand.
- 9 And they said unto the messengers that came, Thus shall ye say unto the men of Jabesh-gilead, To-morrow, by *that time* the sun be hot, ye shall have ³help. And the messengers came and showed *it* to the men of
- 10 Jabesh; and they were glad. Therefore the men of Jabesh said, To-morrow we will come out unto you, and ye shall do with us all that seemeth good unto you.
- 11 And it was *so* on the morrow, that ^lSaul put the people ^min three companies; and they came into the midst of the host in the morning watch, and slew the Ammonites until the heat of the day: and it came to pass, that they which remained were scattered, so ⁿthat two of them were not left together
- 12 And the people said unto Samuel, Who *is* he that said, ^oShall Saul
- 13 reign over us? ²bring the men, that we may put them to death. And Saul said, ^qThere shall not a man be put to death this day: for to-day ^rthe LORD hath wrought salvation in Israel.
- 14 Then said Samuel to the people, Come, and let us go ^tto Gilgal, and
- 15 renew the kingdom there. And all the people went to Gilgal; and there they made Saul king before the LORD in Gilgal; and there they sacrificed sacrifices of peace offerings before the LORD; and there Saul and all the men of Israel rejoiced greatly.
- 12 AND Samuel said unto all Israel, Behold, I have hearkened unto ^ayour voice in all that ye said unto me, and ^bhave made a king over you.

B. C. 1065.
^h Judg 21. 5.
ⁱ Gen 25. 5.
^j 2 Chr. 14. 14.
^k Fro. 11. 26.
^l as one man.
^m Judg. 20. 1.
ⁿ Judg 1. 5.
^o ch. 13. 15.
^p ch. 15. 4.
^q 2 Sam. 21. 9.
^r Or deiverance.
^s ch. 31. 11.
^t Judg 7. 16.
^u Matt 7. 2.
^v Jas. 2. 13.
^w ch 10 27.
^x Fs. 21. 8.
^y Luke 19. 27.
^z 2 Sam 19. 22.
^{aa} Ex. 14. 13, 30.
^{ab} ch. 11. 45.
^{ac} ch. 17. 5.
^{ad} 63.
^{ae} ch. 19. 5.
^{af} 1 Chr. 11. 14.
^{ag} ch. 10. 8
 CHAP. 12.
^{ah} ch. 8. 5.
^{ai} ch. 10. 21.
^{aj} ch. 11. 14.

neglected to obey it. Saul conjoins the name of Samuel with his own, to lend the greater influence to the measure, and strike greater terror into all contemners of the order. The small contingent furnished by Judah suggests that the disaffection to Saul was strongest in that tribe. 8. Bezek. This place of general muster was not far from Shechem, on the road to Beth-shan, and nearly opposite the ford for crossing to Jabesh-gilead. The great number on the muster-roll showed the effect of Saul's wisdom and promptitude.

11. on the morrow . . . Saul put the people in three companies—and marched them down the same pass by which Joshua had penetrated into the interior of the country. Crossing the Jordan—probably by the upper ford opposite Wady Yâbes, which comes down from the east into the Jordan opposite Beisan (Beth-shan)—in the evening, Saul marched his army all night, according to *Josephus* ('Antiquities,' b. vi., ch. v., sec. 3), thirty furlongs, and came by daybreak on the camp of the Ammonites, who were surprised in three different parts, and totally routed. This happened before the seven days' truce expired. *Josephus* adds that they made a great slaughter—Nahash, the Ammonite sheikh, being amongst the number of the slain—and pursued the fugitives in a complete rout across the desert.

12-15.—SAUL CONFIRMED KING.

12. the people said, . . . Who . . . said, Shall Saul reign over us? The enthusiastic admiration of the people, under the impulse of grateful and generous feelings, would have dealt summary vengeance on the minority who opposed Saul, had not he, either from principle or policy, shown himself as great in clemency as in valour. The calm and sagacious counsel of Samuel directed the popular feelings into a right channel, by appointing a general assembly of the militia, the really effec-

tive force of the nation, at Gilgal, where, amid great pomp and religious solemnities, the victorious leader was confirmed in his kingdom.

15. all the people went to Gilgal . . . and there they sacrificed sacrifices of peace offerings before the Lord. Peace offerings could be offered only at the sanctuary (see on ch. xiii. 9; 2 Sam. xxiv. 25). On the occasion of the election of a king, there was a general convention of the nation through its representatives. It was a solemn festival of the people, and it is probable that the tabernacle was at hand; for as it was moveable, and in point of fact had many temporary stations (Josh. xviii. 1; xxiv. 25, 26; ch. i. 9; vii. 2; xv. 24; xxi.; 1 Chr. xxi. 29); and, moreover, as David in his disastrous flight was accompanied by the ark (see on Josh. xxiv. 1; 2 Sam. xv. 24), it is probable that the tabernacle had its place in later times at the official abode of the chief magistrate; and consequently that Gilgal was in all probability chosen as the scene of Saul's inauguration, and the place of peace (*i. e.*, federal) offerings, in consequence of the tabernacle being there (see 'Israel after the Flesh,' p. 147). 'The late period at which the regal form of government was established in Israel is an evidence of the Divine origin of the law, which in a certain degree provides for it, yet disapproves of and restrains it. It was not unproductive of advantage to the permanent interests of religion that this great change was delayed by Providence until the Mosaic law had subsisted long enough to prove that its first establishment had not originated in any human policy, and that its subsequent support was independent of any human power' (*Graves*, ii. pp. 161, 162).

CHAP. XII. 1-5.—SAMUEL TESTIFIES HIS INTEGRITY.

1. Samuel said unto all Israel. The venerable

2 And now, behold, the king walketh before you: and I am old and grey-headed; and, behold, my sons are with you: and I have walked before you from my childhood unto this day. Behold, here I am: witness against me before the LORD, and before his anointed: whose ox have I taken? or whose ass have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I received any bribe to blind mine eyes therewith? and I will restore it you. And they said, Thou hast not defrauded us, nor oppressed us, neither hast thou taken ought of any man's hand. And he said unto them, The LORD is witness against you, and his anointed is witness this day, that ye have not found ought in my hand. And they answered, He is witness.

6 And Samuel said unto the people, It is the LORD that advanced Moses and Aaron, and that brought your fathers up out of the land of Egypt. Now therefore stand still, that I may reason with you before the LORD of all the righteous acts of the LORD, which he did to you and to your fathers. When Jacob was come into Egypt, and your fathers cried unto the LORD, then the LORD sent Moses and Aaron, which brought forth your fathers out of Egypt, and made them dwell in this place. And when they forgot the LORD their God, he sold them into the hand of Siserá, captain of the host of Hazor, and into the hand of the Philistines, and into the hand of the king of Moab; and they fought against them. And they cried unto the LORD, and said, We have sinned, because we have forsaken the LORD, and have served Baalim and Ashtaroth: but now deliver us out of the hand of our enemies, and we will serve thee. And the LORD sent Jerubbaal, and Bedan, and Jephthah, and Samuel, and delivered you out of the hand of your enemies on every side, and ye dwelled safe. And when ye saw that Nahash the king of the children of Ammon came against you, ye said unto me, Nay; but a king shall reign over us: when the LORD your God was your king. Now therefore behold the king whom ye have chosen, and whom ye have desired! and, behold, the LORD hath set a king over

B. C. 1095.
 o Num. 27. 17. ch 8. 20.
 d Num 16. 15. Acts 20. :3.
 1 Thes. 2. 5.
 1 ransom.
 2 Or, that I should hide mine eyes at him.
 o Deut. 16. 19.
 f John 18 33. Acts 23. 9. Ac's 24. 16. 2 Cor. 1. 12
 o Ex. 22. 4. Ps. 17. 3.
 h Ex. 6. 26. Neh. 9. 9-14.
 Ps. 77. 19, 20.
 Hos. 12 13. Mic. 6. 4.
 8 Or, made. Isa. 1. 18. Isa. 5. 3.
 Eze. 18. 25-30.
 Mic. 6. 2. 3.
 4 righteous-nesses, cr. benefits. Judg. 5. 11.
 5 with.
 f Gen. 17. 7. Judg. 8. 23. ch 8. 7. ch. 10. 19.
 k Hos. 13. 11.

judge, in resigning his magisterial authority, challenged the most minute inquiry into every act of his administration. He called upon any one who had ever brought a cause for decision before him, to state whether he felt that injustice had been done him, or any abuse had been committed of the public interests confided to his care. Standing in an open assembly, he took God to witness that his hands were pure, and that uprightness and integrity had guided the whole course of his official life. History does scarcely anywhere present a more striking example of the moral sublime. *Grotius* compares Samuel to *Aristides*. 2. I am old and grey-headed. [The Septuagint, from a different punctuation, renders it, *καγω γενηρακα και καθισομαι*, and I have become old, and will sit down.] This public address was made after the solemn re-estalment of Saul, and before the convention at Gilgal separated. Samuel having challenged a review of his public life, received a unanimous testimony to the unsullied honour of his personal character, as well as the justice and integrity of his public administration. 5. The Lord is witness against you, and his anointed is witness this day—that, by their own acknowledgment, he had given them no cause to weary of the Divine government by judges, and that, therefore, the blame of desiring a change of government rested with themselves. This was only insinuated, and they did not fully perceive his drift.

6-16.—HE REPROVES THE PEOPLE FOR INGRATITUDE.

7. Now therefore stand still, that I may reason with you. The burden of this faithful and uncompromising address was to show them that though they had obtained the change of government they had so importunately desired, their conduct was highly displeasing to their heavenly King. Nevertheless, if they remained faithful to him, and to the principles of the theocracy, they might be delivered from many of the evils to which the new state of things would expose them. And in confirmation of these statements, no less than in evidence of the Divine displeasure, a remarkable phenomenon, on the invocation of the prophet, and of which he gave due premonition, took place. 11. Bedan. The Septuagint reads Barak; and for "Samuel" some versions read 'Samson,' which seems more natural than that the prophet should mention himself, to the total omission of the greatest of the judges (cf. Heb. xi. 32). 13. Now therefore behold the king whom ye have chosen . . . the LORD hath set a king over you. In concluding his address to the assembled heads of the nation, he presents to them Saul, whom in Jehovah's name he had previously anointed to be king; but while stating that they had obtained the object of their ardent desire, he reminded them that 'the Lord had set a king over them'—i. e., that he was, in the theocratic government of the Hebrews, the representative and vicegerent of Jehovah. 14. If ye

- 14 you. If ye will ¹fear the LORD, and serve him, and obey his voice, and not rebel against the ⁶commandment of the LORD, then shall both ye and also the king that reigneth over you ⁷continue following the LORD
- 15 your God: but if ye will ^mnot obey the voice of the LORD, but rebel against the commandment of the LORD, then shall the hand of the LORD
- 16 be against you, as *it was* against your fathers. Now therefore stand and
- 17 see this great thing, which the LORD will do before your eyes. *Is it not* ⁿwheat harvest to-day? ^oI will call unto the LORD, and he shall send thunder and rain; that ye may perceive and see that ^pyour wickedness is great, which ye have done in the sight of the LORD, in asking you a king.
- 18 So Samuel called unto the LORD; and the LORD sent thunder and rain that day: and ^qall the people greatly feared the LORD and Samuel.
- 19 And all the people said unto Samuel, Pray ^rfor thy servants unto the LORD thy God, that we die not: for we have added unto all our sins
- 20 *this* evil, to ask us a king. And Samuel said unto the people, Fear not: (ye have done all this wickedness: yet turn not aside from following the
- 21 LORD, but serve the LORD with all your heart; and turn ye not aside: ^sfor *then should ye go* after vain things, which cannot profit nor deliver;
- 22 for they are vain:) for the LORD will not forsake his people ^tfor his great name's sake: because ^uit hath pleased the LORD to make you his people.
- 23 Moreover as for me, ^vGod forbid that I should sin against the LORD ⁸in ceasing to pray for you: but I will teach you the good ^wand the right
- 24 way: only fear the LORD, and serve him in truth with all your heart: ^xfor
- 25 consider ^yhow great things he hath done for you. But if ye shall still do wickedly, ^zye shall be consumed, ²both ye and your king.
- 13 SAUL ¹reigned one year; and when he had reigned two years over
- 2 Israel, Saul chose him three thousand men of Israel; *whereof* two thousand were with Saul in Michmash and in mount Beth-el, and a thousand were with Jonathan in Gibeah of Benjamin: and the rest of the people he sent every man to his tent.

B. C. 1095.

¹ Josh. 24. 14.

Ps. 81. 13.

⁶ mouth.⁷ be after.^m Lev. 26. 14.

Deut. 25. 15.

Josh. 21. 20.

ⁿ Fro. 26. 1.^o Josh. 10. 12.

ch. 7. 9.

^p ch. 8. 7.^q Ezra. 10. 9.^r Ex. 9. 28.

Ex. 10. 17.

^s Hab. 2. 18.^t Ps 105. 8.

Jer. 14. 21.

^u Mal. 1. 2.

Matt. 11. 26.

^v 1 Cor. 9. 16.⁸ from

ceasing.

Acts 12. 5.

Rom. 1. 9.

² 1im. 1. 3.^w 1 Ki. 8. 36.

2 Chr. 6. 27.

^x Ezra 9. 13.^y Or, what a

great

thing, etc.

^z Josh. 21. 21.² Deut. 28. 36.

CHAP. 13.

1 the son of

one year in

his reign-

ing.

will fear the Lord . . . 15. But if ye will not obey the voice of the Lord, &c. To set before them the alternative consequences of obedience and disobedience to the authority of the divine law was, as *Graves* well remarks, 'A lesson peculiarly necessary at the beginning of the regal government which the people had called for, from a certain degree of impatience under that theocracy which God by Moses had established.'

17-25.—HE TERRIFIES THEM WITH THUNDER IN HARVEST-TIME.

17. Is it not wheat harvest to-day? That season in Palestine occurs at the beginning of May, when it seldom or never rains, and the sky is serene and cloudless. There could not, therefore, have been a stronger or more appropriate proof of a divine mission than the phenomenon of rain and thunder happening, without any prognostics of its approach, upon the prediction of a person professing himself to be a prophet of the Lord, and giving it as an attestation of his words being true. The people regarded it as a miraculous display of Divine power, and, panic-struck by this unmistakable token of the Divine displeasure at the criminal motives which had prompted their desire for a king, confessed their sin and implored the prophet to pray for them. (*Josephus* calls it 'a winter storm in the midst of harvest' ('Antiquities,' b. vi., ch. v., sec. 6). In our climate, thunder and lightning commonly occur in summer, but in Palestine they usually happen in winter, and are unknown in summer.) Promising to do so, he dispelled their fears. The conduct of Samuel, in this whole

affair of the king's appointment, shows him to have been a great and good man, who sank all private and personal considerations in disinterested zeal for his country's good; and whose last words in public were to warn the people and their king of the danger of apostasy and disobedience to God.

CHAP. XIII. 1, 2.—SAUL'S SELECTED BAND.

1. Saul reigned one year—*lit.*, a son of a year (was) Saul in 'reigning;' *i. e.*, he had been a king for a year. The transactions recorded in the eleventh and twelfth chapters were the principal incidents comprised in the first year of Saul's reign; and the events about to be described in this passage happened in the second year. Some writers, however, regard the text as mutilated and defective in this first verse. The 'Hexapla' of *Origen* has this Greek reading—Saul was (thirty) years old when he was made king, and he reigned—years in Israel; the blank number being filled up by *Houbigant*, *Wall*, and others, as 'forty' (cf. Acts xiii. 21: *Josephus*, 'Antiquities,' b. vi., ch. xiv., sec. 9, where it is said that Saul lived eighteen years while Samuel was alive, and twenty-two after that prophet's death, = forty). The Septuagint omits the first verse altogether.

2. Saul chose him three thousand men of Israel. This band of picked men was a body-guard who were kept constantly on duty, while the rest of the people were dismissed till their services might be needed. It seems to have been his tactics to attack the Philistine garrisons in the country by different detachments, rather than by risking a general engagement; and his first operations were directed to emancipate his native

3 And Jonathan smote "the garrison of the Philistines that was in ²Geba; and the Philistines heard of it. And Saul blew the trumpet throughout
4 all the land, saying, Let the Hebrews hear. And all Israel heard say that Saul had smitten a garrison of the Philistines, and that Israel also ³was had in abomination with the Philistines. And the people were called
5 together after Saul to Gilgal. And the Philistines gathered themselves together to fight with Israel, thirty thousand chariots, and six thousand horsemen, and people as the sand which is on the sea-shore in multitude: and they came up, and pitched in Michmash, eastward ^bfrom Beth-aven.
6 When the men of Israel saw that they were in a strait, (for the people were distressed,) then the people ^cdid hide themselves in caves, and in

B. C. 10 3.
" ch. 10. 5.
ch. 14. 1-6.
2 Sam. 23. 14.
2 Or. The hill.
3 did stink. Gen. 34. 30.
b Josh. 7. 2.
Josh. 18. 12.
Hos 4. 15.
Hos. 5. 8.
c Judg. 6. 2.

territory of Benjamin from the occupation of these enemies.

3, 4.—HE CALLS THE HEBREWS TO GILGAL AGAINST THE PHILISTINES.

3. Jonathan (God-given) smote the garrison of the Philistines . . . in Geba. Geba and Gibeah were towns in Benjamin very close to each other (Josh. xviii. 24, 28). From the similarity of the names, they are apt to be confounded, and they are so in this chapter: for while the two places are accurately distinguished [גִּבְעָה, Gibeah (v. 2), and גִּבְעָה (v. 3)], the distinction is overlooked in our version (v. 16), where the Hebrew text has [גִּבְעָה] Gibeah. Gibeah (Tel el-Fūlil) (see on ch. x. 26). Geba (Jeb'a), a small village half in ruins. "Garrison" [גִּבְעָה] is different from the word used, v. 23; ch. xiv. 1, and signifies something erected; probably a pillar or flag-staff, indicative of Philistine ascendancy; and that the secret demolition of this standard, so obnoxious to a young and noble-hearted patriot, was the feat of Jonathan referred to, is evident from the words, "the Philistines heard of it," which is not the way we should expect an attack on a fortress to be noticed. [The Septuagint considers the word as a proper name—the name of the Philistine officer in command—and renders the clause, τὸν Νασιβ τὸν ἀλλόφυλον τοῦ ἐν τῷ Βουναῖ, smote Nasib, the foreigner who was on the hill.] This view is advocated by Stark ('Gaza und die Philistäische Küste,' p. 164), who says, 'the slaughter of one Nasib at Geba was the occasion of a new campaign.' It is also adopted by Stanley (Smith's 'Dictionary,' article 'Jonathan'). This translation, however, is quite unwarrantable, as, in order to obtain the meaning, "the Philistines," always rendered in the Greek translation 'foreigners,' are changed from the plural into the singular, and 'Geba' into 'the hill.' [Perhaps, after all, the word "garrison" in our version should not be lightly discarded, for גִּבְעָה, garrison (2 Sam. xxiii. 14) is rendered by the sacred historian גִּבְעָה in the parallel passage, 1 Chr. xi. 16; while in 2 Sam. viii. 6, 14, the LXX. themselves render גִּבְעָה by φρουρα, garrison, an outpost or detachment.] Saul blew the trumpet throughout all the land. This, a well-known sound, was the usual Hebrew war-summons: the first blast was answered by the beacon-fire in the neighbouring places. A second blast was blown, then answered by a fire in a more distant locality, whence the proclamation was speedily diffused over the whole country. As the Philistines resented what Jonathan had done as an overt attempt to throw off their yoke, a levy, en masse, of the people was immediately ordered, the rendezvous to be the old camping ground at Gilgal. saying, Let the Hebrews hear—i. e., obey the summons. [The Septuagint has Ἡσπερ ἴκασιν οἱ δούλοι, The slaves have obeyed; as if the text

were גִּבְעָה, slaves, instead of גִּבְעָה, the Hebrews.] The following may be given as a representation of the exact position of affairs:—Michmash (now Mūkhmās) and Geba (now Jeb'a) lay on opposite sides of "the passage of Michmash" (now Wady Suweinit), which is an open valley, about a mile broad at this point, but which contracts in its descent eastward to the Jordan into a narrow precipitous defile. Gibeah (now Tel el-Fūlil) was south of both. Michmash was at first occupied by Saul with a large portion of his army: Jonathan, his son, remained in Gibeah, the capital, with another. The latter had made a successful sally on the Philistine garrison at Geba, and the Philistines having heard of it, determined to take speedy and ample revenge by an invasion of the Hebrew territory on a large scale. Saul, by a war-summons, collected a general muster of the fighting men of his kingdom at Gilgal, and on his temporary withdrawal for that purpose from Michmash, the Philistines took possession of the fortress which he had left.

5.—THE PHILISTINES' GREAT HOST.
5. thirty thousand chariots, and six thousand horsemen. Either this number must include chariots of every kind, or the word "chariots" must mean the men fighting in them (2 Sam. x. 18; 1 Ki. xx. 21; 1 Chr. xix. 18). גִּבְעָה, thirty, is omitted in one MS. Instead of גִּבְעָה, thirty, the Syriac and Arabic versions have גִּבְעָה, three. It has been suggested that גִּבְעָה, having been twice written by mistake, was then interpreted thirty, and that the present reading originated in this way. Or the true number may be גִּבְעָה (31), where גִּבְעָה was afterwards taken for גִּבְעָה (1,000) (Davidson's 'Revision of the Hebrew Text of the Old Testament').] The gathering of the chariots and horsemen must be understood to be on the Philistine plain, before they ascended the western passes, and pitched in the heart of the Benjamin hills, in "Michmash" (now Mūkhmās), a 'steep, precipitous valley' (Robinson) eastward from Beth-aven (Beth-el).

6-S.—THE ISRAELITES' DISTRESS.
6. When the men of Israel saw that they were in a strait. Though Saul's gallantry was unabated, his subjects displayed no degree of zeal and energy. Instead of venturing an encounter, they fled in all directions. [The Septuagint, apparently reading גִּבְעָה, come near, instead of גִּבְעָה, pressed, harassed, renders this clause καὶ αὐτὸν Ἰσραὴλ εἶδεν ὅτι στενωὸς αὐτῷ μὴ προσάγειν αὐτόν, and the man Israel saw that he was in such difficulties that he could not advance to him—viz., the Philistine.] Numbers of the people took refuge in the hiding-places which the broken ridges of the neighbourhood abundantly afford. The rocks are perforated in every direction with

7 thickets, and in rocks, and in high places, and in pits. And some of the Hebrews went over Jordan to the land of Gad and Gilead. As for Saul, he was yet in Gilgal, and all the people trembled. And he tarried seven days, according to the set time that Samuel had appointed: but Samuel came not to Gilgal; and the people were scattered from him. And Saul said, Bring hither a burnt offering to me, and peace offerings. And he offered the burnt offering.

10 And it came to pass, that, as soon as he had made an end of offering the burnt offering, behold, Samuel came; and Saul went out to meet him, 11 that he might salute him. And Samuel said, What hast thou done? And Saul said, Because I saw that the people were scattered from me, and that thou camest not within the days appointed, and that the Philistines gathered themselves together at Michmash; therefore said I, The Philistines will come down now upon me to Gilgal, and I have not made supplication unto the LORD: I forced myself therefore, and offered a burnt offering. And Samuel said to Saul, Thou hast done foolishly: thou hast not kept the commandment of the LORD thy God, which he commanded thee: for now would the LORD have established thy kingdom upon Israel for ever. But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the LORD hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the LORD hath

B C 19 3
 4 trembled after him.
 d ch 10. 8.
 e Deut. 12. 5-14.
 ch. 15. 22.
 2 Chr. 26. 16.
 Heb. 5. 4.
 5 bless him.
 Ruth 2. 4.
 6 entreated the face.
 f 2 Chr. 16. 9.
 Job 34. 18.
 Fro. 19. 3.
 g Lev. 17. 1.
 ch. 15. 11.
 Num. 18. 7.
 h ch 2. 30.
 ch. 15. 28.
 i 2 Sam. 7. 15
 16.
 Is. 73. 70.
 Ps 89. 40.
 Acts 13. 22.

'caves,' and 'holes,' and 'pits,' crevices and fissures sunk deep in the rocky soil, subterranean granaries or dry wells in the adjoining fields. The name of Michmash (hidden treasure) seems to be derived from this natural peculiarity (*Stanley, 'Sinai and Palestine,'* pp. 199, 200; *Drew's 'Scripture Lands,'* pp. 113-115; also *Stewart's 'Tent and Khan,'* p. 359). 7. And some of the Hebrews went over Jordan to the land of Gad and Gilead [עַבְרָיִם יַבְרִי וְעַבְרָיִם; Septuagint, reading εὐχρηστῶν, renders it καὶ οὐ διαβαίνοντες διέβησαν, and the crosses crossed]. 8. he tarried seven days. Saul was still at Gilgal, in the eastern borders of his kingdom, in the valley of Jordan. according to the set time that Samuel had appointed. [The Septuagint, Διέλειπεν ἑπτὰ ἡμέρας τῷ μαρτυρίῳ, ὡς εἶπε Σαμουὴλ, he tarried seven days at the Testimony, as Samuel said.] Some bolder spirits had ventured to join the camp at Gilgal; but even the courage of those stout-hearted men gave way in prospect of this terrible visitation; and as many of them were stealing away, Saul thought some immediate and decided step must be taken. He seems to have waited till the seventh day was far advanced; probably till about the time of the evening sacrifice.

9-16.—SAUL, WEARY OF STAYING FOR SAMUEL, SACRIFICES.

9. Saul said, Bring hither a burnt offering to me, and peace offerings. Saul, though patriotic enough in his own way, was more ambitious of gaining the glory of a triumph to himself than ascribing it to God. He did not understand his proper position as king of Israel; and although aware of the restrictions under which he held the sovereignty, wished to rule as an autocrat who possessed absolute power both in civil and sacred things. This occasion was his first trial. Samuel waited till the last day of the seven, in order to put the constitutional character of the king to the test; and as Saul, in his impatient and passionate haste, knowingly transgressed (v. 12) by want of faith, and thus showing his unfitness for his peculiar office of theocratic ruler, as he showed nothing of the faith of Gideon and other Hebrew generals, he incurred a threat of the rejection which his subsequent waywardness confirmed. 'When Saul ordered animals to be brought to him for burnt and peace offerings, it is to be remarked

that he is said only to have offered the former (vv. 9, 12). And I cannot forbear alluding to the gratuitous supposition that Saul invaded the priest's office in this transaction, and that it was for this he was reprehended by Samuel. I call it gratuitous, because Samuel never speaks of such a thing to Saul. The king's fault was want of a full and confiding faith. In the burnt offering no priest was at that time required (cf. Judg. vi. 26; xiii. 15-23; ch. vii. 9; x. 8; xx. 6, 29; 2 Sam. xxiv. 24); and even if there were, Samuel was not a priest' ('Israel according to the Flesh,' p. 147).

14. now thy kingdom shall not continue. Saul had for some time been swerving from his proper and bounden allegiance to Jehovah as king of Israel, by acting as an autocrat in appointing a standing army (v. 2)—a great innovation—and now in not patiently waiting the time fixed for celebrating the solemn rites of religion. He seems to have been desirous of exercising independent authority, like the heathen rulers in the neighbouring countries, and to have become imperious and self-willed, giving unmistakable indications that, under his government, the divine law, as established by Moses, would soon have been superseded, had not Jehovah, in this first stage of the monarchy, interposed, raising up a new dynasty, and thus vindicated His theocratic supremacy by a precedent set up as a beacon, too much disregarded, for the warning of future kings in Israel. The Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart—viz., David, who in his public and official conduct acted for the most part as a constitutional king of Israel under the theocracy, conforming to the laws, upholding the worship, and testifying devoted allegiance to the authority and revealed will of Jehovah. No doubt he was at one unhappy period of his reign guilty of adultery and murder, and by the commission of those heinous transgressions he was a great sinner. But the phrase, "a man after God's own heart," has no reference to the piety or virtues of private and personal character; for no mere man in that respect has come up to the standard of the divine law. It is used solely with regard to official fidelity in the service of Jehovah in Israel (cf. ch. ii. 35); and David was certainly entitled to be characterized as "a man after God's own heart," from his ardent zeal and undeviating exertions

- commanded him *to be* captain over his people, because thou hast not kept *that* which the LORD commanded thee.
- 15 And Samuel arose, and gat him up from Gilgal unto Gibeah of Benjamin: and Saul numbered the people *that were* ⁷present with him, ³about six hundred men. And Saul, and Jonathan his son, and the people *that were* present with them, abode in ⁸Gibeah of Benjamin:
- 17 But the Philistines encamped in Michmash. And the spoilers came out of the camp of the Philistines in three companies: one company turned unto the way *that leadeth to* ^kOphrah, unto the land of Shual: and another company turned the way *to* ^lBeth-horon: and another company turned *to* the way of the border that looketh to the valley of ⁹Zeboim toward the wilderness.
- 19 Now ^mthere was no smith found throughout all the land of Israel; for the Philistines said, Lest the Hebrews make *them* swords or spears: but all the Israelites went down to the Philistines, to sharpen every man 20 his share, and his coultter, and his ax, and his mattock. Yet they had ¹⁰a file for the mattocks, and for the coulters, and for the forks, and for 22 the axes, and ¹¹to sharpen the goads. So it came to pass, in the day of battle, that ⁿthere was neither sword nor spear found in the hand of any of the people that *were* with Saul and Jonathan: but with Saul and with Jonathan his son was there found.
- 23 And the ¹²garrison of the Philistines went out to the passage of Michmash.

B. C. 1093.

7 found.
 / ch. 14. 2.
 8 Geba.
 ver. 3.
 k Josh 18. 7. 3.
 l Josh. 16. 3.
 Josh. 18. 13.
 14.
 ch. 10. 11.
 1 Chr. 6. 63.
 3 Chr. 8. 6.
 9 Or.
 serpents.
 Neh. 11. 31.
 m 2 Ki 24. 14.
 Jer 21. 1.
 10 a file with
 moutis.
 11 to set.
 n Judg 3. 31.
 Judg. 5. 8.
 ch. 17. 47.
 50.
 Zech 4. 6.
 1 Cor. 1. 27-
 29.
 2 Cor. 4. 7.
 12 Or, stand-
 ing camp.

for the interests of the true religion, in opposition to idolatry. and the Lord hath commanded him to be captain over his people [רִאשׁוֹן, leader, prince]—especially a theocratic prince or ruler (cf. ch. ix. 16; x. 1; xxv. 30; 2 Sam. vi. 21; vii. 8; 1 Ki. i. 35; xiv. 7; Isa. lv. 4; Dan. ix. 25).

15. Samuel . . . gat him . . . unto Gibeah. [The Septuagint has και ανέστη Σαμουήλ και απήλασεν εκ Γαλιγάλων και το κατάλειμμα του λαού ανέβηc όπισθεν Σαούλ εις άπάντησιν όπισθεν του λαού του πολεμιστου. And Samuel went up from Gilgal, and the remnant of the people went up after Saul, and with the men of war—εκ Γαλιγάλων εις Γαβαά Βενιαμιν—from Gilgal to Gibeah of Benjamin.] One MS. reads 'Saul' instead of "Samuel" at the beginning of this verse. Dr. Walls is of opinion that the Hebrew scribe, while copying, missed a line, and so added to the sentence concerning Samuel that which ended the verse concerning Saul. 16. Saul . . . abode in Gibeah [גִּבְעָה]—in Geba. Saul removed his camp thither, either in the hope that, being near his native town, he would gain an increase of followers, or that he might enjoy the counsels and influence of the prophet. [The Septuagint adds και εκλαιου, and the people wept, considering how small a band they were against the immense host of the enemy.]

17. the spoilers came out of the camp of the Philistines in three companies. Those predatory bands, sallying from Michmash, ravaged through the three valleys which radiate from the uplands of Michmash to Ophrah (now Tayibeh) (see on Judg. vii. 2) on the north, through the rocky pass of Beth-horon on the west, and down the ravines of Zeboim (the hyenas), eastward towards the Ghor, or Jordan valley, on the east.

19. Now there was no smith . . . throughout . . . Israel. The country was in the lowest state of depression and degradation. The Philistines, after the great victory over the sons of Eli, had become the virtual masters of the land. Their policy in disarming the natives has been often followed in the East, (cf. Judg. v. 8; see a similar instance in

modern times, Morgan's 'History of Algiers,' p. 196, quoted by Taylor, 'Calmet's Fragments,' No. xci.) For repairing any serious damage to their agricultural implements, they had to apply to the neighbouring forts. 21. Yet they had a file—as a kind of privilege, for the purpose of sharpening sundry smaller utensils of husbandry. [The Septuagint, και ην ο τρυγητός έτοιμος του Ψεριξεν' τα δε σκευη ην τρεις σκλλοι εις τον οδοντα, και τη εξιμη και τω δρεπανω υποστασις ην η αυτη, 'and the grape season (vintage) was ready for the reaping. Now the implements were three shekels for the tooth, and to the ax and to the sickle there was the same subject.' This is a literal and correct rendering; but it is wholly meaningless, or what meaning there is in it is irrelevant to the context.] 22. in the day of battle [בַּיּוֹם הַמִּלְחָמָה] (a verbal noun)—in the day of fighting. [The Septuagint, και εγενεθη εν ταις ημεραις του πολεμου Μαχιας, 'and it happened in the time of the war of Michmash'—a meaning quite different from that of the Hebrew text.] there was neither sword nor spear found in the hand of any of the people. They had no weapons of offence but their rude implements of husbandry. But by means of these a bold, energetic militia could do great execution; and in the well-known instances of the royalist peasantry of La Vendee, or the Hays of Cramond, in Scotland, we have examples of the alert and effective manner in which a pastoral or agricultural people can arm themselves at a moment's notice. Saul and Jonathan alone were furnished with proper military weapons; but the Israelites, on this as on former occasions (see on Judg. iii. 31; v. 8), found that "the Lord saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle is the Lord's" (ch. xvii. 47).

23. the garrison of the Philistines went out to the passage of Michmash. They were seen to remove their camp from the village to the pass of Michmash—i. e., half a mile or so south-east, to the brow of the cliff overhanging the ravine which separates Mic'mash from Geba (Porter's 'Hand-book,' p. 214).

14 NOW ¹it came to pass upon a day, that Jonathan the son of Saul said unto the young man that bare his armour, Come, and let us go over to the Philistines' garrison, that *is* on the other side. But he told not his
2 father. And Saul tarried in the uttermost part of Gibeah under a pomegranate tree which *is* in Migron: and the people that *were* with him
3 *were*^a about six hundred men; and ^b Ahiah, the son of Ahitub, ^c I-chabod's brother, the son of Phinehas, the son of Eli, ^d the LORD's priest in Shiloh, wearing an ephod. And the people knew not that Jonathan was gone.
4 And between the passages, by which Jonathan sought to go over ^e unto the Philistines' garrison, *there was* a sharp rock on the one side, and a sharp rock on the other side: and the name of the one *was* Bozez, and the
5 name of the other Seneh. The ²fore front of the one *was* situate northward over against Michmash, and the other southward over against
6 Gibeah. And Jonathan said to the young man that bare his armour, Come, and let us go over unto the garrison of these ³uncircumcised: it may be that the LORD will work for us: for *there is* no restraint to the
7 LORD to ⁴save by many or by few. And his armour-bearer said unto him, Do all that *is* in thine heart: turn thee; behold, I *am* with thee

E. C. 10:7.

CHAP. 11.
¹ Or, there was a day.
^a ch. 13. 15.
^b ch. 21. 9.
 Ahimelech.
^c ch. 4. 21.
^d Ex. 28. 30.
 ch. 2. 28.
 ch. 22. 13.
^e ch. 13. 33.
² tooth
^f ch. 17. 16.
³ Deut. 3. 31.
 Josh. 14. 12.
 Judg. 7. 47.
 2 Chr. 14. 11.
 Ps. 115. 1-3.
 Ps. 118. 6.
 Zech. 4. 6.
 Matt. 12. 26.

CHAP. XIV. 1-14.—JONATHAN MIRACULOUSLY SMITES THE PHILISTINES' GARRISON.

1. the Philistines' garrison—*margin*, the standing camp in "the passage of Michmash" (ch. xiii. 16, 23), now Wady es-Suweinit. It begins in the neighbourhood of Betin (Beth-el) and el-Bireh (Beeroth), and as it breaks through the ridge below these places its sides form precipitous walls. On the right, about a quarter of an acre below, it again breaks off, and passes between high perpendicular precipices (*Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' ii., p. 116; *Stanley's* 'Sinai and Palestine,' p. 201; *Porter's* 'Haudbaul of Syria and Palestine,' pp. 214, 215). **2.** Saul tarried in the uttermost part of Gibeah. His head-quarters were removed from Geba to Migron, 'in the extremity or skirts of Gibeah,'—thus at once retreating from the Philistines and drawing near to the high priest, as well as Samuel (ch. xiii. 15), who was in Gibeah. The exact site of Migron has not been ascertained; but it lay along the road which ran through this passage (Isa. x. 28), and probably, as *Porter* suggests, somewhere on the bank of Wady Kirah. There was, therefore, only the breadth of the ravine between the two camps. Saul had encamped, along with Samuel and Ahiah, the high priest, on the top of one of the conical or spherical hills which abound in the Benjamite territory, and favourable for an encampment, called Migron (a precipice). under a pomegranate tree (רִמּוֹן, the pomegranate)—some noted tree. But as the pomegranate is of too low a stature for Saul to erect a tent under its shade, many take the word as the name of the town a little north-east of Gibeah and Michmash (Josh. xv. 32; Judg. xx. 45; 1 Chr. xiv. 32; Zech. xiv. 10), now Rümönn: 'a village,' says *Robinson* ('Biblical Researches,' ii., pp. 113, 132), 'which forms a remarkable object in the landscape, being situated on and around the summit of a conical chalky hill, and visible in all directions.' **4.** between the passages—*i. e.*, the deep and great ravine of Suweinit, which extended from west to east. Jonathan sought to go over unto the Philistines' garrison—a distance of about three miles, running between two jagged points, or, Hebrew, 'teeth of the cliff.' there was a sharp rock on the one side, and a sharp rock on the other side . . . Bozez (shining, from the aspect of the chalky rock) . . . Seneh (the thorn, probably from a solitary acacia on its top). They are the only rocks of the

kind in this vicinity; and the top of the crag towards Michmash was occupied as the post of the Philistines. 'In the gorge or valley are two hills of a conical or rather a spherical form, having steep rocky sides, with small wadies running up behind each, so as almost to isolate them. One is on the side towards Geba (Jeb'a), and the other towards Michmash (Mühkmäs). These would seem to be the two rocks mentioned in connection with Jonathan's adventure. They are not, indeed, so "sharp," as the language of Scripture would seem to imply, but they are the only rocks of the kind in this vicinity' (*Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' ii., p. 116). The ridges on each side of the valley exhibit two elevated points which project into the great wady; and the easternmost of these bluffs on each side probably the outposts of the two garrisons of the Israelites and the Philistines. The road passes around the eastern side of the southern hill, the post of Israel, and then strikes up over the western part of the northern one, the post of the Philistines, and the scene of Jonathan's adventure. These hills struck us now, more than formerly, as of sharp ascent, and as appropriate to the circumstances of the narrative. They are isolated cliffs in the valley, except so far as the low ridge, at the end of which they are found, connected them back with the higher ground on each side (*Robinson's* 'Later Biblical Researches,' Second Journey, p. 289). The two camps were in sight of each other; and it was up the steep rocky sides of this isolated eminence that Jonathan and his armour-bearer (v. 6) made their adventurous approach. This enterprise is one of the most gallant and romantic that history records. The action, viewed in itself, was rash, and contrary to all established rules of military discipline, which do not permit soldiers to fight, or to undertake any enterprise that may involve important consequences, without the order of the generals. It might be that he was incited to it by a divine impulse, his patriotic spirit being roused by rumours of the depredations committed by the three marauding parties (ch. xiii. 17, 18) on the peasantry in the neighbourhood. **6.** Jonathan said to the young man . . . Come, and let us go over unto the garrison (אָרְבֵּי-עַבְדֵּי). The Septuagint takes this word as the name of a place, and translates, Διαβίβου eis Μεσσήβ, let us go over to Messab; it may be that the LORD will work for us. This expression did not imply a doubt:

- 8 according to thy heart. Then said Jonathan, Behold, we will pass over
 9 unto *these* men, and we will discover ourselves unto them. If they say
 thus unto us, ³Tarry until we come to you; then we will stand still in
 10 our place, and will not go up unto them. But if they say thus, Come
 up unto us; then we will go up: for the LORD hath delivered them into
 our hand: and ^hthis *shall be* a sign unto us.
- 11 And both of them discovered themselves unto the garrison of the
 Philistines: and the Philistines said, Behold, the Hebrews come forth out
 12 of the holes where they had hid themselves. And the men of the garrison
 answered Jonathan and his armour-bearer, and said, Come up to us, and
 we will show you a thing. And Jonathan said unto his armour-bearer,
 Come up after me; for the LORD hath delivered them into the hand of
 13 Israel. And ⁱJonathan climbed up upon his hands and upon his feet, and
 his armour-bearer after him: and they ^jfell before Jonathan; and his
 14 armour-bearer slew after him. And that first slaughter, which Jonathan
 and his armour-bearer made, was about twenty men, within as it were ^kan
 half acre of land, *which a yoke of oxen might plow*.
- 15 And ^kthere was trembling in the host, in the field, and among all the
 people: the garrison, and ^lthe spoilers, they also trembled, and the earth
 quaked: so it was ⁵a very great trembling.
- 16 And the watchmen of Saul in Gibeah of Benjamin looked; and, behold,
 the multitude melted away, and they went on beating down *one another*.
- 17 Then said Saul unto the people that *were* with him, Number now, and
 see who is gone from us. And when they had numbered, behold,
 18 Jonathan and his armour-bearer *were not there*. And Saul said unto
 Ahiah, Bring hither the ark of God: (for the ark of God was at that time

B. C. 1087.

³ Be still.^A Gen. 21. 14.

Judg. 7. 11.

ch. 10. 7.

² Sam. 5. 24.

Isa. 7. 11-

14.

⁴ ch. 17. 43,

44.

1 Sam. 2. 14.

17.

2 Ki. 14. 8.

^j Lev. 2. 7, 8.

Deut. 23. 7.

Deut. 32. 30.

Josh. 23. 10.

Rom. 8. 31.

⁴ Or, half a

furrow of

an acre of

land.

Judg. 7. 21.

^k Josh. 2. 9.

Judg. 7. 21.

2 Ki. 7. 7.

Job 18. 11.

Ps. 14. 5.

Ps. 48. 5, 6.

^l ch. 13. 17.⁵ a trem-

bling of

God.

Gen. 35. 5.

it signified simply that the object he aimed at was not in his own power, that it depended upon God, and that he expected success neither from his own strength nor his own merit. 8. Behold, we will pass over unto these men, and we will discover ourselves unto them [וַיִּתְּרֻן]—we will appear, show ourselves. [The Septuagint, mistaking וַיִּתְּרֻן, be revealed or laid bare, for וַיִּרְלֻן, be rolled, has ἰδού, ἡμεῖς διαβαίωμεν πρὸς τοὺς ἀνθρώπους, καὶ κατακυλισθήσόμεθα πρὸς αὐτούς, we will cross over to the men, and will be rolled down (tumble) upon them.] 9. If they say . . . 10. Come up . . . the Lord hath delivered them into our hand. When Jonathan appears here to prescribe a sign or token of God's will, we may infer that the same spirit which inspired this enterprise suggested the means of its execution, and put into his heart what to ask of God (see on Gen. xxiv. 12-14).

11. Behold, the Hebrews come forth out of the holes. As it could not occur to the sentries that two men had come with hostile designs, it was a natural conclusion that they were Israelite deserters; and hence no attempt was made to hinder their ascent, or stone them, as they were scrambling up the ridge. 13. and they fell before Jonathan [וַיִּפְּלוּ]; Septuagint, reading וַיִּרְאוּ, they stared at, καὶ ἐπέβλεψαν κατὰ πρόσωπον Ἰωνάθαν, καὶ ἐπάταξεν αὐτοὺς, καὶ ὁ αἶρων τὰ σκέη αὐτῶν, ἐπεδίδου σκίω αὐτῶν, and they looked toward the face of Jonathan, and he smote them, and his armour-bearer gave it them (dealt similar blows) behind him]. This accords with the statement of *Josephus*, that Jonathan's feat was performed very early in the morning, when the Philistine army was mostly asleep, and some newly awake. 14. that first slaughter . . . within . . . an half acre of land, which a yoke of oxen might plow. This was a very ancient mode of measurement, and it still subsists in the East. [Eut

Dr. Kennicott ('First Dissertation,' p. 452) purposes, by a slight change of the punctuation, a different text, which brings out a meaning exactly corresponding to that of the Septuagint,—καὶ ἐγενήθη ἡ πληγὴ ἢ πρώτη ἢ ἐπάταξεν Ἰωνάθαν καὶ ὁ αἶρων τὰ σκέη αὐτοῦ ὡς ἑκοσι ἄνδρες ἐν βολαῖσι καὶ ἐν πετροβόλοις καὶ ἐν κοχλαῖσι τοῦ πεδίου, And this first slaughter, by which Jonathan and his armour-bearer smote about twenty men, was accomplished by arrows, by slinging of stones, and by flints of the field.] The men who saw them scrambling up the rock had been surprised and killed; and the spectacle of twenty corpses would suggest to others that they were attacked by a numerous force. The success of the adventure was aided by a panic that struck the enemy, produced both by the sudden surprise and the shock of an earthquake. The feat was begun and achieved by the faith of Jonathan, and the issue was of God.

15. And there was trembling in the host, in the field, and among all the people: the garrison, and the spoilers, they also trembled. [The Septuagint has καὶ ἐγενήθη ἑκστασις ἐν τῇ παρεμβολῇ καὶ ἐν ἀγρῷ, καὶ πᾶς ὁ λαὸς ὁ ἐν Μεσσαβ, καὶ οὐ διεφθείροντες ἐξέστησαν, καὶ αὐτοὶ οὐκ ἤθελον ποιεῖν, And there was a trembling in the camp, and in the field, and on all the people in Messab, and the spoilers stood still, and would not do (anything).]

16. the watchmen of Saul . . . looked. The wild disorder in the enemies' camp was described, and the noise of dismay heard on the heights of Gibeah. 17. said Saul . . . Number now, and see who is gone from us. The idea occurred to him that it might be some daring adventurer belonging to his own little troop, and it would be easy to discover him. 18. Saul said unto Ahiah, Bring hither the ark of God. There is no evidence that the ark had been brought from Kirjath-jearim. [The Septuagint version is preferable;

19 with the children of Israel.) And it came to pass, while Saul talked
 unto the priest, that the ⁶noise that *was* in the host of the Philistines
 went on and increased: and ⁷Saul said unto the priest, Withdraw thine
 20 hand. And Saul and all the people that *were* with him ⁷assembled them-
 selves, and they came to the battle: and, behold, ⁹every man's sword was
 21 against his fellow, and *there was* a very great discomfiture. Moreover the
 Hebrews *that were* with the Philistines before that time, which went up
 with them into the camp *from the country* round about, even they also
 22 *turned* to be with the Israelites that *were* with Saul and Jonathan. Like-
 wise all the men of Israel which had ²hid themselves in mount Ephraim,
 when they heard that the Philistines fled, even they also followed hard
 23 after them in the battle. So ⁴the LORD saved Israel that day: and the
 battle passed over ⁷unto Beth-aven.
 24 And the men of Israel were distressed that day. for Saul had ⁸adjured
 the people, saying, Cursed *be* the man that eateth *any* food until evening,
 that I may be avenged on mine enemies. So none of the people tasted
 25 *any* food. And ⁴all *they of* the land came to a wood; and there was
 26 ⁴honey upon the ground. And when the people were come into the wood,
 behold, the honey dropped; but no man put his hand to his mouth: for
 27 the people feared the oath. But Jonathan heard not when his father
 charged the people with the oath: wherefore he put forth the end of the
 rod that *was* in his hand, and dipped it in ⁸an honey-comb, and put his
 28 hand to his mouth; and his eyes were enlightened. Then answered one
 of the people, and said, Thy father ⁹straitly charged the people with an
 oath, saying, Cursed *be* the man that eateth *any* food this day. And the
 29 people were ¹⁰faint. Then said Jonathan, My father hath troubled the
 land: see, I pray you, how mine eyes have been enlightened, because I
 30 tasted a little of this honey; how much more, if haply the people had
 eaten freely to-day of the spoil of their enemies which they found?
 for had there not been now a much greater slaughter among the
 Philistines?

B C. 1087.
 Num. 27. 21.
 Or,
 tumult,
 Josh 9. 14.
 Ps. 10. 11.
 were cried
 together.
 Judg 7. 2.
 Chr. 20. 23.
 Isa 9. 19-
 21.
 ch. 13. 6.
 Ex 14. 10.
 Deut 3. 23.
 1 Sam 10.
 19.
 1 Chr 11. 14.
 Ps. 17. 7.
 Ps. 44. 6, 7.
 Isa. 63. 9.
 Hos. 1. 7.
 ch 13. 5.
 Lev. 27. 23.
 Num. 21. 2.
 Deut 27. 15.
 Josh. 6. 21.
 Judg 11. 31.
 Judg. 21. 1-
 5.
 Pro. 11. 9.
 Deut 9. 22.
 Matt. 3. 5.
 Ex. 3. 8.
 Num 13. 27.
 Matt. 3. 4.
 Or, wo d-
 honey.
 adjur. ng.
 adjured.
 Or, weary.

which, by a slight variation of the text, reads, Προσάγαγε το Ἐφὸδόν, bring 'the ephod'—i. e., the priestly cape, which the high priest put on when consulting the oracle. That this should be at hand is natural, from the presence of Ahiah himself, as well as the nearness of Nob, where the tabernacle was then situated.] 19. Withdraw thine hand. The priest, invested with the ephod, prayed with raised and extended hands. Saul, perceiving that the opportunity was inviting, and that God appeared to have sufficiently declared in favour of His people, requested the priest to cease, that they might immediately join in the contest. The season for consultation was past, the time for prompt action was come. 20. Saul and all the people. The whole warriors in the garrison of Gibeah, the Israelite deserters in the camp of the Philistines, and the fugitives among the mountains of Ephraim, now all rushed to the pursuit, which was hot and sanguinary. 21. The Hebrews that were with the Philistines before that time [הַיְהוּדִים]. The Septuagint, reading ἑβραῖοι, renders it *καὶ οἱ δοῦλοι οἱ ὄντες ἐχθῆς καὶ τρίτην ἡμέραν*, and the slaves who had been (with them) yesterday and the third day. The whole body of Hebrews who thus rallied round the king to aid him in pursuing the Philistine fugitives is stated in the Septuagint to have comprised [ὡς δεκά χιλιάδες ἀνδρῶν] about 10,000 men. Josephus gives the same number ('Antiquities,' b. vi., ch. vi., sec. 3). 23. So the Lord saved Israel that day; and the battle passed over unto Beth-aven—i. e., Beth-el. It passed over the forest,

now destroyed, on the central ridge of Palestine, then over to the other side, from the eastern pass of Michmash (v. 31), to the western pass of Ajalon, through which they escaped into their own plains. Josephus asserts that 'many ten thousands of the Philistines were slain in this rout' ('Antiquities,' b. vi., ch. vi., sec. 4).

24. Saul had adjured the people. Afraid lest so precious an opportunity of effectually humbling the Philistine power might be lost, the impetuous king laid an anathema on any one who should taste food until the evening. This rash and foolish denunciation distressed the people, by preventing them taking such refreshments as they might get on the march, and materially hindered the successful attainment of his own patriotic object. 25. all they of the land came to a wood; and there was honey. The honey is described as "upon the ground," "dropping" from the trees, and in honey-combs, indicating it to be bees' honey. 'Bees in the East are not, as in England, kept in hives; they are all in a wild state. The forests literally flow with honey; large combs may be seen hanging on the trees as you pass along, full of honey' (Roberts). [The Septuagint has ἱάλα δρυὸς ἢν μελισσῶνος κατὰ πρόσσωπον τοῦ ἀγροῦ, Jaal was a thicket (forest) full of beehives along the face of the ground.] 27. Jonathan . . . put forth the end of the rod . . . and dipped it in an honey-comb [וַיִּצְרֹף יְהוֹנָתָן]—not, properly, the "honey-comb," i. e., the cells in which the honey is contained, but the dropping of the honey-comb; i. e., liquid honey (cf. Ps. xix. 2) (Gesenius).

31 And they smote the Philistines that day from Michmash to Aijalon :
 32 and the people were very faint. And the people flew upon the spoil, and
 took sheep, and oxen, and calves, and slew *them* on the ground : and the
 33 people did eat *them* ^vwith the blood. Then they told Saul, saying, Behold,
 the people sin against the LORD, in that they eat with the blood. And
 he said, Ye have ¹¹transgressed : roll a great stone unto me this day.
 34 And Saul said, Disperse yourselves among the people, and say unto them,
 Bring me hither every man his ox, and every man his sheep, and slay *them*
 here, and eat ; and sin not against the LORD in eating with the blood.
 And all the people brought every man his ox ¹²with him that night, and
 35 slew *them* there. And Saul ^vbuilt an altar unto the LORD : ¹³the same
 was the first altar that he built unto the LORD.
 36 And Saul said, Let us go down after the Philistines by night, and spoil
 them until the morning light, and let us not leave a man of them. And
 they said, Do whatsoever seemeth good unto thee. Then said the priest,
 37 ^vLet us draw near hither unto God. And Saul asked counsel of God,
 Shall I go down after the Philistines? wilt thou deliver them into the
 hand of Israel? But he ^vanswered him not that day.
 38 And Saul said, ^vDraw ye near hither all the ¹⁴chief of the people ; and
 39 know and see wherein this sin hath been this day : for, ^aas the LORD
 liveth, which saveth Israel, though it be in Jonathan my son, he shall
 surely die. But *there was* not a man among all the people *that* answered
 40 him. Then said he unto all Israel, Be ye on one side, and I and Jonathan
 my son will be on the other side. And the people said unto Saul, Do
 41 what seemeth good unto thee. Therefore Saul said unto the LORD God
 of Israel, ¹⁵Give a perfect lot. ^b And Saul and Jonathan were taken : but
 42 the people ¹⁶escaped. And Saul said, Cast *lots* between me and Jonathan
 43 my son. And Jonathan was taken. Then Saul said to Jonathan, ^cTell
 me what thou hast done. And Jonathan told him, and said, I did but
 taste a little honey with the end of the rod that *was* in mine hand, *and*,
 44 lo, I must die. And Saul answered, ^dGod do so and more also : for thou
 45 shalt surely die, Jonathan. And the people said unto Saul, Shall
 Jonathan die, who hath wrought this great salvation in Israel? God
 forbid : ^eas the LORD liveth, there shall not one hair of his head fall to
 the ground ; for ^fhe hath wrought with God this day. So the people
 46 rescued Jonathan, that he died not. Then Saul went up from following
 the Philistines : and the Philistines went to their own place.
 47 So Saul took the kingdom over Israel, and fought against all his
 enemies on every side, against Moab, and against the children of ^gAmmon,
 and against Edom, and against the kings of ^hZobah, and against the

B. C. 1087.
^v Gen 9. 4.
 Lev. 3. 17.
 Lev. 7. 26.
 Lev. 17. 10.
 Lev. 19. 21.
 Deut 12. 16,
 22, 21.
¹¹ Or, dealt
 treacher-
 ously.
¹² in his
 hand.
¹³ Judg. 21. 4.
 ch 7. 17.
 2 Sam 21.
 25.
¹⁴ that altar
 he began
 to build
 unto the
 LORD.
¹⁵ Mal. 2. 7.
 Jas. 4. 8.
¹⁶ ch. 28. 6.
 Ps. 66. 18.
¹⁷ Josh 7. 14.
 ch 10. 19.
¹⁸ corners.
¹⁹ 2 Sam. 12. 5.
²⁰ Or, Show
 the
 innocent.
 1 ro 16. 33
²¹ Josh 7. 16.
 ch. 10. :0,
 21.
 Jon 1. 7.
²² went
 forth.
²³ Josh 7. 19.
 Jon 1 1:-9.
²⁴ ch. 25. 22.
 2 Sam 3. 9.
²⁵ 2 Sam. 14.
 11.
 1 Ki. 1. 52.
 Luke 2. 13.
²⁶ Isa 14. 3.
 2 Cor. 6. 1
²⁷ ch. 11. 11.
 ch. 12. 12.
²⁸ 2 Sam. 10. 6.

31. the people were very faint. 32. And . . . flew upon the spoil. At evening, when the time fixed by Saul had expired, faint and famishing, the pursuers fell voraciously upon the cattle they had taken, and threw them on the ground, to cut off their flesh and eat it raw, so that the army, by Saul's rashness, were defiled by eating blood, or living animals; probably as the Abyssinians do, who cut a part of the animal's rump, but close the hide upon it, and nothing mortal follows from that wound. They were painfully conscientious in keeping the king's order, for fear of the curse, but had no scruple in transgressing God's command. To prevent this violation of the law, Saul ordered a large stone to be rolled, and those that slaughtered the oxen to cut their throats on that stone. By laying the animal's head on the high stone, the blood oozed out on the ground, and sufficient evidence was afforded that the ox or sheep was dead before it was attempted to eat it. 33. Ye have transgressed : roll a great stone

unto me this day. [The Septuagint has εκ Γεθσαιμ κυλισάτε μοι λίθον ενταύθα μέγαν, from Gethaim roll me a great stone.]

45. the people rescued Jonathan, that he died not. When Saul became aware of Jonathan's transgression in regard to the honey, albeit it was done in ignorance, and involved no guilt, he was, like Jephthah, about to put his son to death, in conformity with his vow. But the more enlightened conscience of the army prevented the tarnishing the glory of the day by the blood of the young hero, to whose faith and valour it was chiefly due.

47. So Saul . . . fought against all his enemies on every side. This signal triumph over the Philistines was followed, not only by their expulsion from the land of Israel, but by successful incursions against various hostile neighbours, on the east as well as west of the Jordan, whom he harassed, though he did not subdue them. kings of Zobah—in northern Syria, adjoining Hamath

- 48 Philistines; and whithersoever he turned himself, he 'vexed *them*. And he ¹⁷gathered an host, and ¹⁸smote the Amalekites, and delivered Israel out of the hands of them that spoiled them.
- 49 Now ^kthe sons of Saul were Jonathan, and Ishui, and Melchi-shua: and the names of his two daughters *were these*; the name of the first-born
- 50 Merab, and the name of the younger Michal: and the name of Saul's wife *was* Ahinoam, the daughter of Ahimaaz: and the name of the
- 51 captain of his host *was* ¹⁸Abner, the son of Ner, Saul's uncle. And ^lKish *was* the father of Saul; and Ner the father of Abner *was* the son of Abiel.
- 52 And there was sore war against the Philistines all the days of Saul: and when Saul saw any strong man, or any valiant man, ^mhe took him unto him.
- 15 SAMUEL also said unto Saul, "The LORD sent me to anoint thee to be king over his people, over Israel: now therefore hearken thou unto the 2 voice of the words of the LORD. Thus saith the LORD of hosts, I remember *that* which Amalek did to Israel, ^bhow he laid *wait* for him in the 3 way, when he came up from Egypt. Now go and smite Amalek, and ^cutterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, ^dinfant and suckling, ^eox and sheep, camel and ass.
- 4 And Saul gathered the people together, and numbered them in ^fTe-laim, two hundred thousand footmen, and ten thousand men of Judah.

E. C. 10-7.

1 Num. 25. 17.

17 Or.

wrough
mightly y.

f ch. 15 3. 7.

g ch. 31. 2.

1 Chr 8. 33.

1 Chr 9. 39.

18 Abiner.

i ch 9. 1.

m ch. 8. 11.

CHAP. 15.

a ch. 9. 16.

ch 10. 1.

b Ex. 17. 8.

Num 24. 10.

Deut. 25. 17.

c Lev. 27. 28.

d Deut. 13. 15.

16.

e Josh 6. 17.

f Ex. 20. 5.

g Gen. 3. 17.

h Jos-h. 7. 24.

i Rom. 8. 20.

j Josh. 15. 24.

on the north, and extending to the Euphrates. It was a rich and important region. In the time of Saul it was governed by a number of petty but independent rulers, whom he "vexed."

49. the sons of Saul were Jonathan (*i. e.*, whom Jehovah gave), and Ishui [Septuagint, Ἰεσίου], and Melchi-shua [Septuagint, Μελχισά] . . . Merab [מֵרָב, increase; Septuagint, Μερόβ; Josephus, Μερόβη] . . . Michal [Septuagint, Μεχάλα; Josephus, Μεχάλα]. 50. Abner—*i. e.*, father of a light [Septuagint, Ἀβέρννη] . . . Ner—*i. e.*, a light, a lamp; the grandfather of Saul.

CHAP. XV. 1-6.—SAUL SENT TO DESTROY AMALEK.

1. The Lord sent me to anoint thee . . . now therefore hearken thou unto the voice of the . . . Lord. Several years had been passed in unsuccessful military operations against troublesome neighbours; and during these Saul had been left to act in great measure at his own discretion as an independent prince. Now a new test is proposed of his possessing the character of a theocratic monarch in Israel; and in announcing the duty required of him, Samuel brought before him his official station as the Lord's vicegerent, and the peculiar obligation under which he was laid to act in that capacity. He had formerly done wrong, for which a severe rebuke and threatening were administered to him (ch. xiii. 13, 14). Now an opportunity was afforded him of retrieving that error by an exact obedience to the Divine command. 2. I remember—I am reminded of what Amalek did; perhaps by the still remaining trophy or memorial erected by Moses (Exod. xvii. 15, 16). Amalek—the powerful tribe which inhabited the country immediately to the eastward of the northern Cushites. Their territory extended over the whole of the eastern portion of the desert of Sinai to Rephidim. They were the earliest opponents (Deut. xxv. 18; Exod. xvii. 8-16), the hereditary and restless enemy of Israel (Num. xiv. 45; Judg. iii. 13; vi. 3), and had not repented (ch. xiv. 48) of their bitter and sleepless hatred during the 500 years that had elapsed since their doom was pronounced. Being a people of nomadic habits, they were as plundering and dangerous as the Bedouin Arabs, particularly to

the southern tribes. The national interest required, and God, as KING OF ISRAEL, decreed, that this public enemy, who had now filled up the measure of their iniquity, should be removed. Their destruction was to be without reservation or exception. 3. Now go and smite Amalek, &c. The Septuagint, as it were to increase the pre-emptoriness of the command, has introduced into the text several clauses which were manifestly at first inserted only as explanatory notes in the margin: 'Now go and smite Amalek and Jerim, and all things that are his; thou shalt not turn to advantage aught of his, but shalt utterly destroy him: thou shalt regard him and all his as lying under a curse, and shalt not spare him,' &c.

4. Saul gathered the people together. The alacrity with which he entered (see a brief notice of it, ch. xiv. 48) on the necessary preparations for the expedition, gave a fair but delusive promise of faithfulness in its execution. Telaim—or 'Telem' (according to Kimchi, Raumer, &c., though Keil is inclined, from the difference in the punctuation, to think they are separate places), among the uttermost cities of the tribe of Judah towards the coast of Edom (Josh. xv. 21, 24). 'Saul would naturally choose a spot where the principal routes from north, east, and west converged in the direction of the Amalekite territory. Only one such place is to be found—namely, at el-Kuseir, about four miles south of 'Arârâh, where the junction of the wadies es-Seba, el-Khûlîl, 'Arârâh, Milh, &c., brings together the various roads from Beer-sheba, Gaza, Hebron, Carmel (Saul's own route), and many other places, and thus gives convenient access to all parts of the country. Now, it is a most interesting fact that this very spot is occupied by the Arab tribe Dhullâm—a word identical with Telem in its consonants, and with Telaim in its principal vowel also' ('Negeb,' p. 887, 888: cf. Robinson's 'Biblical Researches,' ii. p. 619; Wilson's 'Lands of the Bible,' i., p. 345). [As the word תֵּלַם occurs only in three passages, in each it bears the sense of a lamb (ch. vii. 9; Isa. xl. 2; lxxv. 25), the Jewish writers translate lambs here, and the Chaldee Paraphrase, paschal lambs; supposing that Saul deduced the number of the

5 And Saul came to a city of Amalek, and ¹laid wait in the valley.
 6 And Saul said unto ²the Kenites, ³Go, depart, get you down from among
 the Amalekites, lest I destroy you with them: for ⁴ye showed kindness
 to all the children of Israel when they came up out of Egypt. So the
 7 Kenites departed from among the Amalekites. And ⁵Saul smote the
 Amalekites from Havilah ⁶until thou comest to ⁷Shur, that *is* over
 8 against Egypt. And ⁸he took Agag the king of the Amalekites alive,
 9 and ⁹utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword. But
 Saul and the people spared Agag, and ¹⁰the best of the sheep, and of the
 oxen, and ¹¹of the fatlings, and the lambs, and all *that was* good, and
 would not utterly destroy them: but every thing *that was* vile and refuse,
 that they destroyed utterly.

B. C. 1079.

¹ Or fought.
² Num 24. 21.
 Judg. 1. 16.
³ Gen. 18. 15.
⁴ Ex. 18. 10.
⁵ ch. 14. 48.
⁶ Gen. 2. 14.
⁷ Gen. 16. 7.
⁸ 1 Ki. 10. 31.
⁹ ch. 20. 1.
¹⁰ 1 Ro 15. 7.
¹¹ Cr. of the
 second
 sort.

people from the number of lambs slain for the passover. The Vulgate has *quasi agnos*, as lambs, apparently reading אֲגָנִים, instead of אֲגָלִים, in our present Hebrew text. It is alleged in support of this interpretation that *Telaim* is found nowhere else as a proper name. On the other hand, the leading versions have rendered it as the name of a place. The Septuagint has εν Γαλγαλοῖς, in Gilgal, which *Bochart* ('Hierozoicon,' lib. ii., c. 43) says was the error of a copyist for Ταλαιῖος (see the Septuagint on 2 Sam. iii. 12). The Syriac retains it as here; but the Arabic has, *in a certain place called Taria.* 5. came to a city of Amalek—probably their capital, laid wait in the valley—following the strategic policy of Joshua at Ai, (Josh. vi.) 6. And Saul said unto the Kenites, Go, depart, get you down from among the Amalekites. Their encampment about 'Arâd was in a mountainous country, and on an elevated part of that country (*Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' ii., pp. 202, 467-468, 618; *Stanley*, 'Sinai and Palestine,' pp. 160-161, 289, 294; 'Negeb,' pp. 10, 76). "Kenites" (see on Judg. i. 16). In consequence, probably, of the unsettled state of Judah, they seem to have returned to their old desert tracts, and occupied the region around 'Arâd (Judg. i. 16). Though now intermingled with the Amalekites, they were not implicated in the offences of that wicked race; but for the sake of their ancestors, between whom and those of Israel there had been a league of amity, a timely warning was afforded them to remove from the scene of danger.

7-9.—HE SPARES AGAG AND THE BEST OF THE SPOIL.

7. Saul smote the Amalekites—pursuing them over the whole territory they frequented. His own view of the proper and expedient course to follow was his rule, not the command of God. 8. took Agag . . . alive. אֶגָּג, evidently a reduplicate variety of the Egyptian Hâk, ruler (see on Num. xxi. 33). This was the common title of the Amalekite kings. Saul had no scruple about the apparent cruelty of it, for he made fierce and indiscriminate havoc of the people. But he spared Agag, probably to enjoy the glory of displaying so distinguished a captive. *Josephus* distinctly asserts ('Antiquities,' b. vi., ch. vii., sec. 2) that the beauty and tallness of his body made so fine an appearance, and Saul admired it so much, that he thought him worthy of preservation (cf. 1 Ki. xx. 32-34), and in like manner the most valuable portions of the booty, as the cattle. 9. and of the fatlings [אֲגָלִים]. This plural substantive (cf. ii. Sam. vi. 13), which in the singular denotes second rank, second place, is used apparently in this passage to indicate cattle of a second quality; perhaps lambs of the second birth—i. e., autumnal lambs, and therefore weaker and less

valuable (*Gesenius*). *Bochart* ('Hierozoicon') thinks that it means full-grown cattle. [The Septuagint has τῶν ἐδεσμάτων, cattle fit for food]. Our translators have evidently followed the LXX. By this wilful and partial obedience to a positive command, complying with it in some parts and violating it in others, as suited his own taste, humour, or cupidity, Saul showed his selfish, arbitrary temper and love of despotic power, and consequently his utter unfitness to perform the duties of a delegated king in Israel. In fact, he was guilty of the very sin of Achan, in secreting, through covetousness, "the accursed thing" (Josh. vii. 20, 21). The Amalekites were a horde of fierce, restless, incorrigible marauders, who lived by plunder; and, joining with the remnant of the ancient Rephaim and their Anakim kindred, appeared as open hereditary enemies of Israel. It was a political measure, therefore, essential to the peace of the Jewish kingdom, that such dangerous neighbours should be extirpated; and hence reasons of present policy, enforced by the memory of early national wrongs, prompted this hostile expedition against them in the reign of Saul. The stern decree or law for the utter extermination of this people has frequently drawn down bitter reproaches upon the Hebrew legislator. But considering the unprovoked and oft-repeated attacks they made upon Israel, and the constant perils to which the inhabitants in the southern parts of the kingdom were exposed—the loss of their property, and the abduction of their young women for slaves by the predatory incursions of the Amalekites—prudence and self-defence required that this tribe of lawless banditti should be swept away. Their lawless character may be gathered from many incidents and allusions in Scripture (cf. Exod. xvii. 8-16; Num. xiv. 45; Judg. vi. 3-6; Ps. lxxiii. 7), and from the most barbarous of all cruel plots, that of Haman the Agagite (Esth. iii. 1-15). But as the ban against them was registered so early, and in terms of such unrelenting severity, in the divinely authorized statute book of Moses, there must have been other reasons for this stern procedure, of which we have not been informed (see on Deut. xxv. 17-19). 'If God foresaw that the safety of the chosen people depended upon it, the order to exterminate the Amalekites was wisely and justly given; and if the people were ripe for that vengeance with which they had been threatened above 400 years before, and which had been so long mercifully delayed by the patience of Almighty God, I presume it was no injustice in Him who best knows the proper seasons of His own conduct, and is the best judge of the means and instruments to execute His own purposes, to put the sword of justice into his (Saul's) hands, and command him to cut off those whom He thought fit to make examples of, for the numerous vices, oppressions, and cruelties of which He knew

10, Then came the word of the LORD unto Samuel, saying, It ^prepenteth
 11 me that I have set up Saul *to be* king: for he is ^qturned back from
 following me, ^rand hath not performed my commandments. And it
 12 ^sgrieved Samuel; and he cried unto the LORD all night. And when
 Samuel rose early to meet Saul in the morning, it was told Samuel,
 saying, Saul came to ^tCarmel, and, behold, he set him up a place, and is
 gone about, and passed on, and gone down to Gilgal.
 13 And Samuel came to Saul: and Saul said unto him, "Blessed *be* thou
 14 of the LORD; ^vI have performed the commandment of the LORD. And
 Samuel said, What *meaneth* then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears,
 15 and the lowing of the oxen which I hear? And Saul said, They have
 brought them from the Amalekites: ^wfor the people spared the best
 of the sheep and of the oxen, to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God; and
 16 the rest we have utterly destroyed. Then Samuel said unto Saul, Stay,
 and I will tell thee what the LORD hath said to me this night. And
 he said unto him, Say on.
 17 And Samuel said, When thou *wast* little in thine own sight, *wast* thou
 not *made* the head of the tribes of Israel, and the LORD anointed thee
 18 king over Israel? And the LORD sent thee on a journey, and said, Go
 and utterly destroy the sinners the Amalekites, and fight against them
 19 until ³they be consumed. Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice
 of the LORD, but didst fly upon the spoil, and didst evil in the sight of
 20 the LORD? And Saul said unto Samuel, Yea, I have obeyed the voice
 of the LORD, and have gone the way which the LORD sent me, and have
 brought Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the

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^p Gen 6. 6.
² Sam. 24.
 16.
^{Ps.} 110. 4.
^{Jer.} 13. 7.
 10.
^{Amos} 7. 3.
^{John} 3. 10.
^{John.} 4. 2.
^{Josh} 12. 16.
¹ Ki 9. 6.
^{Ps.} 36. 3.
^{Zeph.} 1. 6.
^{Matt.} 24. 13.
^r ch. 13. 13.
^s ch. 16. 1.
^{Luke} 19. 41-
 41.
^t Rom. 9. 1-7.
^u Josh. 15. 55.
^v Gen. 3. 19.
^{Gen.} 14. 19.
^{Judg} 17. 2.
^{Ruth} 3. 2.
^{ch} 13. 10.
^w Fro. 27. 2.
^{Fro} 28. 13.
^{Luke} 8. 11.
^x Gen. 3. 12.
^{Fro} 23. 13.
³ they
 consume.

them to be guilty. Samuel terms them "those sinners," the Amalekites, to denote that even at that time they were a very wicked people, that they themselves were ripe for the judgments of the Almighty, and that they were punished for their own sins, though mention is made of the evil conduct of their ancestors; and it had been long predicted that Amalek should be destroyed, (*Chandler's* 'Life of David,' vol. i. b. i., ch. iv.: see further, *Butler's* 'Analogy,' part ii., ch. iii.)

10, 11.—GOD REJECTS HIM FOR DISOBEDIENCE.

11. It repenteth me that I have set up Saul. Repentance is attributed in Scripture to the Divine Being when bad men give Him cause to alter His course and method of procedure, and to treat them as if He did 'repent' of kindness shown. To the heart of a man like Samuel, who was above all envious considerations, and really attached to the king, so painful an announcement moved all his pity, and led him to pass a sleepless night of earnest intercession. Samuel, though his kindly feelings were intensely pained by the rejection of Saul, was led afterwards to excuse the necessity of this procedure, and to acquiesce in the wisdom of the Divine arrangement (see this subject discussed by *Josephus*, 'Antiquities,' b. vi., sec. 2; ch. vii., sec. 2; ch. xii., sec. 7; and 'Contra Apion,' b. ii., sec. 30). 12. Saul came to Carmel. In the Alexandrian version of the Septuagint it is said that Saul travelled in a chariot. Carmel was in the south of Judah (Josh. xv. 55; ch. xxv. 2). he set him up a place [7, a hand; Septuagint, *χειρα*—i. e., a pillar (2 Sam. xviii. 18), indicating that whatever was the form of the monument, it was surmounted, according to the ancient fashion, by the figure of a hand, the symbol of power and energy. *Jerome* ('Quest. Hebraicæ') says, it was a triumphal arch, made of myrtle, palm, and olive branches. These decorations might have been added to heighten the

splendour of the trophy. But it is more than probable that, as the Hebrew text plainly states, the memorial of the victory was in the form of a colossal hand of stone, wood, or other durable material. Many such forms of the human hand exist amongst the monuments of ancient Egypt. *Niebuhr* ('Voyage en Arabie,' ii., p. 211) says, in his description of Ali's mosque at Mesched-Ali, that surmounting the dome, instead of a crescent, there is a *hand* extended, to represent that of Ali. The same symbol is on the top of the Alhanbra, the palace of the Moorish kings in Grenada. The erection of this vain-glorious trophy was an additional act of disobedience. His pride had overborne his sense of duty, in first raising this monument to his own honour, and then going to Gilgal to offer sacrifice to God.

13. Saul said . . . I have performed the commandment of the Lord. Saul was either blinded by a partial and delusive self-love, or he was, in his declaration to Samuel, acting the part of a bold and artful hypocrite. He professed to have fulfilled the Divine command, and that the blame of any defects in the execution, especially in the reservation of the flocks and herds, lay with the people.

17. When thou wast little in thine own sight, &c. Samuel saw the real state of the case, and, in discharge of the commission he had received before setting out, proceeded to denounce his conduct as characterized by pride, rebellion, and obstinate disobedience. When Saul persisted in declaring that he had obeyed, alleging that the animals whose bleating was heard had been reserved for a liberal sacrifice of thanksgiving to God, his shuffling, prevaricating answer called forth a stern rebuke from the prophet. It well deserved it, for the destination of the spoil to the altar was a flimsy pretext, a gross deception; an attempt to conceal the selfishness of the original motive under the cloak of religious zeal and gratitude.

- 21 Amalekites. But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God in Gilgal.
- 22 And Samuel said, ^aHath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, ^bto obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of ^cwitchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath
- 24 also rejected thee from being king. And ^dSaul said unto Samuel, "I have sinned: for I have transgressed the commandment of the LORD, and
- 25 thy words: because I ^efeared the people, and obeyed their voice. Now therefore, I pray thee, pardon my sin, and turn again with me, that I may worship the LORD.
- 26 And Samuel said unto Saul, I will not return with thee: for thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, and the LORD hath rejected thee from being king over Israel. And as Samuel turned about to go away, ^fhe
- 28 laid hold upon the skirt of his mantle, and it rent. And Samuel said unto him, "The LORD hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day,
- 29 and hath given it to a neighbour of thine, that is better than thou. And also the ^gStrength of Israel will not lie nor repent: for he is not a man,
- 30 that he should repent. Then he said, I have sinned: yet ^hhonour me now, I pray thee, before the elders of my people, and before Israel, and turn
- 31 again with me, that I may worship the LORD thy God. So Samuel turned again after Saul; and Saul worshipped the LORD.
- 32 Then said Samuel, Bring ye hither to me Agag the king of the

B. C. 1079.
^a Ps. 50. 8, 9.
 Pro. 21. 3.
 Isa. 1. 11.
 Jer. 7. 22.
 Mic. 6. 6.
 Heb. 10. 6.
^b Eccl. 5. 1.
 Hos. 6. 6.
 Matt. 5. 21.
 Matt. 9. 17.
 Matt. 12. 7.
 Mark. 12. 33.
^c divination.
 Deut. 18. 10.
^d 2 Sam. 12. 13.
^e Ex. 9. 27.
^f Ex. 13. 2.
 Pro. 29. 15.
 Isa. 51. 12.
^g ch. 2. 30.
^h 1 Ki. 11. 30.
ⁱ ch. 28. 17.
^j Or,
 Eternity.
 or, Vic-
 tory.
^k Num. 23. 19.
 2 Tim. 2. 13.
 Tit. 1. 2.
^l John 5. 44.

22. Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings, &c. Samuel must not be regarded as in any way disparaging the ordinances of the Mosaic law. The sacrifices had been appointed by Divine authority, and therefore were to be duly performed. But they were merely expressive of the faith and piety cherished by the worshippers; and whenever the outward observance was considered of greater importance than the inward sentiment or the spiritual feeling, there was a perversion of religion which was displeasing to God. Obedience is the true test of a religious profession. 23. rebellion is as . . . witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Assuming that there were teraphim in Saul's family (ch. xix. 13), and that Samuel knew it, these words have a point and significance that must have been deeply felt. 24. I have sinned . . . because I feared the people, and obeyed their voice. This was a different reason from the former he had assigned. It was the language of a man driven to extremities; and even had it been true, the principles expounded by Samuel showed that it could have been no extenuation of the offence. The prophet then pronounced the irreversible sentence of the rejection of Saul and his family. Dean Stanley says that 'because he thought sacrifice greater than obedience, the curse descended upon him' ('Lectures on the Jewish Church,' second series, p. 22). Not so. He was judicially cut off for his disobedience of a positive command, which, as a theocratic king, it was his duty to have executed. 25. turn again with me, that I may worship the Lord. The erring but proud and obstinate monarch was not humbled. He was conscience-smitten for the moment; but his confession proceeded not from sincere repentance, but from a sense of danger and desire of averting the sentence denounced against him. For the sake of public appearance he besought Samuel not to allow their serious differences to transpire, but to join with him in a public act of worship.

Under the influence of his painfully agitated feelings, he designed to offer sacrifice, partly to express his gratitude for the recent victory, and partly to implore mercy and a reversal of his doom. It was, in another view, a politic scheme, that Samuel might be betrayed into a countenancing of his design in reserving the cattle for sacrificing. Samuel declined to accompany him.

27. he laid hold upon the skirt of his mantle [כַּף־לְבָשׁוֹ]—his upper tunic, official robe—in a humble and supplicating manner (cf. Isa. iv. 1; Zech. viii. 23). The verses that precede and follow this statement demonstrate that the demeanour of Saul towards the prophet was full of submission and humility. The separation between Samuel and Saul was an impassioned scene, each being overcome by the force of strong though different emotions. In an agony of mental excitement Saul took hold of the prophet's dress, while he was hurrying away in vehement anger, to detain him. The rending of the mantle was adroitly pointed to as a significant and mysterious representation of his severance from the throne. 29. the Strength of Israel will not lie [יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ]—the Glory of Israel, the Object of Israel's confidence, He that gives victory to Israel (cf. 1 Chr. xxix. 11), will not lie nor repent—i. e., as Josephus expresses it ('Antiquities,' b. vi., ch. vii., sec. 5), 'God will persevere in what He has decreed concerning you: to be mutable and changeable in what is determined is agreeable to human passions only, but is not agreeable to the Divine majesty.' This was a further rebuke of Saul's pride in rearing the Carmel trophy, and an intimation that no loss would be sustained in Israel by his rejection. 31. Samuel turned again after Saul—not to worship along with him, but, first, that the people might have no ground, on pretence of Saul's rejection, to withdraw their allegiance from him; and, secondly, to compensate for Saul's error, by executing God's judgment upon Agag.

- Amalekites. And Agag came unto him delicately. And Agag said, Surely
 33 the bitterness of death is past. And Samuel said, ^aAs thy sword hath made women childless, so shall thy mother be childless among women. And ⁱSamuel hewed Agag in pieces before the LORD in Gilgal.
- 34 Then Samuel went to Ramah; and Saul went up to his house to
 35 ^jGibeah of Saul. And Samuel came no more to see Saul until the day of his death: nevertheless Samuel mourned for Saul: and the LORD repented that he had made Saul king over Israel.
- 16 AND the LORD said unto Samuel, How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? ^aFill thine horn with oil, and go, I will send thee to Jesse the Beth-lehemite: for I ^bhave provided me a king among his sons. And Samuel said, How can I go? if Saul hear *it*, he will kill me. And the LORD said, Take an heifer ¹with thee, and say, ^cI am come to sacrifice to the LORD. And call Jesse to the ²sacrifice, and ^dI will show thee what thou shalt do: and thou ^eshalt anoint unto me *him* whom I name unto thee.
- 4 And Samuel did that which the LORD spake, and came to Beth-lehem. And the elders of the town ^ftrembled at his ³coming, and said, ^gComest thou peaceably? And he said, Peaceably: I am come to sacrifice unto

B. C. 1079.
 a Ex. 17. 11.
 Judg 1. 7.
 Matt. 7. 2.
 Jas 2. 13.
 Rev 16. 6.
 Rev. 18. 6.
 i 1 Ki. 18. 40.
 j ch. 11. 4.

CHAP. 16.
 a 2 Ki. 9. 1.
 b Ps. 79. 70.
 Acts 13. 22.
 1 in thine hand.
 c ch. 20. 29.
 2 Or, feast.
 d Ex. 4. 15.
 e ch. 9. 16.
 f ch. 21. 1.
 Acts 24. 25.
 3 meeting.
 g 1 Ki. 2. 13.
 2 Ki. 9. 22.

32. Agag came . . . delicately—pliantly, or cheerfully, since he had gained the favour and protection of the king. [מַלְּכָה, from לָךְ, to be soft, pliant, is rendered, by *Kimchi* and other Jewish writers, 'decked in royal state.' *Poole* ('Annotations'), following them, translates it, 'came in delights'—i. e., in his ornaments; not as an offender expecting the sentence of death, but in that garb and gesture which became his royal state. And Agag said—or, For Agag said, as the reason why he came so. [The Septuagint has *τρεμων*, trembling.] 33. Samuel hewed Agag. This cruel tyrant met the retribution of a righteous Providence. Never has it been unusual for great or official personages in the East to perform executions with their own hands (cf. Judg. viii. 21). Samuel did it "before the Lord in Gilgal," appointing that same mode of punishment (hitherto unknown in Israel) to be used towards him, which he had formerly used towards others.

CHAP. XVI. 1-10.—SAMUEL SENT BY GOD TO BETH-LEHEM.

1. How long wilt thou mourn for Saul? Samuel's grief on account of Saul's rejection, accompanied, doubtless, by earnest prayers for his restitution, showed the amiable feelings of the man; but they were at variance with his public duty as a prophet. The declared purpose of God to transfer the kingdom of Israel into other hands than Saul's was not an angry menace, but a fixed and immutable decree; so that Samuel ought to have sooner submitted to the peremptory manifestation of the Divine will. But to leave him no longer room to doubt of its being unalterable, he was sent on a private mission to anoint a successor to Saul (see on ch. x. 1). The immediate designation of a king was of the greatest importance for the interest of the nation, in the event of Saul's death, which at this time was dreaded: it would establish David's title, and comfort the minds of Samuel and other good men with a right settlement, whatever contingency might happen. Fill thine horn with oil. Horns were anciently used for holding liquors, which were sometimes drunk out of them. They were hung up on the walls of rooms or the poles of tents (Isa. xxii. 24). I will send thee to Jesse the Beth-lehemite. The genealogy of Jesse is traced (Ruth iv. 18-21) to Boaz. But the object was merely to prove that he was a link in the Messianic chain of descent;

and it is left quite unknown whether Jesse was the eldest of Obed and Boaz's family, the heir of that wealthy proprietor, or a younger son. That he was a comparatively poor man has been inferred from his having a small flock, under the care of one shepherd only, his youngest son. At the same time, he seems to have been a man of note in the village, esteemed for his piety and general worth of character (cf. Isa. xi. 1). I have provided me a king. The language is remarkable, and intimates a difference between this and the former king. Saul was the people's choice—the fruit of their wayward and sinful desires for their own honour and aggrandizement; the next was to be of God's nomination, who would consult the divine glory, and selected from that tribe to which the pre-eminence had been early promised (Gen. xlix. 10). 2. How can I go? This is another instance of human infirmity in Samuel. Since God had sent him on this mission, He would protect him in the execution. I am come to sacrifice. This was true, though not the whole truth, which he was not bound or called upon to tell. It seems to have been customary with Samuel to do this (cf. ix. 12), in the different circuits to which he went, that he might encourage the worship of God. It has been formerly shown that although the appointed place for presentation of offerings was the front court of the national sanctuary (see on Lev. xvii. 1-9; Dent. xii. 5-7), in not a few instances sacrifices were offered elsewhere, even by prophets (ch. vii. 17; ix. 12; Judg. ii. 5; 1 Ki. xviii. 19, 32). 3. call Jesse to the sacrifice—i. e., the social feast that followed the peace offering. Samuel, being the offerer, had a right to invite any guest he pleased.

4. the elders of the town trembled at his coming. Beth-lehem was an obscure town, and not within the usual circuit of the judge. The elders were naturally apprehensive, therefore, that his arrival was occasioned by some extraordinary reason, and that it might entail evil upon their town, in consequence of the estrangement between Samuel and the king. They might have been conscious of secret guilt, and supposed that Samuel, coming among them as the judicial viceroy of God, was about to investigate and punish the commission of some crime. The inhabitants of this place have long been proverbial for their refractory spirit; for even in modern times

- the LORD: ^hsanctify yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice. And he sanctified Jesse and his sons, and called them to the sacrifice.
- 6 And it came to pass, when they were come, that he looked on ⁱEliab,
- 7 ^jand said, Surely the LORD's anointed *is* before him. But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on ^khis countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for ^lthe LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man ^mlooketh on the ⁿoutward appearance, but the LORD
- 8 looketh on ^othe heart. Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass
- 9 before Samuel. And he said, Neither hath the LORD chosen this. Then Jesse made Shammah to pass by. And he said, Neither hath the LORD
- 10 chosen this. Again, Jesse made seven of his sons to pass before Samuel. And Samuel said unto Jesse, The LORD hath not chosen these.
- 11 And Samuel said unto Jesse, Are here all ^pthy children? And he said, ^qThere remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he keepeth the sheep. And Samuel said unto Jesse, ^rSend and fetch him: for we will not sit
- 12 ^sdown till he come hither. And he sent and brought him in. Now he ^twas ^uruddy, and withal ^vof a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look
- 13 to. ^wAnd the LORD said, Arise, anoint him: for this *is* he. Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed ^xhim in the midst of his brethren: and ^ythe Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah.
- 14 But ^zthe Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and ^{aa}an evil spirit
- 15 from the LORD ^{ab}troubled him. And Saul's servants said unto him, Behold

B. C. 1063.

A Ex. 19. 10.
 i Called
 Elihu,
 1 Chr. 27. 19,
 j 1 Ki. 12. 2. i.
 k Ps. 147. 10.
 l Isa. 55. 8.
 m 2 Cor. 10. 7.
 n eyes.
 o 1 Ki. 8. 39.
 1 Chr. 23. 9.
 p Ps 7. 9.
 q ch 17. 12.
 r 2 Sam. 7. 8.
 s Ps. 78. 70.
 t round.
 u Song 5. 10.
 v fair of eyes.
 w ch. 9. 17.
 x Ps. 89. 20.
 y Num 27. 18.
 z Judg 11 23.
 aa ch 18. 12.
 ab Judg 16: 9.
 ac Judg. 9. 23.
 ch. 19. 9.
 Isa. 10. 14.
 Or,
 terrified.

they have been often at variance with the reigning power' (*Hardy's* 'Notices of the Holy Land,' p. 174). 5. sanctify yourselves—by the preparations described, Exod. xix. 14, 15. The elders were to sanctify themselves. Samuel himself took the greatest care in the sanctification of Jesse's family. Some, however, think that the former were invited only to join in the sacrifice, while the family of Jesse were invited by themselves to the subsequent feast.

6. he looked on Eliab [עֲלִיָּאֵל, to whom God is father]—or Elihu (1 Chr. xxvii. 18). and said, Surely the Lord's anointed is before him. Here Samuel, in consequence of taking his impressions from the external appearance, falls into the same error as formerly (ch. x. 24).

11-14.—HE ANOINTS DAVID.

11. the youngest . . . he keepeth the sheep. Jesse, having evidently no idea of David's wisdom and bravery, spoke of him as the most unfit; as one not to be taken into account in the conduct of any public affairs. God, in His providence, so ordered it that the appointment of David might the more clearly appear to be a Divine purpose, and not the design either of Samuel or Jesse. Samuel said unto Jesse, Send and fetch him: for we will not sit down till he come hither [שֶׁלֹּא נִשְׁבַּח]—we will not come around, we will not surround—i. e., by sitting at table (cf. Ps. cxxviii. 3). The ancient Hebrews sat round a low table, with their legs crossed, as the modern Orientals do; for the luxurious practice of reclining was not introduced into Judea till a late period in the Old Testament history. David had not been sanctified with the rest of his family, because, owing to his absence from home, he had not been invited to the sacrifice; and it is probable that he returned to his pastoral duties the moment the special business on which he had been summoned was done. 12. he was ruddy, &c. [רֹמְמִי, red, red or auburn haired (Gen. xxv. 25); Septuagint, *πυρρόχρως*; Vulgate, *rufus*. *Josephus*, on the other hand ('Antiquities,' b. vi., ch. viii., sec. 1), refers

this expression to his tawny complexion, *ξανθὸς τῆν χροῖαν*]. withal of a beautiful countenance [רָם]—bright or beautiful in his eyes. [The Septuagint has *μετὰ κάλλους ὀφθαλμῶν*, with beauty of eyes; while *Josephus* ('Antiquities,' b. vi., ch. viii., sec. 1) describes him as *γογγὸς τὰς ὄψεις*, sharp, penetrating eyes.] and goodly to look on [רָם, and comely in person; Septuagint, *αγαθὸς ὀράσει κυρίῳ*, uncommonly graceful and well-proportioned]. It will be observed that although his physical qualities and external attractions are so minutely specified as engaging the notice and admiration of beholders, the circumstance of his being selected for the regal office implies that he possessed the right state and dispositions of mind (v. 7). *Josephus* says that David was ten, while most modern commentators are of opinion that he must have been fifteen, years of age. the Lord said, Arise, anoint him: for this is he. This symbolical ceremony was performed only on the first of a royal dynasty (ch. x. 1). 13. Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him. This transaction must have been strictly private, according to *Josephus*, who states that Samuel *whispered* the object of it in his ear. But the sacred historian says expressly that it was done "in the midst of his brethren." Whether the elders of Beth-lehem were present or not, Jesse and all his sons were witnesses of the ceremony, and cognizant of its import, (see end of ch. xvii.) and the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward—(see on ch. x. 1.) The anointing is placed in causal connection with the communication of the Spirit, the former typifying what the latter secured (cf. Mark vi. 13; Jas. v. 14): it was a seal and pledge of the blessings which the Lord bestowed upon the rulers of the nation for the people's good' (*Hengstenbery*, 'Christology,' iii., p. 125).

14. an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him [רוּחַ רָע מִלְּפָנֵי יְהוָה], and a spirit of defection (apostasy) from the Lord]. There is no reason, from the phraseology of the text, to believe that the

16 now, an evil spirit from God troubleth thee. Let our lord now command thy servants, *which are* before thee, to seek out a man, *who is* a cunning player on an harp: and it shall come to pass, when the evil spirit from God is upon thee, that he shall play with his hand, and thou shalt be well. And Saul said unto his servants, Provide me now a man that can play well, and bring *him* to me. Then answered one of the servants, and said, Behold, I have seen a son of Jesse the Beth-lehemite, *that is* cunning in playing, and a mighty valiant man, and a man of war, and prudent in matters, and a comely person, and the ^w LORD *is* with him. Wherefore Saul sent messengers unto Jesse, and said, Send me David thy son, which *is* ^w with the sheep. And Jesse took an ass *laden* with bread, and a bottle of wine, and a kid, and sent *them* by David his son unto Saul. And David came to Saul, and ^y stood before him: and he loved him greatly; and he became his armour-bearer. And Saul sent to Jesse, saying, Let David, I pray thee, stand before me; for he hath found favour in my sight. And it came to pass, when the *evil* spirit from God was upon Saul, that ^z David took an harp, and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him.

17 NOW the Philistines gathered together their armies to battle, and were gathered together at "Shochoh, which *belongeth* to Judah, and pitched

B C. 1063.

8 Or. speech.

w Gen. 39. 2.

21.

ch. 3. 19.

ch. 10. 7.

ch. 18. 12.

14.

Matt. 1. 23.

Matt 23. 20.

z ch. 17. 15.

ch. 33. 34.

Ex. 3. 1-10.

1 KI. 19. 19.

Ps. 78. 70.

72.

Amos 1. 1.

Amos 7. 14.

Matt. 4. 18.

v Gen. 41. 46.

1 Ki. 10. 10.

Pro. 12. 10.

z 1 Sam. 18.

10.

CHAP. 17.

a Josh. 15. 35.

2 Chr. 23. 18.

Hebrews were accustomed to ascribe every malignant disorder as "from the Lord." Saul was possessed of a devil; for it is evident from the symptoms, as well as the remedy proposed, that his attendants regarded his malady as a natural, not an extraordinary or miraculous, disease. It was manifestly a case of hypochondria. But his bodily distemper was aggravated by the state of his temper (*Mead*, 'Medica Sacra,' p. 26). His own gloomy reflections, the consciousness that he had not acted up to the character of an Israelitish king, the loss of his throne, and the extinction of his royal house, made him jealous, irritable, vindictive, and subject to fits of morbid melancholy, and even of violent frenzy.' [The Septuagint has ἐπιτεταχέν αὐτὸν πνεῦμα ποιητὸν παρὰ κυρίου, an evil spirit from the Lord choked, strangled him.] *Josephus* also ('Antiquities,' b. vi., ch. viii., sec. 2) says 'that some strange disorders came upon him, and brought upon him such suffocations as were ready to choke him.' 15. Saul's servants said unto him. The Hebrew physicians knew of no remedy for a malady of this sort but music, which 'has charms to soothe the savage breast;' and accordingly they advised to obtain the services of a person skilful in instrumental music. 18. Then answered one of the servants. Jewish tradition points to Doeg (*Jerome*, 'Quæst. Hebraicæ'). Whether he or some other of the king's attendants, it appears that David's talents and accomplishments as a musician were already celebrated. 19. Saul sent messengers unto Jesse . . . Send me David. In the East the command of a king is imperative; and Jesse, however reluctant and alarmed, had no alternative but to comply. 20. Jesse took an ass . . . and sent them . . . unto Saul—as a token of homage and respect. "An ass laden with." These two last words are supplemented by our translators. [The Hebrew text is וְיָמַר לְיֵסֶע, an ass of bread; which the Septuagint renders γομῶν ἄρτων, a homer of loaves.] *Reland* ('Disser. de inscrip. Nummor. Samar.') adduces a great number of quotations from Greek writers, showing that the ancients used a bottle with two long handles, which, from their resemblance to asses' ears, were called [λόφοι] asses; and the Greek poet *Sosibus* says of one

of his heroes, 'He ate three times in the space of a single day three great asses of bread' [ἀρτων τρεῖσι ὄνοις]; which *Casaubon* understood to signify the lading of three asses; whereas the true meaning is, the contents of three vases or jars called asses (see on ch. xxv. 18; cf. *Exod.* viii. 14; *Judg.* xv. 16, where the word is "heaps upon heaps"—*lit.*, asses upon asses; *i. e.*, it signifies, not an animal, but a measure, or amount of anything). According to this import of the expression, the clause will stand thus: Jesse took a heap or pile of loaves, and a bottle of wine [כַּדָּי, a skin (cf. *Josh.* ix. 4, 13; also *Judg.* iv. 19). The word is applied to a substance soft, moist, or moistened into pliancy. They were rendered fit for preserving wine or other liquids by being suspended in the smoke (*Ps.* ix. 83). 21. David came to Saul. Providence thus prepared David for his destiny, by placing him in a way to become acquainted with the manners of the court, the business of government, and the general state of the kingdom. became his armour-bearer. This choice, as being an expression of the king's partiality, shows how honourable the office was held to be. 23. David took an harp, and played with his hand [כַּנְנוֹר, the kinnor]—not the large, heavy instrument denoted by the word harp amongst us, but the lyre, a light, portable instrument, resembling a bow in shape. The performers played on this instrument both in a standing (*v.* 21) and a sitting posture. Saul was refreshed, and was well. The ancients believed that music had a mysterious influence in healing mental disorders (see 'Disseratio Historico-Theologica de Saule pro musicam curato,' by *Casper Læscherus*, Professor of Divinity at Wittenberg, 1868; 'Memoires de l'Académie Française,' 1707; *Issac Vossius*, 'De Poematum cantu et rhythmi viribus'; *Kittó's* 'Daily Bible Illustrations,' vol. iii., p. 253, 254).

CHAP. XVII. 1-3.—THE ISRAELITES AND PHILISTINES BEING READY TO BATTLE—

1. the Philistines gathered together their armies—twenty-seven years after their overthrow at Michmash. Having now recovered their spirits and strength, they sought an opportunity of wiping out the infamy of that national disaster, as well as of regaining their lost ascendancy over Israel.

- 2 between Shochoh and Azekah, in ¹Ephes-dammim. And Saul and the men of Israel were gathered together, and pitched by the valley of Elah, 3 and ²set the battle in array against the Philistines. And the Philistines stood on a mountain on the one side, and Israel stood on a mountain on the other side: and *there was* a valley between them.
- 4 And there went out ³a champion out of the camp of the Philistines, named ⁴Goliath of Gath, whose height *was* ⁵six cubits and a span.
- 5 And *he had* an helmet of brass upon his head, and *he was* ⁶armed with a coat of mail; and the weight of the coat *was* five thousand shekels of 6 brass. And *he had* greaves of brass upon his legs, and a ⁷target of brass 7 between his shoulders. And the staff of his spear *was* like a weaver's beam; and his spear's head *weighed* six hundred shekels of iron: and 8 one bearing a shield went before him. And he stood and cried unto

B C. 1063.

- ¹ Or, The coast of bloods, called Pas-dammim, 2 ranged the battle. 3 a treader down. 4 ch. 21, 9. 5 about eleven feet and a half. 6 clothed. 7 Or, gorget.

Shochoh—now Shuweikeh, a town marked by ancient ruins, nine Roman miles from Eleutheropolis, towards Jerusalem, situated on the southern side of a spacious wady, which extends in a north-westerly direction from the spurs of the Judah hills till it opens down into the Shephelah, or plain of Philistia. **Azekah**—now Zakariyeh, another site of ancient ruins on a round projecting eminence, about two miles distant, on the same side of the valley. **Ephes-dammim**—‘the portion or effusion of blood’ [Septuagint, *Εφερμίν*; Alexandrian, *αφεσδομμειν*], lying between the other two, and chosen as the site of the Philistine encampment. 2. **Saul and the men of Israel . . . pitched by the valley of Elah** [עֲלָיִם]—a long, broad, depressed plain, lying between two parallel ranges of hills. [עֲלָיִם, of the terebinth, the *shittim-wood* (the *butm* of the Arabs); probably some remarkable tree of this species which grew there (now Wady es-Sümt, valley of the acacia tree), with which at present it abounds.] This valley, formed by the junction of three lateral ones—viz., Wady el-Musür from the east, Wady es-Sür from the south, and another, name unknown, from the north—opens into the great Wady Sürär, anciently the valley of Sorek. It is a fertile plain, flanked on the north and south by lowly hills, and abounding with grain produce, except ‘in the spots covered by acacia thickets and olive plantations.’ *Robinson* states that the largest terebinth he saw in all the country was in Wady es-Sür, a little above the spot where it emerges into Wady es-Sümt. On the slopes of the opposite hills the hostile armies were encamped. 3. and **there was a valley between them** [עֲלָיִם, the ravine]. ‘A close examination of the locality would show, what, indeed, a closer inspection of the text suggests, that the ravine between the two armies was the glen into which the valley contracted in its descent towards the plain of Philistia’ (*Stanley*, ‘Sinai and Palestine,’ Appendix, sec. 2). [Septuagint, *καὶ ὁ αἰλῶν ἀνά μεσον αὐτῶν*, the narrow passage: the glen was between them] (see on v. 52).

4-11.—GOLIATH CHALLENGES A COMBAT.

4. **there went out a champion**—Hebrew, a man between two; *i. e.*, a person who, on the part of his own people, undertook to determine the national quarrel by engaging in single combat with a chosen warrior in the hostile army. This was frequently done in ancient warfare, when the issue of the contest depended on the personal strength and courage of the combatants; and the well-known story of the Horatii and Curiatii shows that the custom was transmitted even to classic times. **out of the camp** [מִבְּרִיתָם, plural]—from the armies or hosts of the Philistines. **named Goliath of**

Gath [גִּלְיָת], supposed to be from גִּלְיָת, same as גִּלְיָת, exile, migration; and if this derivation be correct, it suggests that Goliath was not his proper name, but an appellative bestowed on him as one of the ancient Rephaim, who, on being dispossessed of their native territory by an invasion of Ammonites, took refuge with the Philistines (Deut. xi. 20-23). And this idea seems to obtain support from the fact, that the name is given to another giant called Lahmi (see on 1 Chr. xx. 5). Another derivation, however, is mentioned by *Gesenius*, from an Arabic word signifying ‘strong,’ whose height was six cubits and a span. Taking a cubit at the standard of 21 inches, the stature of the champion would be 10½ feet. [But the Septuagint has ὕψος αὐτοῦ τεσσαράκων πηχέων καὶ σπιδάρης, his height was four cubits and a span=8 feet and a little more; and the statement of Josephus (‘Antiquities,’ b. vi., ch. ix., sec. 1) coincides with this estimate of the giant’s tallness; so that, even according to the reduced scale of reckoning, he must have been a person of monstrous dimensions.] 5. **helmet of brass**. The Philistine helmet had the appearance of a row of feathers set in a tiara, or metal band, to which were attached scales of the same material, for the defence of the neck and the sides of the face. **a coat of mail**—a kind of corset, quilted with leather or plates of metal, reaching only to the chest, and supported by shoulder straps, leaving the shoulders and arms at full liberty. 6. **greaves of brass**—boots for the defence of the leg, rising to nearly the knee, and without feet, terminating at the ankle, made of bull’s hide leather, wood, or in one plate of metal, but rounded to the shape of the leg, and often lined with felt or sponge. Some of the ancient greaves, however, did not come so far up as the knee. They frequently were made to open behind, and were fastened by buttons, buckles, or ties to the leg. More rarely the lacing was in front. The object contemplated in the wearing of this defensive armour was to protect the calf, rather than the shin; and hence, in time of battle, they were sometimes worn only on the left leg, which, with the left side, was commonly the parts of the body most exposed in action, on account of the buckler being worn on the left arm. They were useful in guarding the legs, not only against the spikes of the enemy, but in making way among thorns and briars (see *Layard’s* ‘Nineveh and its Remains,’ ii., p. 337). **a target of brass**—a circular frame carried at the back, suspended by a long belt which crossed the breast from the shoulders to the loins. 7. **staff of his spear**—rather under five feet long, and capable of being used as a javelin (ch. xix. 10). It had an iron head. **one bearing a shield**. In consequence of their great size and weight, the Oriental warrior had a trusty and

the armies of Israel, and said unto them, Why are ye come out to set your battle in array? am not I a Philistine, and ye servants to Saul? choose you a man for you, and let him come down to me. If he be able to fight with me, and to kill me, then will we be your servants: but if I prevail against him, and kill him, then shall ye be our servants, and serve us. And the Philistine said, I defy the armies of Israel this day; give me a man, that we may fight together. When Saul and all Israel heard those words of the Philistine, they were dismayed, and greatly afraid.

12 Now David was the son of that Ephrathite of Beth-lehem-judah, whose name was Jesse; and he had eight sons: and the man went among men for an old man in the days of Saul. And the three eldest sons of Jesse went and followed Saul to the battle: and the names of his three sons that went to the battle were Eliab the first-born; and next unto him, Abinadab; and the third, Shammah. And David was the youngest: and the three eldest followed Saul. But David went and returned from Saul to feed his father's sheep at Beth-lehem. And the Philistine drew near morning and evening, and presented himself forty days.

17 And Jesse said unto David his son, Take now for thy brethren an ephah of this parched corn, and these ten loaves, and run to the camp to thy brethren; and carry these ten cheeses unto the captain of their thousand, and look how thy brethren fare, and take their pledge.

19 Now Saul, and they, and all the men of Israel, were in the valley of

B C. 10f3.

ch. 8. 17.
1 Chr 21. 3.
d ch. 11. 1.
e Num. 23. 7.
8.
2 Sam. 21.
21.
2 Sam. 33. 9.
Neh 2. 19.
f Ruth 1. 22.
ch. 16. 1.
18.
Matt 1. 6.
Luke 3. 31.
32.
g Gen. 35. 19.
Ps. 132. 6.
Mic. 5. 2.
h ch. 16. 10.
11.
1 (hr. 2. 13.
i ch 16 6
1 Chr. 2. 13.
7 cheeses of
milk
8 captain of
a thou-
sand.
i Gen 37. 11.

skilful friend, whose office it was to bear the large shield, behind which he avoided the missile weapons of the enemy. He was covered, cap-a-pied, with defensive armour, while he had only two offensive weapons—a sword by his side and a spear in his hand. 10. I defy the armies of Israel . . . give me a man, that we may fight together. In cases of single combat, a warrior used to go out in front of his party, and, advancing towards the opposite ranks, challenge some one to fight with him. If his formidable appearance, or great reputation for physical strength and heroism, deterred any from accepting the challenge, he used to parade himself within hearing of the enemy's lines, speechify in a loud, boastful, bravado style, defying them, and pouring out torrents of abuse and insolence to provoke their resentment.

12-16.—DAVID ACCEPTS THE CHALLENGE, AND SLAYS HIM.

Cf. on ch. xvi. 14-23. The Vatican MS. of the Septuagint omits the whole passage (vv. 12-32); and *Kennicott* ('Dissertation on the Hebrew Text') maintains the propriety of its omission as an interpolation (pp. 418-432; also pp. 554-558). But the internal evidence in support of its authenticity is strong; and *Tischendorf*, in the notes to his edition, asserts it on the authority of the most ancient MSS. [The Alexandrian version begins this 12th verse, *και ειπε Δαυιδ*.] (See observations at the end of this chapter.) 16. the Philistine . . . presented himself forty days—i. e., probably for a long time, as the phrase is frequently used in the East (see on Gen. vii. 12).

17. Take now for thy brethren. In those times campaigns seldom lasted above a few days. The soldiers were volunteers or militia, who were supplied with provisions from time to time by their friends at home. The Arab women still carry provisions to their husbands when out on fighting expeditions (*Van de Velde*, ii., p. 146). parched corn [שֶׂבֶר, only here, שֶׂבֶר]—roasted corn (see on ch. xxv. 8; Lev. xxiii. 14; Ruth ii. 14; 2 Sam. xvii. 28). 18. carry these ten cheeses unto

the captain—to enlist his kind attention. [שֶׂבֶר, תְּרֵי עָרְבָי, ten cuttings (slices) of curdled milk—i. e., soft cheese (*Gesenius*). The Septuagint has *και τας δεκα στρουφαλιδους του γαλακτος τουτου*, and ten rounds (little forms, shapes) of this milk.] Oriental cheeses are very small, resembling in shape and size our penny loaves, as the cheeses of the ancient Hebrews seem also to have been (cf. Job x. 10; Ps. lxxviii. 15); and although they are frequently made of so soft a consistence as to resemble curds, those which David carried seem to have been fully formed, pressed, and sufficiently dried to admit of their being carried. [The Hebrew word שֶׂבֶר signifies not only a cutting or slice, but a threshing-sledge; and hence *Harmer* ('Observations,' i., pp. 510, 511) supposes that 'what Jesse bid his son David carry to the officer of the army were ten baskets, somewhat of the shape of their threshing instruments, in which was coagulated milk. Baskets made of rushes or the dwarf palm are the cheese vats of Barbary (*Shaw's* 'Travels,' p. 168); into these they put the curds, and, binding them up close, press them. But the Eastern cheeses are of so very soft a consistency, after their being pressed, and even when they are brought to be eaten, that *Sandys* imagined they were not pressed at all,—“a beastly kind of unpressed cheese that lies in a lump,” being his description of this part of the Eastern diet. Now, if the cheeses sent by Jesse were as soft and tender as those now in use in the East, or if the milk was only coagulated, so as to be what we mean by the word curds, which forms a considerable part of the diet in the East, can we imagine any way more commodious for the carrying them to the army than in the rush-baskets in which curds were formed into cheese?' (See on 2 Sam. xvii. 29; Job x. 10; also see *Burckhardt*, 'Notes on the Bedouins,' i., p. 60). take their pledge. Tokens of the soldiers' health and safety were sent home in the convenient form of a lock of their hair, a piece of their nail, or such like. Some think that nothing more is meant by 'taking their pledge' than that Jesse wished

- 20 Elah, fighting with the Philistines. And David rose up early in the morning, and left the sheep with a keeper, and took, and went, as Jesse had commanded him; and he came to the ⁹trench, as the host was going
- 21 forth to the ¹⁰fight, and shouted for the battle. For Israel and the
- 22 Philistines had put the battle in array, army against army. And David left ¹¹his carriage in the hand of the keeper of the carriage, and ran into
- 23 the army, and came and ¹²saluted his brethren. And as he talked with them, behold, there came up the champion (the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name) out of the armies of the Philistines, and spake according to the
- 24 same words: and David heard *them*. And all the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled ¹³from him, and were sore afraid.
- 25 And the men of Israel said, Have ye seen this man that is come up? surely to defy Israel is he come up: and it shall be, *that* the man who killeth him, the king will enrich him with great riches, and ^kwill give him his daughter, and make his father's house free in Israel.
- 26 And David spake to the men that stood by him, saying, What shall be done to the man that killeth this Philistine, and taketh away ^lthe reproach from Israel? for who *is* this ^muncircumcised Philistine, that he
- 27 should defy the armies of ⁿthe living God? And the people answered him after this manner, saying, So shall it be done to the man that killeth him.
- 28 And Eliab his eldest brother heard when he spake unto the men: and ^oEliab's anger was kindled against David, and he said, Why camest thou down hither? and with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know thy pride, and the naughtiness of thine heart; for
- 29 thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle. And David said,

B. C. 1067.

⁹ Or, place of the carriage. ch. 26. 5.

¹⁰ battle array, or, place of fig. t.

¹¹ the vess ls from upon him.

¹² asked his brethren of peace, as Gen. 43. 27. Judg. 18. 13.

¹³ from his face.

^k Josh. 15. 16.

^l Josh. 5. 9.

ch. 11. 2.

^m 1 Tim. 6. 17.

ⁿ ch. 14. 6.

^o Deut. 5. 27.

Jer. 10. 10.

^p Gen. 37. 4.

8. 11.

Pro. 19. 19.

1 ro 4. 7.

Ecc. 4. 4.

Matt 10 3.

Mark 3. 21.

David to bring some proof or assurance of their having got the provisions he had sent.

20. David . . . left the sheep with a keeper [דָּוִד]—a watchman, and hence a shepherd. This is the only instance in which the hired shepherd is distinguished from the master or one of the family. trench [בְּחַדְוֵי הַמַּחְצוֹת]—the wagon-rampart—some rude attempt at a rampart, formed by a line of carts or chariots, which from the earliest times was the practice of nomad people (see on Judg. vii. 20). as the host . . . shouted for the battle—*i. e.*, he heard as he arrived the well-known war cry of Israel (cf. Num. xxiii. 21; Josh. vi. 5; Judg. vii. 20). 22. David left his carriage in the hand of the keeper of the carriage—*lit.*, left the vessels (stores) from upon him (with which he was charged) in the hand of the keeper of the stores. [The Septuagint, τα σκευη αυτου αφ' αυτου επι χειρα φυλακος.] and ran into the army [בְּחַדְוֵי הַמַּחְצוֹת]—to the array; the army drawn up in battle order. [Septuagint, εις την παραταξιν, to the disposition, the line by the standard of Judah.] and saluted his brethren [וַיִּשְׁאַל בְּרָאִתָּם]—and asked his brethren of peace; *i. e.*, after the welfare of his brethren. 23. And as he talked . . . Goliath . . . spake according to the same words—*i. e.*, repeated the challenge.

25. the men of Israel said, Have ye seen this man? On perceiving the dismay of the Israelite soldiers, David was astonished, and ran with eager curiosity from man to man, and from rank to rank, inquiring into all the circumstances of the affair, and whether any or what reward was promised to the person who should free his countrymen from the reproach of the unaccepted challenge. make his father's house free in Israel—*i. e.*, his family should be exempted from the impositions and service to which the general body of the Israelites were subjected.

28. Eliab his eldest brother heard . . . and Eliab's anger was kindled against David. The language of Eliab is very churlish, and shows very clearly that he spoke, not under the influence of sudden and momentary irritation, but of a settled dislike and rooted jealousy. with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness? David himself was young, and he may have had to commit his flock to the care of one younger than himself. In the East, particularly amongst the Arab nomads, when the warriors of a tribe are engaged in distant forays, or in war, their tents and flocks are frequently left to the care of a mere child. Whilst the child in a civilized country is still under the care of its nurse, the Bedouin boy is compelled to exercise his highest faculties; and on his prudence or sagacity may sometimes depend the safety of his tribe. I know thy pride [וַיִּדְעֵם]—thy insolence, from a root signifying to boil over as water; and the reference seems to have been to the proud, ambitious aspirations of David, as indicated by the prevailing tenor of his words and actions. [The Septuagint, την υπερηφανιαν σου, thy excessive pride.] and the haughtiness of thine heart [וַיִּדְעֵם]—Septuagint, και την κακιαν της καρδιας]—and the evil or perversity of thy heart. for thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle. Under his jaundiced impressions, this eldest brother misconstrued the demonstrations of joy which David testified on learning that his brothers were well, alleging that the real object of David's journey to the camp was to see the battle. 'Such an idea,' as *Kitto* well remarks, 'could not have occurred to him, had not the warlike tastes of David already been well known to his family. It is more than probable, from this and other circumstances, that he had already wished to join in the first instance with his brothers, but had not been allowed by his friends to do so. But this is hardly sufficient to account for the

30 What have I now done? *Is there* not a cause? And he turned from him toward another, and spake after the same ¹⁴manner: and the people
 31 answered him again after the former manner. And when the words were heard which David spake, they rehearsed *them* before Saul; and he ¹⁵sent for him.
 32 And David said to Saul, ²Let no man's heart fail because of him;
 33 ⁷thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine. And Saul said to David, ⁸Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him:
 34 for thou *art but* a youth, and he a man of war from his youth. And David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there
 35 came a lion and a bear, and took a ¹⁶lamb out of the flock; and I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered *it* out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught *him* by his beard, and smote him,
 36 and slew him. Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied
 37 the armies of the living God. David said moreover, ²The LORD that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear,

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^p Fro. 15. 1.
¹⁴ word.
¹⁵ took him.
^a Num. 13. 30.
 Num. 11. 9.
 Deut. 20. 1.
 3.
 Isa. 35. 3.
 Heb. 12. 12.
^r ch. 16. 18.
^a Num. 13. 31.
 Deut. 9. 2.
¹⁶ Or, kid.
^c ch. 7. 12.
 Ps. 18. 16. ⁷.
 Ps. 63. 7.
 Ps. 77. 11.
 Ps. 133. 3.
 2 Cor. 1. 10.
 2 Tim. 4. 17.
 13.

expressions of Eliab, which must have been founded on wider experience; and to those who have studied the character of David it will appear almost certain that he had often been led to speak of his desire to see Israel rid of the oppressors who had laid her honour in the dust, and of his hope to take some part in the great work of ridding the Philistine yoke from her fair neck' (*Journal of Sacred Literature*, July, 1848). 29. David said, **What have I now done? Is there not a cause?**—i. e., Is there not force and reason in what I have said? Is the state of our country so desperate that there is no hope of an Israelite being able, with the help of God, to encounter and discomfit this arrogant giant? 30. **And he turned from him toward another, and spake after the same manner.** His eager enquiries were addressed to various persons, till, in the directing providence of God, they were reported to the king, who summoned him into the royal presence.

33. **Saul said to David, Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him.** The king judged from appearances, which led him to conclude that David was quite unfit for so unequal a combat, both on account of his youth and his inexperience in arms. 34. **David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father's sheep.** The purport of the reply was that, though a raw and undisciplined youth, he was not untried in deeds of valour, and agility, and strength. **there came a lion, and a bear.** The lion which anciently infested Palestine and the whole of Western Asia (Jer. xlix. 19; Zech. xi. 3) is thought to have been the Persian variety, which is described by *Olivier* ('Egyptian Sepulchres and Syrian Shrines') as neither so fierce nor so powerful as its African congener, and as prone to capture its prey rather by cunning than by violence. On laying hold of a sheep, he makes off with it with the utmost expedition, but often abandons it to save himself on the approach of a man, though it is known in many instances to have exerted itself vigorously to retain it. The bear must have been the Syrian bear, which is believed to be a distinct species, or perhaps a variety of the brown bear. Bears, though inhabiting generally the cold latitudes of the north, are found also in the more genial climes of the south. *Dr. Shaw* mentions them in Barbary, and *Thevenot* saw them in the desert south of Palestine. **and took a lamb out of the flock** [לַמְּנִי, this, instead of לְמִנִּי, lamb or sheep. This erroneous

reading has disfigured the Hebrew text in most of the editions of the Hebrew Bible that have been printed subsequently to the second edition of *Bomberg*, in 1525. It is found in no Hebrew manuscript, nor in any previous printed edition; and it must have originated with the compositor in *Bomberg's* printing-office, who confounded the two words by reason of the similarity of the sound of the two sibilant letters. It deprives the passage of all meaning, and it has accordingly been corrected in the various translations; but, with the exception of a few editions in which the correct reading is given, it continues still to keep its place in the recent beautiful and commodious German Polyglot Bible (*Black's* 'Exegetical Study of the Original Scriptures'). Those youthful feats of David seem to have been performed with no weapon more effective than the rude staves usually carried in the hand of an Eastern shepherd, particularly the iron-headed club (Ps. xxiii. 4), which is used for repelling the attacks of wolves and other ravenous animals (Amos iii. 12). 'I have known,' says *Dr. Wilson* ('Lands of the Bible,' i. p. 321), 'a shepherd in India encounter with it a tiger which he found mangling one of his goats. It is much in use among the Fellahin of Wady Mâsa, and the Arabs in general.' 35. **I went out after him, and smote him.** The deeds relate to two different rencontres; for those animals, like all beasts of prey, prowl alone, and singly. This appears further from the use of the pronoun "him;" and as the bear is mentioned last, the encounter with it was probably the most recent. The description, therefore, in all probability is applicable to it; for, while the lion springs upon its prey with a tremendous roar, and tears it with its claws, the bear steals forward in silence, and 'arising' on its hind legs, clutches it in the horrid embrace of its fore legs. The "beard" applies to the lion alone. [The "beard," בְּרִי, signifies also the chin; and accordingly the Septuagint has ἐκράτησα τοῦ φάρυγγος, I caught it by the throat.] But *Josephus* ('Antiquities,' b. vi. ch. ix., sec. 3) says, 'when he leaped upon me with violence, I caught him by the tail, and dashed him against the ground.' 37. **The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion** [מִפִּי]—from the hand. It would have been natural for a youth, and especially an Oriental youth, to make a parade of his gallantry. But David's piety sank all consideration of his own prowess, and ascribed the success of those achievements to the Divine aid, which he

- he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine. And Saul said unto David, Go, and "the LORD be with thee.
- 38 And Saul ¹⁷armed David with his armour, and he put an helmet of brass upon his head; also he armed him with a coat of mail. And David girded his sword upon his armour, and he assayed to go; for he had not proved *it*. And David said unto Saul, I cannot go with these;
- 40 for I have not proved *them*. And David put them off him. And he took his staff in his hand, and chose him five smooth stones out of the ¹⁸brook, and put them in a shepherd's ¹⁹bag which he had, even in a scrip; and his sling *was* in his hand: and he drew near to the Philistine.
- 41 And the Philistine came on and drew near unto David; and the man that bare the shield *went* before him.
- 42 And when the Philistine looked about, and saw David, he ²⁰disdained him; for he was *but* a youth, and ²¹ruddy, and of a fair countenance.
- 43 And the Philistine said unto David, *Am* ²²I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves? And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. And the Philistine ²³said to David, Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field.
- 45 Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield; ²⁴but I come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied.
- 46 This day will the LORD ²⁵deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the ²⁶carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; ²⁷that all the earth may know that there is a God in

B. C. 1063.

ch 20. 13.
 1 Chr. 22. 11, 16.
 17 clothed
 David with his clothes.
 18 Or, valley.
 19 vessel.
 20 Ps 1:3. 4, 5.
 1 Cor. 1. 27, 28.
 21 ch. 16. 12.
 22 ch. 21. 14.
 2 Sam 3. 8.
 23 1 Ki 20. 10, 11.
 24 2 Sam. 22. 33, 35.
 Ps. 121. 8.
 Ps. 125. 1.
 2 Cor. 10. 4.
 Heb. 11. 31, 31.
 25 shut thee up
 a Deut. 28. 26.
 b Josh. 4. 24.
 1 Ki. 8. 43.
 1 Ki. 18. 31.
 2 Ki. 19. 19.
 Isa. 25. 10.

felt assured would not be withheld from him in a cause which so intimately concerned the safety and honour of His people. Saul said . . . Go, and the Lord be with thee. The pious language of the modest but valiant youth impressed the monarch's heart. He felt that it indicated the true military confidence for Israel, and therefore made up his mind, without any demur, to sanction a combat on which the fate of his kingdom depended, and with a champion supporting his interests apparently so unequal to the task. The tradition of the combat between David and Goliath, in which the latter was killed, is preserved among the Arabs; for he is mentioned in the Koran, where he is called Galut or Jalut. The Arabs also call the dynasty of the Philistine kings, who reigned in Palestine when the Hebrews came there, Galuliah or Jaluliah.

38. Saul armed David with his armour. The ancient Hebrews were particularly attentive to the personal safety of their warriors; and hence Saul equipped the youthful champion with his own defensive accoutrements, which would be in the best style. It is probable that Saul's coat of mail, or corslet, was a loose shirt; otherwise it could not have fitted both a stripling and a man of the colossal stature of the king. 39. he assayed to go [אָסָה לָלֶכֶת]—and he tried (began) to go away, to walk. [The Septuagint renders it, graphically, και ἐκοιτάσε περιπατήσας ἅπαξ και οἶς, and he made one or two efforts to walk.] for he had not proved it. The Septuagint omits this clause, and it does appear superfluous. I cannot go with these (*lit.*, in these); for I have not proved them [אֲנִי לֹא נִסֵּיתִי]—for I have not yet tried them; *i. e.*, I have no experimental acquaintance with them. And David put them off him [Septuagint, και ἀφαρούσεν αὐτὰ ἀπ' αὐτοῦ, and they took them (the armour) off him]. 40. he took his staff in his hand [לָקַח]—his shoot, rod, staff (cf. Gen.

xxxii. 2; Exod. xii. 2). [Septuagint, ελαβε τῆν βακτηρίαν, he took the stick.] and chose him five smooth stones [חָמֵשׁ אֲבָתֵי־אֶבֶן]—and selected for himself five smooth stones; *i. e.*, smoothed by the action of the water. out of the brook [מִן־הַבְּרוֹךְ] from the torrent, wady, and put them in a shepherd's bag [בְּבִגְדֵי־רֹעֵה]—in the dress-scrip hung round the neck of shepherds. sling. The sling consisted of a double rope with a thong, probably of leather, to receive the stone. The slinger held a second stone in his left hand. David chose five stones, as a reserve in case the first should fail. Shepherds in the East carry a sling and stones still for the purpose both of driving away or killing the enemies that prowl about the flock. It was and is a favourite weapon in Syria and Arabia. Polybius says, 'The arms which the Achæans principally employed were slings. They were educated in the use of these weapons from their childhood; and, by dint of long-continued practice, they could take so accurate an aim that they could throw the stone on the head of an enemy or on any other part of his body they chose.'

43. cursed David by his gods [בְּאֱלֹהֵי־יָוֵן]—by his god (Dagon), as the word is used, Ezra i. 3. The Chaldee paraphrast, as quoted by Dean Stanley, represents this braggadocio as vaunting that he was the slayer of Hophni and Phinehas.

44. the Philistine said . . . 45. said David to the Philistine. When two champions met, they generally made each of them a speech, and sometimes recited some verses, filled with allusions and epithets of the most opprobrious kind, and hurling contempt and defiance at one another (as in *Homer's* 'Iliad,' i. 4; also xxiii., 21). This kind of abusive dialogue is common among the Arab combatants still. David's speech, however, presents a striking contrast to the usual

- 47 Israel. And all this assembly shall know that the LORD saveth not with sword and spear: for ^athe battle is the LORD's, and he will give you into our hands.
- 48 And it came to pass, when the Philistine arose, and came and drew nigh to meet David, that David ^ehasted, and ran toward the army to meet
- 49 the Philistine. And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang *it*, and ^fsmote the Philistine in his forehead, that the stone ^gsunk into his forehead; and he fell upon his face to the earth.
- 50 So ^hDavid prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone, and smote the Philistine, and slew him; but *there was* no sword in the hand of David.
- 51 Therefore David ran, and stood upon the Philistine, and took his ⁱsword, and drew it out of the sheath thereof, and slew him, and cut off his head therewith.
- And when the Philistines saw their champion was dead, they ^jfled.
- 52 And the men of Israel and of Judah arose, and shouted, and pursued the Philistines, until thou come to the valley, and to the gates of Ekron: and the wounded of the Philistines fell down by the way ^kto Shaaraim, even unto Gath, and unto Ekron. And the children of Israel returned
- 53 from chasing after the Philistines, and they spoiled their tents. And David took the head of the Philistine, and brought it to Jerusalem: but he put his armour in his tent.
- 54 And when Saul saw David go forth against the Philistine, he said unto Abner, the captain of the host, Abner, ^lwhose son is this youth?
- 55 And Abner said, *As thy soul liveth, O king, I cannot tell.* And the
- 56 king said, Enquire thou whose son the stripling is. And as David

B. C. 1663.

^c Ps. 44. 6, 7.
Hos. 1. 7.
Zech. 4. 6.

^d ch. 14. 6.
2 Chr. 20. 15.
Ps. 46. 11.
Isa. 9. 7.
Zech. 4. 6.
Rom. 8. 31.
37.

^e Ps. 27. 1.
Pro. 23. 1.

^f 1 Ki. 22. 34.
2 Ki. 9. 21.
1 Cor. 1. 27.
28.

^g sunk as a stone in the water.

^h Judg. 3. 31.
Judg. 15. 15.
ch. 21. 9.
ch. 23. 21.

ⁱ ch. 21. 9.
2 Sam. 23. 21.
Esth. 7. 10.
Ps. 7. 15.

^j Heb. 11. 31.
Josh. 15. 26.

^k ch. 16. 21.

strain of those invectives. It was full of pious trust; and to God he ascribed all the glory of the triumph he anticipated.

49. smote the Philistine in his forehead—at the opening for the eyes. That was the only exposed part of his body. 51. cut off his head—not as an evidence of the giant's death, for his slaughter had been effected in presence of the whole army, but as a trophy to be borne to Saul. The heads of slain enemies are always regarded in the East as the most welcome tokens of victory. But the Israelites were not in the habit of mutilating the corpses of their slain enemies; and there is no evidence that they did so on this occasion to the other soldiers of the Philistines. But Goliath was not an ordinary enemy, nor did he fall in the ordinary fight. He fell by Jehovah's special interposition; and the head of the Philistine giant was to be kept, doubtless after embalment, as a memento of a great national deliverance, as well as a memorial to David of God's favour to him.

52. Shaaraim (see Josh. xv. 36), even unto Gath, and unto Ekron. [The Septuagint has *εως εισόδου Γαθ, as far as the entrance into Gath; και εως οψης πύλης Ασκαλωνος, and as far as the gate of Ascalon.*]

54. David took the head of the Philistine, and brought it to Jerusalem. This must have been at some future period, for the Jebusites still held the fort (2 Sam. v. 7). but he put his armour in his tent. This clause, like the former, is proleptical. David being on a temporary visit to his brethren, could have no tent of his own on the field. But on his commencement of a wandering life he would have a tent, in which he kept the armour of Goliath, until it could be deposited in the safe custody of the sanctuary at Nob, where it was placed as a votive offering to the Lord.

55. Saul . . . said unto Abner . . . whose son is this youth? A young man is more spoken of in many Eastern countries by his father's name than his own. The growth of the beard and other changes on a now full-grown youth prevented the king from recognizing his former favourite

minstrel. 56. Enquire thou whose son the stripling is [עֲדָרָה, a youth of marriageable age; Septuagint, *ὁ νεανίσκος*]. The Vatican copy of the Septuagint omits the four concluding verses of this chapter, as well as the entire paragraph comprised between vv. 12-31. Both of these passages are regarded by *Michaelis, Professor Dathe*, and many English critics (amongst whom is *Kennicott*, 'Dissertation,' ii., pp. 419-428), as an interpolation. In the view of these writers the omission of the passage in the middle of the chapter leaves the narrative apparently in its natural connection, David's remark to Saul (v. 32) bearing a direct reference to the panic-stricken state of the army, described in v. 11. David was at that time serving as minstrel to the king (ch. xvi. 23); and as he had also been promoted, through the royal favour, to the post of armour-bearer to Saul (ch. xvi. 21), we are prepared to find him near the person of his sovereign when the battle was set in array. Moreover, in volunteering to fight the giant, David, according to this textual hypothesis, appears to sustain the character given of him, on his being recommended to the king as "a mighty valiant man, and a man of war" (ch. xvi. 18); and the ready compliance of Saul with his proposal to encounter the Philistine is thus easily accounted for; whereas it appears irreconcilable with the idea of his being a stranger and a raw shepherd youth, who had just arrived a little before in the camp. But the rejection of a long passage as interpolated, though a common and convenient expedient of early writers for getting rid of a difficulty in the original text, is not a principle much favoured by modern critics, especially when the internal evidence in favour of the genuineness of the portions objected to is so strong as in this chapter. As little countenance is given to the theory of *Horsley*, who would transfer the passage in ch. xvi. 14-23 to the end of ch. xviii. 5, on the ground that not only Saul, but Abner also, were strangers to David's person, although, as the Hebrew text stands, he had resided at court as

- returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, Abner took him, and brought him before Saul, with the head of the Philistine in his hand.
- 58 And Saul said to him, Whose son art thou, thou young man? And David answered, *I am* the son of thy servant Jesse the Beth-lehemite.
- 18 AND it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the "soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. And Saul took him that day, and would let him go no more home to his father's house. Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul. And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David, and his garments, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle.
- 5 And David went out whithersoever Saul sent him, and behaved himself wisely: and Saul set him over the men of war; and he was accepted in the sight of all the people, and also in the sight of Saul's servants.
- 6 And it came to pass as they came, when David was returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, that "the women came out of all cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet king Saul, with tabrets, with joy, and with instruments of music. And the women answered one another as they played, and said,
Saul hath slain his thousands,—and David his ten thousands.

B. C. 1033.

CHAP. 18.

Gen. 44, 30.

2 Sam. 18,

33.

Col. 2, 2.

Dent. 13, 6.

ch. 19, 2.

ch. 20, 17.

2 Sam. 1, 26.

1ro. 18, 24.

ch. 17, 15.

1 Cr.

prospered.

Matt 10, 16.

2 Cr, Phillis-

tines.

d Ex 15, 20.

Judg 5, 1.

Judg 11, 34.

2 Sam. 6, 14.

3 three-

str-inged

instru-

ments.

e Ex. 15, 21.

an attendant on the king some time before the engagement with Goliath. This circumstance, however strange it may seem, is capable of satisfactory explanation, without the necessity of admitting that any portion of the text is either spurious or dislocated. 1st. The interval of a few years from the cessation of his early services to Saul, till his memorable engagement with Goliath, may have produced so great a change on David's appearance that the minstrel boy could not be recognized in the bearded face and homely dress of the grown shepherd. 2d. The cold and formal etiquette of an Eastern court, which placed the young musician at a humble distance from the immediate presence of the king, might keep Saul comparatively a stranger to his features; and Abner might have been absent during his attendance at court on some military expedition, so that he had no opportunity of seeing David. 3d. The king's moody temper, not to say frequent fits of insanity, would alone be sufficient to explain the circumstance of his not recognizing a youth who, during the time of his mental aberration, had been much near him, trying to soothe his dis-tempered soul. Or, 4th. The rumour of Samuel's commission to anoint another king, and his journey to Beth-lehem for that object, together with the fact that David had come from that village, and the suspicion, after the conquest of Goliath, which procured him so much glory throughout the nation, that David was destined for the throne (ch. xviii. 8), might have so excited his jealousy that he dissembled, and, pretending not to know David, kept his vigilant eye upon him, with a view to accomplish the destruction of this young and formidable rival. Any of these probabilities may account for Saul's enquiry at Abner (v. 25); and all of them combined are sufficient to remove the difficulties of this chapter, without calling in question the integrity of the text.

CHAP. XVIII. 1-4.—JONATHAN LOVES DAVID.

1. the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David. They were nearly of an age. The prince had taken little interest in David as a minstrel; but his heroism, and modest, manly bearing, his piety and high endowments, kindled the flame, not of admiration only, but of affection, in the congenial mind of Jonathan. 2. Saul would let him

go no more home. He was established as a permanent resident at court. 3. Then Jonathan and David made a covenant. Such covenants of brotherhood are frequent in the East. They are ratified by certain ceremonies, and in presence of witnesses, that the persons covenanting will be sworn brothers for life. 4. Jonathan stripped himself of the robe . . . and gave it to David. To receive any part of the dress which had been worn by a sovereign, or his eldest son and heir, is deemed in the East the highest honour which can be conferred on a subject (see on Esth. vi. 8). The girdle, being connected with the sword and the bow, may be considered as being part of the military dress, and great value is attached to it in the East.

5-9. SAUL ENVIES HIS PRAISE.

6. the women came out of all cities of Israel—in the homeward march from the pursuit of the Philistines. with instruments of music [כִּנֹּוֹרִים; Septuagint, ἐν κυμβάλοις]—with cymbals. These were metallic instruments of percussion. They were in form somewhat like a cup, and on the outside of the hollow part was a strap, through which the player who held them struck one against the other with greater or less violence, as the music or the occasion called for (Ps. cl. 5). In the open air their sound produced a martial effect. This is a characteristic trait of Oriental manners. On the return of friends long absent, and particularly on the return of a victorious army, bands of women and children issue from the towns and villages, to form a triumphal procession to celebrate the victory, and as they go along, gratify the soldiers with dancing, instrumental music, and extempore songs, in honour of the generals who have earned the highest distinction by feats of gallantry. They formed themselves into two choirs, which sung in alternate or responsive strophes. The chorus was,

"Saul has slain his thousands,
And David his ten thousands."

(See on Exod. xv. 20: cf. Ps. lxxviii. 11, 12.) The Hebrew women, therefore, were merely paying the customary gratulations to David as the deliverer of their country; but they committed a great indiscretion by praising a subject at the expense of their sovereign.

- 8 And Saul was very wroth, and the saying ⁴displeased him; and he said, They have ascribed unto David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed *but* thousands: and *what* can he have more but the kingdom?
- 9 And Saul ⁷eyed David from that day and forward.
- 10 And it came to pass on the morrow, that ⁹the evil spirit from God came upon Saul, ^hand he prophesied in the midst of the house: and David played with his hand as at other times: and *there was* a javelin in Saul's hand. And Saul ⁱcast the javelin; for he said, I will smite David even to the wall *with it*. And David avoided out of his presence twice.
- 12 And Saul was afraid of David, because ^jthe LORD was with him, and ^kwas departed ^lfrom Saul. Therefore Saul removed him from him, and made him his captain over a thousand; and ^mhe went out and came in before the people. And David ⁿbehaved himself wisely in all his ways; and ^othe LORD *was* with him. Wherefore, when Saul saw that he behaved himself very wisely, he was afraid of him. But all Israel and Judah loved David, because he went out and came in before them.
- 17 And Saul said to David, Behold my elder daughter Merab, ^pher will I give thee to wife; only be thou ^qvaliant for me, and fight ^rthe LORD's battles. For Saul said, Let ^snot mine hand be upon him, but let the hand of the Philistines be upon him. And David said unto Saul, ^tWho am I? and what *is* my life, or my father's family in Israel, that I should be son-in-law to the king? But it came to pass at the time when Merab, Saul's daughter, should have been given to David, that she was given ^uunto Adriei the ^vMeholathite to wife.
- 20 And Michal, Saul's daughter, loved David: and they told Saul, and ^wthe thing ^xpleased him. And Saul said, I will give him her, that she may be ^ya snare to him, and that the hand of the Philistines may be against him. Wherefore Saul said to David, Thou shalt this day be my son-in-law in *the one of the twain*. And Saul commanded his servants, *saying*, Commune with David secretly, and say, Behold, the king hath delight in thee, and all his servants love thee: now therefore be the king's

B. C. 1061.

⁴ was evil in his eyes. Eccl. 4. 1.
⁷ Gen. 4. 5.
⁹ ch. 16. 14.
^h ch. 19. 21.
ⁱ 1 Ki 18. 20.
^k Acts 16. 16.
^l Pro. 27. 21.
^m Hos 6. 4.
ⁿ ch. 16. 13.
^o ch. 22. 13.
^p ch. 23. 15.
^q Matt 25. 41.
^r Num 27. 17.
^s 2 Sam 5. 2.
^t Or, prospered.
^u Gen 19. 2.
^v Josh. 6. 27.
^w ch. 10. 7.
^x ch. 16. 18.
^y Acts 7. 9.
^z ch 17. 25.
^{aa} a son of valour.
^{ab} Num. 32: 50.
^{ac} ch 15. 28.
^{ad} 2 Sam 12. 9.
^{ae} ch. 9. 11.
^{af} 2 Sam. 7. 18.
^{ag} Pro. 15. 33.
^{ah} 2 Sam 21. 8.
^{ai} Judg 7. 22.
^{aj} was right in his eyes.
^{ak} Ex. 10. 7.
^{al} Ps. 7. 14-15.
^{am} Pro. 23. 21-24.

9. Saul eyed David [פָּקַד], was eyeing (the participle denoting continuous action upon another)—i. e., invidiously, with secret and malignant hatred. [The Vatican copy of the Septuagint omits. The Alexandrian copy (*Vischendorf's* notes) has *ὁ ἄνθρωπος βλέπωνος*, was suspicious of, looked sternly at, David.]

10-12.—SEEKS TO KILL HIM.

10. on the morrow, that the evil spirit from God came upon Saul. This rankling thought brought on a sudden paroxysm of his mental malady. he prophesied [פָּקַד]. The term denotes one under the influence either of a good or a bad spirit. In the present instance it is used to express that Saul was in a frenzy—a violent raving (cf. ch. xix. 24). [The Septuagint, mistaking the sense, has *προεφητεύσειν*, prophesied, which our translators borrowed. But it is an unhappy translation.] David, perceiving the symptoms, "played with his hand" (ch. xvi. 23)—i. e., hastened, by the soothing effects of his harp, to allay the stormy agitation of the royal mind. But ere its mollifying influence could be felt, Saul hurled a javelin at the head of the young musician. there was a javelin in Saul's hand. It was the royal sceptre, which he always had. Had it been followed by a fatal result, the deed would have been considered the act of an irresponsible maniac. It was repeated more than once ineffectually, and Saul became impressed with a dread of David as under the special protection of Providence.

13-16.—FEARS HIM FOR HIS GOOD SUCCESS.

13. Therefore Saul removed him from him—

sent him away from the court, where the principal persons, including his own son, were spell-bound with admiration of the young and pious warrior. and made him his captain over a thousand—gave him a military commission, which was intended to be an honourable exile. But this post of duty served only to draw out before the public the extraordinary and varied qualities of his character, and to give him a stronger hold of the people's affections.

17-21.—HE OFFERS HIM HIS DAUGHTER, FOR A SNARE.

17. my elder daughter Merab, her will I give thee to wife. Though bound to this already, he had found it convenient to forget his former promise, and now holds it out as a new offer, which would tempt David to give additional proofs of his valour. only be thou valiant for me. But the fickle and perfidious monarch broke his pledge at the time when the marriage was on the eve of being celebrated, and bestowed Merab on another man (see on 2 Sam. xxi. 8)—an indignity as well as a wrong, which was calculated deeply to wound the feelings and provoke the resentment of David. Perhaps it was intended to do so, that advantage might be taken of his indiscretion. But David was preserved from this snare.

20. Michal [Septuagint, Μελοχά], Saul's daughter, loved David. This must have happened some time after. they told Saul, and the thing pleased him—not from any favour to David, but he saw that it would be turned to the advancement of his malicious purposes, and the more so when,

23 son-in-law. And Saul's servants spake those words in the ears of David. And David said, Seemeth it to you a light thing to be a king's son-in-law, 24 seeing that I am a poor man, and lightly esteemed? And the servants of 25 Saul told him, saying, ⁸On this manner spake David. And Saul said, Thus shall ye say to David, The king desireth not any ⁹dowry, but an hundred foreskins of the Philistines, to be ¹⁰avenged of the king's enemies. But Saul thought to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines. 26 And when his servants told David these words, it ¹¹pleased David well to 27 be the king's son-in-law: and the days were not ¹²expired. Wherefore David arose and went, he and his men, and slew of the Philistines two hundred men; and ¹³David brought their foreskins, and they gave them in full tale to the king, that he might be the king's son-in-law. And 28 Saul gave him Michal his daughter to wife. And Saul saw and knew that the LORD was with David, and that Michal, Saul's daughter, loved 29 him. And ¹⁴Saul was yet the more afraid of David; and Saul became 30 David's enemy continually. Then the princes of the Philistines went ¹⁵forth: and it came to pass, after they went forth, that David behaved himself more ¹⁶wisely than all the servants of Saul; so that his name was much ¹⁷set by.

19 AND Saul ¹⁸spake to Jonathan his son, and to all his servants, that 2 they should kill David. But Jonathan, Saul's son, ¹⁹delighted much in David: and Jonathan told David, saying, Saul my father seeketh to kill thee: now therefore, I pray thee, take heed to thyself until the morning, 3 and abide in a secret place, and hide thyself: and I will go out and stand beside my father in the field where thou art, and I will commune with my father of thee; and what I see, that I will tell thee.

4 And Jonathan ²⁰spake good of David unto Saul his father, and said unto him, Let not the king ²¹sin against his servant, against David; because he hath not sinned against thee, and because his works have 5 been to thee-ward very good: for he did put his ²²life in his hand, and slew ²³the Philistine, and ²⁴the LORD wrought a great salvation for all Israel:

B. C. 10. 3.

⁸ According to these words.⁹ Gen. 34. 12.

Ex. 22. 17.

¹⁰ ch. 14. 24.¹¹ was right in the eyes of.¹² fulfilled.¹³ 2 Sam. 3. 11.¹⁴ Job 5. 2, 12, 13.

Ps. 57. 12, 13.

Ecc. 4. 4.

¹⁵ 2 Sam. 11. 1.¹⁶ Luke 21. 15.¹⁷ precious.

ch. 16. 21.

2 Ki. 1. 13.

Ps. 116. 15.

CHAP. 19.

^a Pro. 27. 4.^b Acts 23. 16.^c Pro. 31. 8.

Jer. 18. 20.

^d Gen. 42. 22

Ps. 35. 12.

Ps. 101. 5.

Pro. 17. 13.

Jer. 18. 20.

^e Judg. 9. 17.

Judg. 12. 3.

ch. 28. 21.

Ps. 119. 109.

^f ch. 17. 49.^g 1 Sam. 11.

13.

1 Chr. 11. 14.

by the artful intrigues and flattery of his spies, the loyal sentiments of David were discovered. 25. The king desireth not any dowry. In Eastern countries the husband purchases his wife either by gifts or services. As neither David nor his family were in circumstances to give a suitable dowry for a princess, the king intimated that he would be graciously pleased to accept some gallant deed in the public service. an hundred foreskins of the Philistines. Such mutilations on the bodies of their slain enemies were commonly practised in ancient war, and the number told indicated the glory of the victory. Saul's willingness to accept a public service had an air of liberality, while his choice of so difficult and hazardous a service seemed only putting a proper value on gaining the hand of a king's daughter. But he covered unprincipled malice against David under this proposal, which exhibited a zeal for God and the covenant of circumcision. 26. the days were not expired—the period within which this exploit was to be achieved was not exhausted. 27. David . . . slew of the Philistines two hundred men. The number was doubled, partly to show his respect and attachment to the princess, and partly to oblige Saul to the fulfilment of his pledge. This passage and 2 Sam. i. 20 (cf. Gen. xxxiv.), where the Philistines are styled “the uncircumcised,” seems directly at variance with a well-known statement by Herodotus (b. ii.: cf. ch. civ: Diodorus, b. i., 28), of the fact that circumcision was practised, not only by the Egyptians and Ethiopians, but by the Syrians of Palestine and the Phœnicians. But the two statements, though apparently

conflicting, are capable of being adjusted. ‘Subsequently to the time of Saul a great change took place in the population of the Philistine cities, and a considerable Egyptian element, practising circumcision, had probably been introduced (Blakesley's ‘Notes,’ also Wilkinson in Rawlinson's ‘Herodotus,’ ii., p. 104). gave them in full tale to the king. Trophies of this sort, whether hands, heads, or other dismembered relics of slaughtered remains, were minutely enumerated and carefully recorded (Gliddon's ‘Ancient Egypt,’ p. 99; Layard). 29. Saul was yet the more afraid of David—because Providence had visibly favoured him, by not only defeating the conspiracy against his life, but through his royal alliance paving his way to the throne.

CHAP. XIX. 1-7.—JONATHAN DISCLOSES HIS FATHER'S PURPOSE TO KILL DAVID.

1. Saul spake to Jonathan his son, and to all his servants, that they should kill David. The murderous design he had secretly cherished he now reveals to a few of his intimate friends. Jonathan was among the number. He prudently said nothing at the time, but secretly apprised David of his danger, and waiting till the morning, when his father's excited temper would be cooled, stationed his friend in a place of concealment, where, overhearing the conversation, he might learn how matters really stood, and take immediate flight, if necessary.

4. Jonathan spake good of David. He told his father he was committing a great sin to plot against the life of a man who had rendered the most invaluable services to his country, and

thou sawest it, and didst rejoice: ^hwherefore then wilt thou ⁱsin against
 6 innocent blood, to slay David without a cause? And Saul hearkened
 unto the voice of Jonathan: and Saul sware, *As* the LORD liveth, he
 7 shall not be slain. And Jonathan called David, and Jonathan showed
 him all those things. And Jonathan brought David to Saul, and he was
 in his presence, as ¹in times past.
 8 And there was war again: and David went out and fought with the
 Philistines, and slew them with a great slaughter; and they fled from ²him.
 9 And ^jthe evil spirit from the LORD was upon Saul, as he sat in his house
 10 with his javelin in his hand: and David played with *his* hand. And Saul
^ksought to smite David even to the wall with the javelin; but he slipped
 away out of Saul's presence, and he smote the javelin into the wall: and
 11 David fled, and escaped that night. Saul ^lalso sent messengers unto
 David's house, to watch him, and to slay him in the morning; and Michal,
 David's wife, told him, saying, If thou save not thy life to-night, to-morrow
 12 thou shalt be slain. So Michal ^mlet David down through a window: and
 13 he went, and fled, and escaped: And Michal took an ⁿimage, and laid it
 in the bed, and put a pillow of goats' hair for his bolster, and covered it
 14 with a cloth. And when Saul sent messengers to take David, she said,
 15 He *is* sick. And Saul sent the messengers *again* to see David, saying,
 16 Bring him up to me in the bed, that I may slay him. And when the
 messengers were come in, behold, *there was* an image in the bed, with a

B C 1) 3.
^h ch 20, 32.
ⁱ Matt. 27, 4.
^j 1 yesterday
 third day.
^k 2 his face.
^l ch. 16, 14.
 ch. 1, 10.
^m Job 5, 2.
 Ps 5, 6.
 1 ro. 1, 11.
 Pro. 2, 11.
 Hos. 6, 4.
 Matt. 12, 43.
 Luke 11, 24.
 26.
 2 Pet. 2, 20.
 22.
ⁿ Ps. 59.
 title.
^o Josh. 2, 15.
 Acts 9, 24.
 25.
 2 Cor 11, 32.
 33.
^p teraphim.
 Gen. 31, 19.
 Judg. 17, 5.
 Judg 18, 14.

whose loyalty had been uniformly steady and devoted. The strong remonstrances of Jonathan produced an effect on the impulsive mind of his father. As he was still susceptible of good and honest impressions, he bound himself by an oath to relinquish his hostile purpose, and thus, through the intervention of the noble-minded prince, a temporary reconciliation was effected, in consequence of which David was again employed in the public service.

8. 17.—SAUL'S MALICIOUS RAGE BREAKS OUT AGAINST DAVID.

8. David went out and fought with the Philistines. A brilliant victory was gained over the public enemy. But these fresh laurels of David re-awakened in the moody breast of Saul the former spirit of envy and melancholy. On David's return to court, the temper of Saul became more fiendish than ever—the melodious strains of the harp had lost all their power to charm; and, in a paroxysm of uncontrollable frenzy, he aimed a javelin at the person of David, the missile having been thrown with such force that it pierced the chamber wall. David providentially escaped; but the king having now thrown off the mask, and being bent on aggressive measures, made his son-in-law's situation everywhere perilous.

11. Saul also sent messengers unto David's house. The fear of causing a commotion in the town (viz., Gibeah, which was then the capital), or favouring his escape in the darkness, seemed to have influenced the king in ordering them to patrol till the morning. They betrayed their presence and hostile intentions of seizing David as he went out, by loud cries and execrations against the young champion, who had been so recently the idol of public admiration, more like savage dogs than officers of a court, as is most graphically recorded in Ps. lix., which, as the title in the Hebrew, Septuagint, and Vulgate indicates, was written on that occasion (see *vs.* 3, 6, 7, 12). This infatuation of the king's messengers was overruled by Providence to favour David's escape; for his wife, secretly apprised by Jonathan, who was privy to the design, or spying

persons in court livery watching the gate, perceived their purpose to be the clandestine seizure of David's person, and she contrived to let him down through a window (see on Josh. ii. 15; also Ps. xviii. 29). 13; Michal took an image [מִכָּלִים], the teraphim (see on Gen. xxxi. 34); Septuagint, Τα κεντάφια], and laid it in the bed—the 'teraphim,' of the figure and size of the human form, used for superstitious purposes by the Israelites in the times of the judges and of Saul (Judg. xvii. 5), until the practice was suppressed by Josiah (2 Ki. xxiii. 24). They were considered the givers and guardians of life and property, or consulted as oracles (Zech. x. 2; Hos. iii. 4). The pretext was that David lay there sick. The first messengers of Saul, keeping at a respectful distance, were deceived; but the imposition was detected on a closer inspection, and put a pillow of goats' hair [קֶבֶר הַעֲזִים]. This word *kebeer* is defined (*Gesenius*, 'Lexicon') as 'something braided or plaited,' from the root קָבַר, to plait; whence also קֶבֶר, a sieve; and קֶבֶר, net-work]. Accordingly, *Dr. Shaw, Parkhurst, Harmer*, and *Dr. A. Clarke*, long before *Ewald* ('Gesch.', iii., 101), considered it the mosquito net, drawn over an Eastern bed as a defence from the gnats. It is a curtain made of gauze, or fine linen, or silk thread, but anciently, as it seems, of goats' hair. Michal drew this, if it was used so early as the time of Saul, over the head of the image, as if to protect the sleeper from the stings of the flies, and at the same time covered the rest of the figure [קֶבֶר] with the coverlet. [The Septuagint, having probably read קֶבֶר, liver, instead of קֶבֶר, net-work, renders this clause καὶ ἦμαρ τῶν αἰγῶν ἐθετο πρὸς κεφαλῆς αὐτοῦ, and she put the goats' liver at his head] (cf. *Josephus*, 'Antiquities,' b. vi., ch. xi., sec. 4, where it is said, 'she showed the messengers the bed covered, and made them believe, by the leaping of the liver, which caused the bed-clothes to move also, that David breathed like a person labouring under asthma'). 15. Bring him up to me in the bed—a portable couch, or mattress.

- 17 pillow of goats' hair for his bolster. And Saul said unto Michal, Why hast thou deceived me so, and sent away mine enemy, that he is escaped? And Michal answered Saul, He said unto me, Let me go; why should I kill thee?
- 18 So David fled, and escaped, and came to Samuel to Ramah, and told him all that Saul had done to him. And he and Samuel went and dwelt in Naioth. And it was told Saul, saying, Behold, David is at Naioth in Ramah. And Saul sent messengers to take David: and when they saw the company of the prophets prophesying, and Samuel standing as appointed over them, the Spirit of God was upon the messengers of Saul, and they also prophesied. And when it was told Saul, he sent other messengers, and they prophesied likewise. And Saul sent messengers again the third time, and they prophesied also. Then went he also to Ramah, and came to a great well that is in Sechu: and he asked and said, Where are Samuel and David? And one said, Behold, they be at Naioth in Ramah. And he went thither to Naioth in Ramah: and the Spirit of God was upon him also, and he went on and prophesied, until he came to Naioth in Ramah. And he stripped off his clothes also, and prophesied before Samuel in like manner, and lay down naked all that day and all that night. Wherefore they say, Is Saul also among the prophets?
- 20 And David fled from Naioth in Ramah, and came and said before Jonathan, What have I done? what is mine iniquity? and what is my sin before thy father, that he seeketh my life? And he said unto him, God forbid; thou shalt not die: behold, my father will do nothing, either great or small, but that he will show it me: and why should my father hide

B C. 1062.
 2 Sam. 2 22.
 Pro 17. 17.
 Mal. 2 7.
 John 7. 37.
 45.
 ch. 10. 5, 6.
 John 7. 45.
 46.
 1 Cor 14. 3.
 24, 25.
 Num 11. 6.
 Joel. 2. 28.
 Gen. 31. 24.
 Num. 23. 5.
 Num 24. 2.
 ch 10. 10.
 Pro. 21. 1.
 Dan. 4. 35.
 Isa. 50. 2.
 Mic. 1. 8.
 fell.
 Num. 24. 4.
 2 Sam. 6. 14.
 29.
 Mic. 1. 8.
 ch. 10. 11.
 Acts 9. 21.
 CHAP. 20.
 Gen. 44. 7.
 Josh 22.:9.
 uncover
 mine ear.
 ch. 9. 15.

18-23.—DAVID FLEES TO SAMUEL.

18. David fled . . . and came . . . to Ramah. Samuel was living in great retirement, superintending the school of the prophets established in the little hamlet of Naioth [*i. e.*, habitations; a small cluster of dwellings reared for the seminary, or college. The Septuagint has *Nauâç*, as if this were the proper name of the place] in the neighbourhood of Ramah (Ramathaim-zophim) [Septuagint, *Ἀρμασαιμ*. This version supplies *ἔν Παυά* after "Naioth," at the end of v. 18.]. It was a retreat congenial to the mind of David; but Saul, having found out his asylum, sent three successive bodies of men to apprehend him. The character of the place and the influence of the sacred exercises produced such an effect on them that they were incapable of discharging their commission, and were led by a resistless impulse to join in singing the praises of God (see on ch. x. 5). 22. Then went he also to Ramah, and came to a great well that is in Sechu [בְּיַם בְּשֵׁחָ]—a cistern or reservoir, a pit. The Hebrew word, signifying watch-tower, denotes an elevated region in the Benjamin territory. *Van de Velde* ('Syria and Palestine,' ii., p. 53) hints at a village called Shák; and *Dr. Robinson* ('Biblical Researches,' ii., p. 185) saw, a quarter of an hour east-north-east of Shúk, an old stone water-tank on a hill called Bir-es-Zafaraneh. But *Van de Velde* thinks this rather too far to the north-east of er-Rámeh, and takes the large well mentioned in this verse to be Ain ed-Dirweh. *Bonar* ('Land of Promise,' p. 342) places Sechu at ez-Zeewekih, within a mile of el-Bireh (the well), in the environs of Jerusalem. *Porter* ('Handbook of Syria and Palestine') ranks it in his index of places not identified. [The Septuagint renders the clause, *ἐρχεται ἔως τοῦ φρέατος τοῦ ἄνω τοῦ ἐν τῷ Σεφά*.] Saul, in a fit of rage and disappointment, determined to go himself. But, before reaching the spot, his mental

susceptibilities were roused even more than those of his messengers, and he was found ere long swelling the ranks of the young prophets. This singular change can be ascribed only to the power of Him who can turn the hearts of men even as the rivers of water.

24.—SAUL PROPHESES.

24. lay down naked—*i. e.*, divested of his armour and outer robes, as the prophets seem to have stripped themselves of their upper clothing in seasons of extraordinary devotion (cf. Isa. i. 3; xx. 2, 3; Amos ii. 16; Mic. i. 8; also John xxi. 7; *Josephus*, 'Antiquities,' b. iv., ch. iii., sec. 2; b. viii., ch. xiv., sec. 7; also b. xi., ch. v., sec. 8). Thus God, in making the wrath of man to praise Him, preserved the lives of all the prophets, frustrated all the purposes of Saul, and preserved the life of His servant.

CHAP. XX. 1-10.—DAVID CONSULTS WITH JONATHAN FOR HIS SAFETY.

1. David fled from Naioth in Ramah, and came and said before Jonathan. He could not remain in Naioth, for he had strong reason to fear that when the religious fit, if we may so call it, was over, Saul would relapse into his usual fell and sanguinary temper. It may be thought that David acted imprudently in directing his flight to Gibeah. But he was evidently prompted to go thither by the most generous feelings, to inform his friend of what had recently occurred, and to obtain that friend's sanction to the course he was compelled to adopt. Jonathan could not be persuaded there was any real danger after the oath his father had taken; at all events, he felt assured his father would do nothing without telling him. Filial attachment naturally blinded the prince to defects in the parental character, and made him reluctant to believe his father capable of such atrocity. David repeated his unshaken convictions of Saul's murderous purpose, confirming his declaration by

3 this thing from me? it *is* not so. And David swore moreover, and said, Thy father certainly knoweth that I have found grace in thine eyes; and he saith, Let not Jonathan know this, lest he be grieved: but truly, as the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, *there is* but a step between me and death. Then said Jonathan unto David, ²Whatsoever thy soul ³desireth, I will even do *it* for thee.

5 And David said unto Jonathan, Behold, to-morrow *is* the ^bnew moon, and I should not fail to sit with the king at meat: but let me go, that I may ^chide myself in the field unto the third *day* at even. If thy father at all miss me, then say, David earnestly asked *leave* of me that he might run ^dto Beth-lehem his city; for *there is* a yearly ⁴sacrifice there for all 7 the family. If ^ehe say thus, *It is well*; thy servant shall have peace: but 8 if he be very wroth, *then* be sure that evil is determined by him. Therefore thou shalt ^fdeal kindly with thy servant; for ^gthou hast brought thy servant into a covenant of the LORD with thee: notwithstanding, ^hif there be in me iniquity, slay me thyself; for why shouldst thou bring me to thy father?

9 And Jonathan said, Far be it from thee: for if I knew certainly that evil were determined by my father to come upon thee, then would not I tell it thee?

10 Then said David to Jonathan, Who shall tell me? or what *if* thy 11 father answer thee roughly? And Jonathan said unto David, Come, and let us go out into the field. And they went out both of them into the 12 field. And Jonathan said unto David, ⁱO LORD God of Israel, when I have ⁵sounded my father about to-morrow any time, or the third *day*, and, behold, *if there be* good toward David, and I then send not unto thee, 13 and ⁶show it thee; the ^jLORD do so and much more to Jonathan: but if it please my father to *do* thee evil, then I will show it thee, and send thee away, that thou mayest go in peace: and ^kthe LORD be with thee, as he 14 hath been with my father. And thou shalt not only while yet I live show 15 me the kindness of the LORD, that I die not: but *also* ^lthou shalt not cut off thy kindness from my house for ever: no, not when the LORD hath 16 cut off the enemies of David every one from the face of the earth. So Jonathan ^mmade a *covenant* with the house of David, *saying*, ⁿLet the 17 LORD even require *it* at the hand of David's enemies. And Jonathan

B. C. 1062.

² Or, say what is thy mind, and I will do, etc.

³ speake^th, or, thinketh.

Fro. 17. 17.

^b Num. 10. 10.

Num. 23. 11.

2 Ki. 4. 23.

1 Chr. 21. 31.

2 Chr. 2. 4.

Ezra 3. 5.

^c ch. 19. 2.

Ps. 55. 12.

^d ch. 16. 4.

^e Or, feast.

ch. 9. 12.

^f Deut. 1. 23.

2 Sam. 17. 1.

^g Gen. 21. 49.

Josh. 2. 14.

Ruth 1. 8.

^h ch. 18. 3.

ch. 23. 18.

ⁱ 2 Sam. 14.

32.

^j Josh. 22. 22.

^k searched.

^l uncover

thine ear.

^m Ruth 1. 17.

ⁿ Josh. 1. 5.

ch. 17. 57.

^o Gen. 21. 23.

2 Sam. 9. 1

3. 7.

2 Sam. 21. 7.

^p cut.

^q ch. 25. 12.

ch. 31. 2.

2 Sam. 4. 7.

2 Sam. 21. 3.

a peculiar form of oath, which occurs here for the first time, but in terms delicately chosen (*v.* 3) not to wound the filial feelings of his friend; while Jonathan, clinging, it would seem, to a hope that the extraordinary scene enacted at Naioth might have wrought a sanctified improvement on Saul's temper and feelings, undertook to inform David of the result of his observations at home.

5, to-morrow is the new moon. The beginning of a new month or moon was always celebrated by special sacrifices, followed by feasting, at which the head of a family expected all its members to be present. David, both as the king's son-in-law and a distinguished courtier, dined on such occasions at the royal table; and from its being generally known that David had returned to Gibeah, his presence in the palace would be naturally expected. This occasion was chosen by the two friends for testing the king's state of feeling. As a suitable pretext for David's absence, it was arranged that he should visit his family at Beth-lehem, and thus create an opportunity of ascertaining how his non-appearance would be viewed. The time and place were fixed for Jonathan reporting to David; but as circumstances might render another interview unsafe, it was deemed expedient to communicate by a concerted signal.

11-23.—THEIR COVENANT RENEWED BY OATH.

11. Jonathan said . . . Come, and let us go out into the field. The scene of this memorable conference was, as Porter describes ('Handbook,' p. 324), 'a shallow valley between Gibeah (Tell-el-Fûil) and Nob, breaking down on the east in rocky declivities into Wady Suleim. Behind some of the rocks in it David could easily lie hid, and yet see Jonathan descending from the city above.' The private dialogue which is here detailed at full length presents a most beautiful exhibition of these two amiable and noble-minded friends. Jonathan was led, in the circumstances, to be the chief speaker. The strength of his attachment, his pure disinterestedness, his warm piety, his invocation to God—consisting of a prayer and a solemn oath combined—the calm and full expression he gave of his conviction that his own family were, by the Divine will, to be disinherited, and David elevated to the possession of the throne; the covenant entered into with David on behalf of his descendants, and the imprecation (*v.* 16) denounced on any of them who should violate his part of the conditions; the reiteration of this covenant on both sides (*v.* 17), to make it indissoluble,—all this indicates such a power of mutual affection, such magnetic attractiveness in the character of David, such susceptibility and elevation of feeling in the

- caused David to swear again, ⁸ because he loved him: for he loved him as he loved his own soul.
- 18 Then Jonathan said to David, To-morrow is the new moon: and thou shalt be missed, because thy seat will be ⁹ empty. And when thou hast stayed three days, then thou shalt go down ¹⁰ quickly, and come to ¹¹ the place where thou didst hide thyself when the business was in hand, and thou shalt remain by the stone ¹² Ezel. And I will shoot three arrows on the side thereof, as though I shot at a mark. And, behold, I will send a lad, saying, Go, find out the arrows. If I expressly say unto the lad, Behold, the arrows are on this side of thee, take them; then come thou: for there is peace to thee, and ¹³ no hurt, as the LORD liveth. But if I say thus unto the young man, Behold, the arrows are beyond thee; go thy way: for the LORD hath sent thee away. And as touching the matter which thou and I have spoken of, behold, the LORD be between thee and me for ever.
- 24 So David hid himself in the field: and when the new moon was come, the king sat him down to eat meat. And the king sat upon his seat, as at other times, even upon a seat by the wall: and Jonathan arose, and
- 26 Abner sat by Saul's side, and David's place was empty. Nevertheless Saul spake not any thing that day: for he thought, Something hath befallen him, he is not clean; surely he is not clean.
- 27 And it came to pass on the morrow, which was the second day of the month, that David's place was empty: and Saul said unto Jonathan his son, Wherefore cometh not the son of Jesse to meat, neither yesterday nor to-day? And Jonathan answered Saul, David earnestly asked leave of me to go to Beth-lehem: and he said, Let me go, I pray thee; for our family hath a sacrifice in the city; and my brother, he hath commanded me to be there: and now, if I have found favour in thine eyes, let me get away, I pray thee, and see my brethren: therefore he cometh not unto the king's table.

B C. 1052.

Or, by his love toward him. ch. 18. 1. ch. 19. 2. 2 Sam. 1. 23. 9 mi-se'd. 10 greatly, or diligently. 11 ch. 19. 2. 11 in the day of the business. 12 Or, that showeth the way. 13 not any thing. 14 Deut. 6. 13. Deut. 10. 21. Ps. 63. 12. Isa. 65. 16. Jer. 4. 2. 15 1ro. 27. 12. 16 ch. 14. 10. 17 Lev. 5. 2. 3. Lev. 7. 21. Lev. 11. 2'. 27, 31, 40. Lev. 13. 1-3. Lev. 15. 5. Lev. 22. 4. Num. 10. 16. 1 Cor. 15. 33. 2 Cor. 6. 17. Eph. 2. 1-3. Eph. 5. 11.

heart of Jonathan, that this interview, for dramatic interest and moral beauty, stands unrivalled in the records of human friendship.

18. To-morrow is the new moon [שָׂרָא]. The first day of the lunar month was held as a festival amongst the Hebrews. 19. when thou hast stayed three days—either with your family at Beth-lehem, or wherever you find it convenient, where thou didst hide thyself when the business was in hand—Hebrew, 'in the day or time of the business,' when the same matter was under enquiry formerly (ch. xix. 22). remain by the stone Ezel [עֶזֶל]—the stone of departure (*Gesenius*); so called, probably, from its being the spot whence David separated from his friend. He was to conceal himself in some cave or hiding-place near that spot. 23. as touching the matter which thou and I have spoken of. The plan being concerted, the friends separated for a time, and the amiable character of Jonathan again peers out in his parting allusion to their covenant of friendship.

24-40.—SAUL, MISSING DAVID, SEEKS TO KILL JONATHAN.

24. the king sat him down to eat meat [אָכַל]—food, bread. The English word "meat," at the time when the present English translation of the Bible was made, was applied to farinaceous as to animal substances. [The Septuagint has και ερχεται ο βασιλευς επι την τραπεζαν του φαγειν, the king comes to the four-footed table to eat.] Perhaps, like Joseph, he had a small table for himself, or for a few of his chief officers. 25. the king sat upon his seat, as at other times . . . by the wall. The left-hand corner at the upper end of a room

was, and still is, in the East, the most honourable place. The person seated there has his left arm confined by the wall, but his right hand is at full liberty. From Abner's position next the king, and David's seat being left empty, it would seem that a state etiquette was observed at the royal table, each of the courtiers and ministers having places assigned them according to their respective gradations of rank. Jonathan, as prince, had of course the highest seat; Abner was captain of the host, or commander-in-chief; and David was successively armour-bearer to the king (ch. xvi. 21; xviii. 2), captain over a thousand (ch. xviii. 13), and on his becoming Saul's son-in-law, he had been promoted, as *Ewald* explains this passage (cf. ch. xxii. 14), to the dignified office of captain of the royal body-guard. These three were the most honoured guests on state occasions at Saul's table. Jonathan arose—either as a mark of respect on the entrance of the king, or in conformity with the usual Oriental custom for a son to stand in presence of his father. [The Septuagint has και προεφθασε τον Ιωανθαν, and he went before, or he faced, Jonathan.] 26. he is not clean. No notice was taken of David's absence, as he might be labouring under some ceremonial defilement.

27. on the morrow, which was the second day of the month. The time of the moon's appearance being uncertain, whether at mid-day, in the evening, or at midnight, the festival was extended over two days. Custom, not the law, had introduced this. Saul said unto Jonathan . . . Wherefore cometh not the son of Jesse? The question was asked, as it were, casually, and with as great an air of indifference as he could assume. And

- 30 Then Saul's anger was kindled against Jonathan, and he said unto him, ¹⁴Thou son of the perverse rebellious woman, do not I know that thou hast chosen the son of Jesse to thine own confusion, and unto the
- 31 confusion of thy mother's nakedness? For as long as the son of Jesse liveth upon the ground, thou shalt not be established, nor thy kingdom. Wherefore now send and fetch him unto me, for he ¹⁵shall surely die.
- 32 And Jonathan answered Saul his father, and said unto him, ⁸Wherefore
- 33 shall he be slain? what hath he done? And Saul cast a javelin at him to smite him: whereby Jonathan knew that it was determined of his
- 34 father to slay David. So Jonathan arose from the table in fierce anger, and did eat no meat the second day of the month: for he was grieved for David, because his father had done him shame.
- 35 And it came to pass in the morning, that Jonathan went out into the
- 36 field at the time appointed with David, and a little lad with him. And he said unto his lad, Run, find out now the arrows which I shoot. And
- 37 as the lad ran, he shot an arrow ¹⁶beyond him. And when the lad was come to the place of the arrow which Jonathan had shot, Jonathan cried
- 38 after the lad, and said, *Is not the arrow beyond thee?* And Jonathan cried after the lad, *Make speed, haste, stay not.* And Jonathan's lad
- 39 gathered up the arrows, and came to his master. But the lad knew not
- 40 any thing: only Jonathan and David knew the matter. And Jonathan gave his ¹⁷artillery unto ¹⁸his lad, and said unto him, Go, carry *them* to the city.
- 41 And as soon as the lad was gone, David arose out of a place toward the south, and fell on his face to the ground, and bowed himself three times: and they kissed one another, and wept one with another, until

B. C. 1067.

¹⁴ Son of
perver-
e
rebellion.
or, Thou
perverse
rebel.

Pro 21. 24.
Matt. 5. 12.

Eph. 6. 4.

Eph. 4. 31.

¹⁵ is the son

of death.

ch. 26. 16.

2 Sam 19.

29.

Ps. 79. 11.

⁸ Gen. 31. 36.

ch. 19. 5.

Ps. 25. 3.

Ps. 69. 4.

Pro. 14. 25.

Pro. 21. 11.

Pro. 31. 9.

Matt. 27. 21.

Luke 23: 2.

John 7. 51.

John 15. 23.

¹⁶ to pass

over him.

¹⁷ instru-

ments.

¹⁸ that was

his.

Jonathan having replied that David had asked and obtained his permission to attend a family anniversary at Beth-lehem, the pent-up passions of the king, who penetrated the prince's policy, burst out in a most violent storm of rage and invective against his son.

30. Thou son of the perverse rebellious woman. This is a striking Oriental form of abuse (see an instance, *Bovet*, 'Voyage en Terre Sainte,' p. 77), the counterpart of that ancient benediction, Luke xi. 27. Saul was not angry with his wife; it was the son alone upon whom he meant, by this style of address, to discharge his resentment; and the principle on which it is founded seems to be, that to a genuine filial instinct it is a more inexpiable offence to hear the name or character of a parent traduced than any personal reproach. In every Eastern family the great object of respect and devotion is the mother. There are familiar expressions which show this very strongly. 'Pull my father's beard, but do not speak ill of my mother.' 'Strike me, but do not curse my mother' (*Urquhart's* 'Spirit of the East'). This was, undoubtedly, one cause of 'the fierce anger' in which the high-minded prince left the table without tasting a morsel. 33. And Saul cast a javelin at him to smite him. The ordinary way in which commentators understand this clause is with reference to Jonathan; and accordingly the usual heading of the chapter in the English Bible is, 'Saul seeketh to kill Jonathan.' But bad as the character of Saul was, and violent his fits of furious rage, he had never attempted any act like the atrocity of taking his son's life. Supposing, however, that he had made such an unnatural attempt, how could Jonathan know by that cruelty to himself "that it was determined of his father to slay David?" Besides, it appears from the next verse that, after this scene of violence, Jonathan arose from the table with deep but deliberate displea-

sure, being determined to fast, from grief on account of David. This hardly seems to harmonize with the idea of his having started up from his seat to save his own life, as we must naturally suppose him to have done, if his father aimed a deadly weapon at him across the table. There is no evidence that a javelin was thrown at Jonathan. Let the sentence be read as an interjected parenthesis, in which the sacred historian refers to former attempts upon David's life, as throwing a clear light upon what had now taken place, and all is plain: 'Now Saul had cast a javelin at him to smite him; whereby Jonathan knew that it was determined of his father to slay David.' That is, Jonathan, recollecting the former attempt at assassinating David, was convinced that the present threats of his father were by no means empty words; but, coupling the present with the former scene, could not now doubt that his father did really cherish the deliberate purpose of slaying David. (See an article on this passage, 'Christian Observer,' vol. xiv., pp. 715, 716.)

35. Jonathan went out into the field at the time appointed—or, 'at the place appointed.' 36. he said unto his lad. The direction given aloud to the attendant was the signal preconcerted with David. It implied danger. 40. gave his artillery—i. e., his missile weapons. The French word 'artillerie' signifies 'archery,' and the term is still used in England, in the designation of the 'artillery company of London,' the association of archers, though they have long disused bows and arrows. Jonathan's boy being despatched out of the way, the friends enjoyed the satisfaction of a final meeting.

41, 42.—JONATHAN AND DAVID LOVINGLY PART. 41. David . . . fell on his face . . . and bowed himself three times—a token of homage to the prince's rank; but on a close approach, every other consideration was sunk in the full

42 David exceeded. And Jonathan said to David, Go in peace, ¹⁹forasmuch as we have sworn both of us in the name of the LORD, saying, The LORD be between me and thee, and between my seed and thy seed for ever. And he arose and departed: and Jonathan went into the city.

21 THEN came David to ^aNob to ^bAhimelech the priest: and Ahimelech was afraid at the meeting of David, and said unto him, Why art thou 2 alone, and no man with thee? And David said unto Ahimelech the priest, ^cThe king hath commanded me a business, and hath said unto me, Let no man know any thing of the business whereabout I send thee, and what I have commanded thee: and I have appointed *my* servants to such 3 and such a place. Now therefore what is under thine hand? give me five 4 loaves of bread in mine hand, or what there is ¹present. And the priest answered David, and said, *There* is no common bread under mine hand; but there is ^dhallowed bread; if ^ethe young men have kept themselves at 5 least from women. And David answered the priest, and said unto him, Of a truth women *have been* kept from us about these three days, since I came out, and the ^fvessels of the young men are holy, and the *bread is* in a manner common, ²yea, though it were sanctified this day ^gin the vessel.

B. C. 1161.

¹⁹Or, The LORD be witness of that which etc

CHAP. 21.

^a Neh. 11. 22.^b ch. 14. 3^c Ps 119. 29.¹ found.^d Ex. 25. 10.^e Ex. 19. 15.^f 1 Thes. 4. 4.² Or, especially

when t' is

day there

is other

sanctified

in the

vessel.

^g Lev. 8. 26.

flow of the purest brotherly affection. 42. Jonathan said to David, Go in peace. The interview being a stolen one, and every moment precious, it was kindness in Jonathan to hasten his friend's departure.

CHAP. XXI. 1-7.—DAVID, AT NOB OBTAINS OF AHIMELECH HALLOWED BREAD.

1. Then came David . . . to Ahimelech. Nob [the Vatican copy of the Septuagint has *Νοββὰ*; the Alexandrian (*Tischendorf's* notes), *Νοβα*], a city of the priests (ch. xxii. 19), was in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem. It is computed to have been about five miles south of Gibeah, and but a short distance from Anathoth (Neh. xi. 32; Isa. xxviii. 32). *Dr. Robinson* ('Biblical Researches,' ii., p. 150), concluding, from the Scriptural notices of Nob, that it must have been situated somewhere on the ridge of the mount of Olives, north-east of the city, made diligent but unsuccessful search for it in that direction. *Thrupp* ('Ancient Jerusalem') considers it identical with Bethphage, which, however, has been satisfactorily proved (*Barclay*, 'City of the Great King,' p. 65) to have lain on the south side of the mount of Olives. *Von Raumer* (p. 195) and *Rupert* identify Nob with el-Isawiyeih, about two miles north of Jerusalem; but that village lies in a deep valley, and commands no view of Jerusalem. *Porter* ('Handbook,' p. 324) seems to have ascertained the site of Nob on a low peaked tell, where are the ruins of a small but ancient town, answering all the conditions of the sacred locality. "Ahimelech"—the same as Abiah, or perhaps his brother, both being sons of Abihub (cf. ch. xiv. 3 with ch. xxii. 4-11, 20). In Mark ii. 6, Abiathar is named as the high priest, not Ahimelech his father, as here. In explanation, it has been advanced that Abiathar was Sagan, the high priest's vicar; for which, however, there is no authority, as Abiathar is not mentioned in this narrative. A more probable supposition is, that the bread given was through the friendly intercession of Abiathar with the high priest, or perhaps was Abiathar's own portion (Lev. xxiv. 9). Both these conjectures are rendered probable by the close and unbroken friendship which afterwards subsisted between David and him. His object in fleeing to this place was partly for the supply of his necessities, and partly for comfort and counsel in the prospect of leaving the kingdom. afraid at the meeting of David [תָּרַס], trembled, was terrified; Septuagint, 191

ἐξέστη, was astounded, thrown into consternation (cf. Mark iii. 21; Luke xxiv. 22)]—suspecting some extraordinary occurrence by his appearing so suddenly, and in such a style, for his attendants were left at a little distance. 2. The king hath commanded me a business . . . Let no man know. This was a direct falsehood, extorted through fear. David probably supposed, like many other persons, that a lie is quite excusable which is told for the sole purpose of saving the speaker's life; or perhaps it was for the preservation of Ahimelech; for, as David saw Doeg there, who he was sure would inform Saul, he might wish to furnish the high priest with some reasonable excuse for the assistance rendered to the fugitive—an excuse which Ahimelech urged in defending himself from the charge of the incensed king (ch. xxii. 14, 15). But what is essentially sinful can never, from circumstances, change its immoral character; and David had to repent of this vice of lying (Ps. cxix. 29). 4. hallowed bread [חֶלֶב קֹדֶשׁ]—consecrated bread. There might be plenty of bread in his house, but it was not at hand, and there was no time to wait for it. The "hallowed bread" was the old showbread (Matt. vi. 3-5; Mark ii. 25, 26; Luke vi. 3, 4) which had been removed the previous day, and which was reserved for the use of the priests alone (Lev. xxiv. 9). Before entertaining the idea that this bread could be lawfully given to David and his men, the high priest seems to have consulted the oracle (ch. xxii. 10) as to the course to be followed in this emergency. A dispensation to use the hallowed bread was specially granted by God himself 5. these three days—as required by law (Exod. xix. 15). David and his attendants seem to have been during this interval lurking in some of the adjoining caves to avoid pursuit, and to have been consequently reduced to great extremities of hunger. *Dean Stanley* (*Smith's 'Dictionary,'* article 'David') says, that 'the young men spoken of were imaginary. He was alone.' This is directly at variance with the testimony of our Lord in the passages referred to, as well as with the answer of the high priest (v. 4), which implies that David had informed him of the retinue he had with him, though they were not priests. the bread is in a manner common—i. e., now that it is no longer standing on the Lord's table. It is eaten by the priests, and may also, in our circumstances, be eaten by us. yea, though it were

- 6 So the priest ^hgave him hallowed *bread*: for there was no bread there but the showbread, ⁱthat was taken from before the LORD, to put hot bread in
7 the day when it was taken away. Now a certain man of the servants of Saul was there that day, detained before the LORD; and his name *was* ^jDoeg, an Edomite, the chiefest of the herdmen that *belonged* to Saul.
8 And David said unto Ahimelech, And is there not here under thine hand spear or sword? for I have neither brought my sword nor my weapons with
9 me, because the king's business required haste. And the priest said, The sword of Goliath the Philistine, whom thou slewest in the valley of Elah, ^kbehold, it *is here* wrapped in a cloth behind the ephod: if thou wilt take that, take *it*; for *there is* no other save that here. And David said, *There is none like that*; give it me.
10 And David arose, and fled that day for fear of Saul, and went to
11 ^lAchish the king of Gath. And ^mthe servants of Achish said unto him, *Is not this David the king of the land? did they not sing one to another of him in dances, saying,* ⁿSaul hath slain his thousands, and David his 12 ten thousands? And David laid up these words in his heart, and was 13 sore afraid of Achish the king of Gath. And ^ohe changed his behaviour

B. C 1073
^a Matt. 12. 3.
4.
Mark 2. 25.
27.
Luke 6. 3.
4.
^c Lev. 24. 9.
^j ch. 22. 9.
Ps. 52.
title.
1 ro. 19. 5.
^k ch. 31. 10.
^l Or, Ahimelech.
Ps. 31.
title.
ⁱ 1's 56.
title.
^m ch. 18. 7.
ⁿ Ps. 34.
title.
Pro. 23. 25.
Ecc. 7. 7.

sanctified this day in the vessel—*i. e.*, though the hallowed bread had been but newly placed on the vessel, the ritual ordinance would have to yield to the great law of necessity and mercy (see on Matt. xii. 3; Mark ii. 25; Luke vi. 3). 6, there—in the tabernacle. The removal of the old and the substitution of new bread was done on the Sabbath (Lev. xxiv. 8), the loaves being kept warm in an oven heated the previous day. 7, detained before the Lord [עָבַד יְהוָה עָבַד], assembled before Jehovah; from the idea of compelling, constraining to a festival (*Gesenius*); Septuagint, *συνεχόμενος*, being held together, confined]—at the tabernacle; perhaps in the performance of a vow, or from its being the Sabbath, which rendered it unlawful for him to prosecute his journey. Doeg, an Edomite [Septuagint, *ὁ Σέγος*, the Syrian (cf. *Josephus*, 'Antiquities,' b. vi., ch. xii., sec. 1)]—who had embraced the Hebrew religion, the chiefest of the herdmen that belonged to Saul. Eastern monarchs anciently had large possessions in flocks and herds, and the office of the chief shepherd was an important one (*Josephus* styles him 'keeper of the king's mules').

9.—HE TAKES GOLIATH'S SWORD.

9. sword of Goliath—(see on ch. xviii. 54.) wrapped in a cloth [עָבַד], covered, עָבַדוֹ, with the article. Whence it must mean some particular covering; elegant, embroidered, and sufficiently worthy to keep the consecrated memorials of a memorable victory.] *Harmer* thinks that, though the covering of the sword may refer to the scabbard, the probability is that it must be understood of something in which both sword and scabbard were wrapped up, behind the ephod—in the place allotted for keeping the sacred vestments, of which the ephod is mentioned as the chief. The giant's sword was deposited in that safe custody as a memorial of the Divine goodness in delivering Israel, if thou wilt take that, take it. Arms, though deposited as votive offerings in temples, might lawfully be taken, and very frequently were employed, when necessity required, in the public service. There is none like that—not only for its size and superior temper, but for its being a pledge of the Divine favour to him, and a constant stimulus to his faith. This incident forms the historic basis of Ps. liii., as appears from its traditional title.

10-15.—AT GATH HE FEIGNS HIMSELF MAD.

10. David . . . fled that day for fear of Saul. The king's uncontrollable violence and jealousy of David, together with the number of court parasites ready to give information to Saul of his place of refuge, rendered it impossible for him to remain within the territory of Israel, and he had resolved to leave the country. and went to Achish the king of Gath—which was one of the five principalities of the Philistines; but its site is unknown. *Dr. Robinson* ('Biblical Researches,' ii., 420) and *Ritter* ('Erdkunde,' 16 ter; 'Theil,' 136-139.) take it to be Deir-Dubbân. But their opinion has not been adopted. In this place his person must have been known; and to venture into that country, he their greatest enemy, and with the sword of Goliath in his hand, would seem to have been a rash and perilous experiment; but, doubtless, the protection he received implies that he had been directed by the divine oracle. Achish was generous (ch. xxvii. 6). He might wish to weaken the resources of Saul; and it was common in ancient times for great men to be harboured by neighbouring princes, as Themistocles in Persia, and Coriolanus amongst the Volscians. Besides, it has been suggested that the king of Gath might have been secretly well pleased to be rid of so formidable a rival as Goliath, and therefore have no objection to see and entertain the youthful victor. But although the personal feelings of Achish might have led him to give David a friendly reception, his nobles were very differently disposed towards the Hebrew stranger. 11. Is not this David the king of the land? The report of his destined elevation to the throne seems to have been spread amongst the Philistines, did they not sing one to another . . . Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands? The fame of his martial achievements, which had been performed chiefly against their country, roused the patriotic resentment of the courtiers at Gath, and David, as the king began to sympathize with them, felt himself in a false position. 12. David laid up these words in his heart, and was sore afraid of Achish the king of Gath This terror, and the sad extremities of destitution and peril to which he was now reduced, may be inferred from the scheme of deception to which he resorted to extricate himself from those difficulties. 13. And he changed his behaviour [עָבַד]

before them, and feigned himself mad in their hands, and ⁴scrabbled on the doors of the gate, and let his spittle fall down upon his beard. Then said Achish unto his servants, Lo, ye see the man ⁵is mad: wherefore ¹⁵then have ye brought him to me? Have I need of mad men, that ye have brought this fellow to play the mad man in my presence? shall this fellow come into my house?

²² DAVID therefore departed thence, ^aand escaped ^bto the cave Adullam: and when his brethren and all his father's house heard *it*, they ²went down thither to him. And ^cevery one *that was* in distress, and every one that ¹was in debt, and every one *that was* ²discontented, gathered themselves unto him; and he became a captain over them: and there were with him about four hundred men.

³ And David went thence to Mizpeh of Moab: and he said unto the king of Moab, Let ^dmy father and my mother, I pray thee, come forth,

B. C. 1022.

⁴ Or, made marks.
⁶ Or, playeth the mad man.

CHAP. 22.

^a 1's 57,

title,

Ps. 142,

title

^b 1 Ki. 17. 3.^c Judg. 11. 3.¹ had a

creditor.

² bitter of

soul.

^d Gen 47. 11.

ⲁⲛⲁⲣⲏⲧⲏⲥ]—and disfigured his understanding (*Gesenius*). and feigned himself mad [ⲁⲛⲁⲣⲏⲧⲏⲥ]—and acted the madman, in their hands. He had been seized and made prisoner by the Philistine nobles in Gath, as appears from the title to Psalm lvi. and scrabbled [ⲁⲛⲁⲣⲏⲧⲏⲥ]—and made marks, scrawled on the doors of the gate, in the manner of mischievous boys (*Gesenius*), and let his spittle fall down upon his beard. An indignity to the beard, whether done by another or by one's self, is considered in the East an intolerable insult; and no wonder, therefore, that the disgusting defilement of it which was committed by David, and allowed to remain unwiped away, was alone sufficient to convince Achish that he was insane. ¹⁵ Have I need of mad men? Jewish writers say that the wife and daughter of Achish were both mad; and this statement, assuming the fact to be so, gives an emphatic import to the question, "Have I need of mad men . . . shall this fellow come into my house?" David seems to have affected the appearance and sordid condition of a fool or a lunatic—a man whose reason had been overturned by the many severe vicissitudes he had undergone. And in his defence it has been argued that self-preservation, the first law of nature, will justify the use of any stratagem for protecting life from threatened danger. He is not the only great man who is recorded to have played the fool in critical circumstances, since Solon and L. Junius Brutus both fell on the same expedient to escape from their respective troubles. The pretended mania of David must have been exhibited in some particular phase; and the Septuagint version of this passage not only specifies that form, but deviates so remarkably from our present Hebrew text, that it may be interesting to some readers to see it in full [καὶ ἠλοίωσε τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ καὶ προσποιήσατο ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ, καὶ ἐτυμπαίνεν ἐπὶ ταῖς θύραις τῆς πόλεως, καὶ παρεφέρετο ἐν ταῖς χερσὶν αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἔπιπτεν ἐπὶ τὰς θύρας τῆς πόλεως. And he changed his visage before him (viz., the king of Gath), and made (as though he were mad: cf. Luke xxiv. 28) on that day, and beat upon the gates of the city, and was convulsed in his hands, and fell upon the doors of the gate (at the palace entrance, where the king was administering justice), and streams of saliva flowed rapidly down upon his beard. And Achish said unto his servants, Lo! you see the man is epileptic: why do you bring him to me? do I need epileptic persons, that you have brought him to take a fit in my presence? He shall not enter in my house]. Psalms xxxiv. and xxxv. are believed to refer to this incident, the remembrance of which will throw light on many of

the peculiar metaphors used in those sacred compositions.

CHAP. XXII. 1-8.—DAVID'S KINDRED AND OTHERS RESORT TO HIM AT ADULLAM.

1. David . . . escaped to the cave Adullam—supposed to be that now called Deir-Dubbân, a number of pits, or underground vaults, some nearly square, and all about fifteen or twenty feet deep, with perpendicular sides in the soft limestone or chalky rocks. They are on the borders of the Shephelah, or Philistine plain, at the base of the Judean mountains; placed by *Eusebius* and *Jerome* about Ramah, ten miles (about three and a half hours) east from Eleutheropolis (Beit-Jerlin). Psalm xiv. was composed in that cave, well adapted for concealing a great number of refugees. his brethren and all his father's house . . . went down—to escape the effects of Saul's rage, which seems to have extended to all David's family. From Beth-lehem to Deir-Dubbân it is indeed a descent all the way (*Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' ii., p. 175; 'Sinai and Palestine,' p. 254; *Van de Velde*, ii., pp. 140, 157; *Porter's* 'Handbook,' pp. 229, 230: see on John xv. 35).

2. And every one that was in distress . . . gathered themselves unto him—(see on Judg. xi. 3.) While lurking in the caverns of those rocky fastnesses, they were on the confines of extensive pasture lands, over which were spread the vast flocks of the neighbouring proprietors. David rendered useful service in protecting these from the Bedouins of the desert, and in return received from the shepherds supplies of food, as well as reasonable intelligence of the movements of the roving government spies sent to search for them (see on ch. xxv. 8, 9). It is evident from the respect which he inculcated upon his followers for the rights of property and for the person of Saul, that he meditated neither treason against the king nor rebellion against his government. Similar associations exist in the same localities at the present day,—a motley crew of desperate men from all parts of the country: some wild and marauding outlaws, others tolerated by the governments, and empowered to keep the desert tribes in check (see *Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' ii., p. 200; *Drew's* 'Scripture Lands,' p. 121; *Rogers's* 'Domestic Life,' p. 179; *Wolf's* 'Missionary Labours and Researches,' p. 507).

3. And David went thence to Mizpeh of Moab. Mizpeh signifies a watch-tower; and its association with Moab determines the direction in which it is to be sought for. The search is still further limited by the application to it (v. 4) of the term "hold" [ⲁⲛⲁⲣⲏⲧⲏⲥ]—a fortress, stronghold; and all these circumstances combined point evidently to

- 4 *and be* with you, till I know what God will do for me. And he brought them before the king of Moab; and they dwelt with him all the while
- 5 that David was in the hold. And the prophet Gad said unto David, Abide not in the hold; depart, and get thee into the land of Judah. Then David departed, and came into the forest of Hareth.
- 6 When Saul heard that David was discovered, and the men that *were* with him, (now Saul abode in Gibeah under a ³tree in Ramah, having his spear in his hand, and all his servants *were* standing about him;)
- 7 Then Saul said unto his servants that stood about him, Hear now, ye Benjamites; will the son of Jesse ⁷give every one of you fields and vineyards, *and* make you all captains of thousands, and captains of hundreds;
- 8 that all of you have conspired against me, and *there is* none that ⁴showeth me that ⁸my son hath made a league with the son of Jesse, and *there is* none of you that is sorry for me, or showeth unto me that my son hath stirred up my servant against me, to lie in wait, as at this day?
- 9 Then answered ^hDoeg the Edomite, which was set over the servants of Saul, and said, I saw the son of Jesse coming to Nob, to ⁱAhimelech the son of ^jAhitub. And ^khe enquired of the LORD for him, and ^lgave him victuals, and gave him the sword of Goliath the Philistine.

B. C. 1062.

- * 2 Sam. 24. 11.
 1 Chr. 21. 9.
 2 Chr. 24. 25.
 3 Or. grove in a high place.
 7 ch. 8. 14.
 4 uncover-eth mine ear.
 ch. 20. 2.
 8 ch. 18. 3.
 ch. 10. 10.
 ch. 23. 16-18.
 8 ch. 21. 7.
 1's 52, title.
 Pro 19. 5.
 4 ch. 21. 1.
 5 ch. 14. 3.
 6 Num. 27. 21.
 4 ch. 21. 6, 9.

Masada, now Sebbeh, described by *Josephus* ('Jewish Wars,' b. iv., 7, 2; vii. 8, 2; 'Antiquities,' xiii., 9, 14; b. ii., 7) as a lofty rock of considerable circuit, overhanging the Dead Sea, surrounded by profound valleys, unfathomable to the eye. It was inaccessible to the foot of animals in every part, except by two paths hewn in the rock. One of these, the least difficult, was on the west; the other, on the east, was carried up from the lake itself by zig-zags cut along the crags of the precipice, and was exceedingly difficult and dangerous. 'A fortress was built on it,' adds the Jewish historian, 'by our ancient kings, as a place of safe deposit for their wealth during war, and as a place of safety for their persons' (*Trail*, 'Josephus,' vol. ii., p. 109; *Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' ii., p. 240; *Porter's* 'Handbook,' p. 238; *Van de Velde*, ii., pp. 101-103). The king of Moab was an enemy of Saul (ch. xiv. 17), and the great-grandson of Ruth,—of course, related to the family of Jesse. David therefore had less anxiety in seeking an asylum within the dominions of this prince than those of Achish, because the Moabites had no grounds for entertaining vindictive feelings against him, and their enmity to Saul rendered them the more willing to receive so illustrious a refugee from his court. 5. the prophet Gad . . . Abide not in the hold. This sound advice no doubt came from a higher source than Gad's own sagacity. It was necessary to preserve in David's mind a strong feeling of nationality, as well as to keep him from being contaminated by the influence of heathen superstition. It was right also that he should appear publicly amongst the people of his own tribe, as one conscious of innocence, and trusting in God; and it was expedient that, on the death of Saul, his friends might be encouraged to support his interest. depart, and get thee into the land of Judah. *Josephus* ('Antiquities,' b. vi., ch. xii., sec. 4) calls it [την κληρουχίαν] the portion (inheritance) of the tribe of Judah. David departed, and came into the forest of Hareth. It is said to have been on the south-west of Jerusalem; but it has long ago disappeared. [The Septuagint version has ἔρη, instead of ἔρη; ἐκαθίσεν ἐν πολει Σαβίκ.] *Josephus* also says, 'Coming to the city Hareth, which was in that tribe, he remained there.'

6. Saul abode . . . under a tree in Ramah

[תחת האֵשֶׁל בְּרָמָה]—under the tamarisk upon the hill. Oriental princes frequently sit with their court under some shady canopy in the open air. A spear was the early sceptre, as we are informed by *Justin*, who says, 'Anciently kings had spears as signs of royal authority.' Saul's spear might be distinguished from common spears by its length as well as its decorations; and that this was likely to be the case may be inferred from the relics of Egypt and Assyria, in both of which a massive mace was used as a royal sceptre. having his spear in his hand—or at his hand; i. e., near, beside him. When a band of Arabs is preceded by one carrying a long pike, it indicates that there is a chief or prince amongst them. On his alighting, the pike is fixed upright in the ground, close to the centre where the head man is seated (*Pococke's* 'Description of the East). and all his servants were standing about him—not under the tree; for the text distinctly represents the king only as enjoying the arboreal shade; and the tamarisk is too diminutive and limited in its dimensions to admit of a group of royal attendants standing under it. 7. Saul said . . . Hear now, ye Benjamites, &c. Saul had recently attacked the Beerothites, the inhabitants of Beeroth, anciently one of the cities of the Gibeonites, but afterwards included within the territory of Benjamin, and having, either by the massacre or expulsion of the original occupiers, notwithstanding their solemnly-covenanted incorporation with Israel (Josh. ix.), seized their possessions, he bestowed them on his family and favourites (cf. 2 Sam. xxi. 2). The appeal that he now made to the courtiers by whom he was surrounded was to stimulate the patriotism or jealousy of his own tribe, from which he insinuated it was the design of David to transfer the kingdom to another. This address seems to have been made on hearing of David's return with his 400 men to Judah. A dark suspicion had risen in the jealous mind of the king that Jonathan was privy to this movement, which he dreaded as a conspiracy against the crown.

9-16.—DOEG ACCUSES AHIMELECH.

9. Doeg . . . set over the servants.—Septuagint, over the mules of Saul. 10. he enquired of the Lord for him. Some suppose that this was a malicious fiction of Doeg, to curry favour with the king; but Ahimelech seems to acknowledge the fact,

- 11 Then the king sent to call Ahimelech the priest, the son of Ahitub, and all his father's house, the priests that *were* in Nob: and they came
 12 all of them to the king. And Saul said, Hear now, thou son of Ahitub.
 13 And he answered, ⁵Here I *am*, my lord. And Saul said unto him, Why have ye conspired against me, thou and the son of Jesse, in that thou hast given him bread, and a sword, and hast enquired of God for him,
 14 that he should rise against me, to lie in wait, as at this day? Then Ahimelech ⁶answered the king, and said, And who *is so* faithful among all thy servants as David, which *is* the king's son-in-law, and goeth at
 15 thy bidding, and is honourable in thine house? Did I then begin to enquire of God for him? be it far from me. Let not the king impute *any* thing unto his servant, *nor* to all the house of my father: for thy servant knew nothing of all this, ⁶less or more.
 16 And the king said, Thou shalt surely die, Ahimelech, thou, and all thy father's house. And the king said unto the ⁷footmen that stood about him, Turn, and slay the priests of the LORD; because their hand also *is* with David, and because they knew when he fled, and did not show it to me. But the servants of the king ⁸would not put forth their hand to fall upon the priests of the LORD. And ⁹the king said to Doeg, Turn thou, and fall upon the priests. And Doeg the Edomite turned, and he fell upon the priests, and ⁹slew on that day fourscore and five persons that
 19 did wear a ²linen ephod. And ⁷Nob, the city of the priests, smote ⁵he with the edge of the sword, both men and women, children and sucklings, and oxen, and asses, and sheep, with the edge of the sword.
 20 And ⁶one of the sons of Ahimelech the son of Ahitub, named Abiathar,
 21 ⁸escaped, and fled after David. And Abiathar showed David that Saul had slain the LORD's priests. And David said unto Abiathar, I knew *it* that day, when Doeg the Edomite *was* there, that he would surely tell Saul: I have occasioned *the death* of all the persons of thy father's house.
 23 Abide thou with me, fear not; ⁹for he that seeketh my life seeketh thy life: but with me thou *shalt be* in safeguard.
 23 THEN they told David, saying, Behold, the Philistines fight against
 2 ^aKeilah, and they rob the threshing-floors. Therefore David ^benquired

B C. 1062.

⁵ Behold me.
⁶ ch. 19. 4. 5.
⁷ ch. 20. 32.
⁸ ch. 21. 11.
⁹ ch. 26. 23.
¹⁰ Pro. 31. 9.
¹¹ little or great.
¹² runners, or, guard.
¹³ Ex. 1. 17.
¹⁴ Acts 4. 19.
¹⁵ Acts 5. 29.
¹⁶ Ps. 12. 5.
¹⁷ Pro. 23. 15.
¹⁸ ch. 2. 31.
¹⁹ Ex. 28. 40.
²⁰ Neh. 11. 32.
²¹ Isa. 10. 32.
²² Job 29. 19.
²³ 10.
²⁴ Ps. 10. 1-19.
²⁵ Isa. 26. 13.
²⁶ ch. 23. 6.
²⁷ Judg. 9. 5.
²⁸ ch. 2. 33.
²⁹ Job 1. 15.
³⁰ 19.
³¹ 1 Ki. 2. 26.
³² Matt. 21. 9.
³³ John 15. 20.
³⁴ 21.
 CHAP. 23.
^a Josh. 15. 44.
^b Num. 27. 21.
^c Judg. 1. 1.
^d ch. 28. 6.
^e ch. 30. 8.
^f 2 Sam. 5. 19.
^g 13.
^h 1 Chr 10. 14.

15. Did I then begin to enquire of God for him?

The reply of Ahimelech implies that he had frequently done so on former occasions, consulting for him as for one engaged in the public service, and that he did so on the occasion of David's arrival in Nob, without having the smallest idea of any change. The poor simple-minded high priest knew nothing of the existing family feud between Saul and David. The informer, if he knew it, said nothing of the cunning artifice by which David obtained the aid of Ahimelech. *The facts looked against him, and the whole priesthood along with him were declared abettors of conspiracy.*

17-19.—SAUL COMMANDS TO KILL THE PRIESTS.

17. the footmen that stood about him—his body-guard, or his runners (ch. viii. 11; 2 Sam. xv. 1; 1 Ki. i. 5; xiv. 28), who held an important place at court (2 Chr. xii. 10). But they chose rather to disobey the king than to offend God by imbruing their hands in the blood of his ministering servants. A foreigner alone (Ps. lii. 1-3) could be found willing to be the executioner of this bloody and sacrilegious sentence. Thus was the doom of the house of Eli fulfilled, (see on ch. ii.) **19.** Nob . . . smote he with the edge of the sword. The barbarous atrocities perpetrated against this city seem to have been designed to terrify all the subjects of Saul from affording either aid or an asylum to David. But they proved ruinous to Saul's own interest, as they

alienated the priesthood, and disgusted all good men in the kingdom, (see on 2 Sam. xxi.)

20-23.—ABIATHAR ESCAPES AND FLEES AFTER DAVID.

20. one of the sons of Ahimelech . . . escaped. This was Abiathar, who repaired to David in the forest of Hareth, rescuing with his own life the high priest's vestments (ch. xxiii. 6, 9). On hearing his sad tale, David declared that he had dreaded such a fatal result from the malice and intriguing ambition of Doeg; and, accusing himself as having been the occasion of all the disaster to Abiathar's family אָנֹכִי הֵאֵרָא בְּבָלִי נִפְשׁ בְּיַד אֲבִיהֶן דָּוִד, 'I am the cause to all the persons of thy father's house: 'i. e. I have brought about the death of all thy family], invited him to remain, because, firmly trusting himself in the accomplishment of the Divine promise, David could guarantee protection to him.

CHAP. XXIII. 1-6.—DAVID RESCUES KEILAH.

1. Then they told . . . the Philistines fight against Keilah—rather, 'now they had told; ' for this information had reached him previous to his hearing (v. 6) of the Nob tragedy. The attack of those troublesome neighbours was made at the commencement of harvest. "Keilah"—a city in the west or lowland district of Judah (Josh. xv. 44), not far from the forest of Hareth, in a part of the Shephelah, and therefore a grain country. **and they rob the threshing-floors.** These were com-

- of the LORD, saying, Shall I go and smite these Philistines? And the LORD said unto David, Go and smite the Philistines, and save Keilah.
- 3 And David's men said unto him, Behold, we be afraid here in Judah: how much more then if we come to Keilah against the armies of the
- 4 Philistines? Then David enquired of the LORD yet again. And the LORD answered him, and said, Arise, go down to Keilah; for I will deliver the Philistines into thine hand. So David and his men went to Keilah, and fought with the Philistines, and brought away their cattle, and smote them with a great slaughter. So David saved the inhabitants of Keilah.
- 6 And it came to pass, when Abiathar the son of Ahimelech fled to David to Keilah, that he came down with an ephod in his hand.
- 7 And it was told Saul that David was come to Keilah. And Saul said, God hath delivered him into mine hand; for he is shut in, by entering into a town that hath gates and bars. And Saul called all the people together to war, to go down to Keilah, to besiege David and his men.
- 9 And David knew that Saul secretly practised mischief against him; and he said to Abiathar the priest, Bring hither the ephod. Then said David, O LORD God of Israel, thy servant hath certainly heard that Saul seeketh to come to Keilah, to destroy the city for my sake. Will the men of Keilah deliver me up into his hand? will Saul come down, as thy servant hath heard? O LORD God of Israel, I beseech thee, tell thy servant. And the LORD said, He will come down. Then said David, Will the men of Keilah deliver me and my men into the hand of Saul? And the LORD said, They will deliver thee up.
- 13 Then David and his men, which were about six hundred, arose and departed out of Keilah, and went whithersoever they could go. And it was told Saul that David was escaped from Keilah; and he forbore to go
- 14 forth. And David abode in the wilderness in strong holds, and remained in a mountain in the wilderness of Ziph. And Saul sought him every day; but God delivered him not into his hand.
- 15 And David saw that Saul was come out to seek his life: and David

B. C. 1062.

° ch. 24. 33.
 ch. 4. 12.
 ch. 22. 10.
 Job 1. 15-17, 19.
 d Ex. 15. 9.
 ch. 24. 4-6.
 ch. 21. 8, 9.
 Ps 71. 11.
 ° Num. 27. 21.
 ch. 14. 18.
 ch. 30. 7.
 / ch. 22. 19.
 2 Sam. 10. 20.
 Esth. 3. 6.
 Ps 44. 22.
 1 shut up.
 ° ch. 22. 2.
 ch. 25. 13.
 ch. 50. 9, 10.
 A Ps 11. 1.
 † Josh. 15. 55.
 j ch. 27. 1.
 Ps. 54. 3, 4.
 Pro. 1. 16.
 Iro. 4. 16.
 k Deut. 33. 3.
 1 Sam. 2. 9.
 Ps. 31. 7.
 Ps. :3. 18.
 Ps. 31. 6-8, 15-18.
 Ps. 121. 3, 8.
 Iro. 2. 8.
 I'ro. 21. 30.
 Rom. 8. 31.
 2 Tim. 3. 11.
 2 Tim. 4. 17, 18.

monly situated on the fields, and were open to the wind (Judg. vi. 11; Ruth iii. 2). 2. David enquired of the Lord—most probably through Gad, who was present in David's camp (ch. xxii. 5), probably by the recommendation of Samuel. To repel unprovoked assaults on unoffending people, who were engaged in their harvest operations, was a humane and benevolent service. But it was doubtful how far it was David's duty to go against a public enemy without the royal commission; and on that account he asked and obtained the Divine counsel. A demur on the part of his men led David to renew the consultation for their satisfaction; after which, being fully assured of his duty, he encountered the aggressors, and by a signal victory over the foraging party, delivered the people of Keilah from further molestation,—probably remaining with his men in the city and neighbourhood till the crop in the fields had been secured.

6. when Abiathar . . . fled to David . . . he came down with an ephod—in which was the Urim and Thummim (Exod. xxviii. 30). It had probably been committed to his care while his father, Ahimelech, and the other priests repaired to Gibeah, in obedience to the summons of Saul (ch. xxii. 2).

7-13.—SAUL'S COMING, AND TREACHERY OF THE KEILITES.

7. it was told Saul that David was come to Keilah. He imagined himself now certain of his victim, who would be hemmed within a walled or fortified town. The wish was father to the thought. How wonderfully slow and unwilling

to be convinced by all his experience, that the special protection of Providence shielded David from all his snares! 8. Saul called all the people—not the united tribes of Israel, but the inhabitants of the adjoining districts. This force was raised probably on the ostensible pretext of opposing the Philistines, while in reality it was secretly to arouse mischief against David.

9. David . . . said to Abiathar . . . Bring hither the ephod. The consultation was made and the prayer uttered by means of the priest. 11. Will the men of Keilah deliver me up [לְיָדָיו]—the lords or chiefs of Keilah. The Septuagint has not this clause about the men of Keilah. The alternative conditions here described have often been referred to as illustrating the doctrine of God's foreknowledge and pre-ordination of events. David departed out of Keilah with a band of followers now amounting to 600 men.

14-18.—DAVID ESCAPES TO ZIPH.

14. David abode . . . in the wilderness of Ziph. A mountainous and sequestered region was generally called a wilderness, and took its name from some large town in the district. Two miles southeast of Hebron, and in the midst of a level plain, is Tell Ziph, an isolated and conical hillock, about 100 feet high, probably the acropolis (*Van de Velde*), or the ruins (*Robinson*), of the ancient city of Ziph, from which the surrounding wilderness was called. It seems, anciently, to have been covered by an extensive wood. The country has for centuries lost its woods and forests, owing to the devastations caused by man.

16 was in the wilderness of Ziph in a wood. And Jonathan, Saul's son, arose, and went to David into the wood, and strengthened his hand in
 17 God. And he said unto him, Fear not; for the hand of Saul my father shall not find thee; and thou shalt be king over Israel, and I shall be
 18 next unto thee; and ¹that also Saul my father knoweth. And they two ^mmade a covenant before the LORD. And David abode in the wood, and Jonathan went to his house.

19 Then ⁿcame up the Ziphites to Saul to Gibeath, saying, Doth not David hide himself with us in strong holds in the wood, in the hill of
 20 Hachilah, which ^{is} ²on the south of ³Jeshimon? Now therefore, O king, come down, according to all the desire of thy soul to come down; and
 21 ⁴our part shall be to deliver him into the king's hand. And Saul said,
 22 Blessed be ye of the LORD; for ye have compassion on me. Go, I pray you, prepare yet, and know and see his place where his ⁵haunt is, and who hath seen him there: for it is told me that he dealeth very subtilly.
 23 See therefore, and take knowledge of all the lurking places where he hideth himself, and come ye again to me with the certainty, and I will go with you: and it shall come to pass, if he be in the land, that I will
 24 search him out throughout all the thousands of Judah. And they arose, and went to Ziph before Saul:

But David and his men were in the wilderness ^oof Maon, in the plain
 25 on the south of Jeshimon. Saul also and his men went to seek him. And they told David: wherefore he came down ⁶into a rock, and abode in the wilderness of Maon. And when Saul heard that, he pursued after
 26 David in the wilderness of Maon. And Saul went on this side of the mountain, and David and his men on that side of the mountain: ^pand David made haste to get away for fear of Saul; for Saul and his men
 27 ^qcompassed David and his men round about to take them. But ^rthere came a messenger unto Saul, saying, Haste thee, and come; for the Philistines

B. C. 1011.
 1 ch 20. 31.
 ch 24. 20.
 Acts 5. 39.
 m Gen. 14. 3.
 ch. 18. 3.
 ch. 20. 16.
 42.
 2 Sam. 9. 1-3.
 2 Sam 21.7.
 n Josh. 15.24.
 55.
 ch. 22. 7. 8.
 ch. 26. 1.
 Ps 54.
 title.
 2 on the right hand.
 3 Or. The wilderness.
 4 it becometh me
 l's. 51. 3.
 5 foot shall be.
 o Josh. 16.55.
 ch. 25. 2.
 6 Or, from the rock.
 p ch. 19. 12.
 ch. 21. 34.
 l's. 31. 22.
 q Ps. 17. 9.
 r Deut. 2.33.
 2 Ki. 19. 9.

16. Jonathan . . . went to David into the wood, and strengthened his hand in God—by the recollection of the Divine promises, and of their mutual covenant. 17. Fear not; for the hand of Saul my father shall not find thee. "The hand" denotes the activity and power of the king, and "find" includes the ideas of detecting and apprehending. What a victory over natural feelings and lower considerations must the faith of Jonathan have won ere he could seek such an interview, and give utterance to such sentiments! To talk with calm and assured confidence of himself and family being superseded by the man who was his friend by the bonds of a holy and solemn covenant, could only have been done by one who, superior to all views of worldly policy, looked at the course of things in the spirit and through the principles of that theocracy which acknowledged God as the only and supreme Sovereign of Israel. Neither history nor fiction depicts the movements of a friendship purer, nobler, and more self-denying than Jonathan's.

19. 29.—SAUL PURSUES HIM.

19. Then came up the Ziphites to Saul. . . saying, Doth not David hide himself with us? From the Tell of Ziph a panorama of the whole surrounding district is to be seen. No wonder, then, that the Ziphites saw David and his men passing to and fro in the mountains of the wilderness, and spying him at a distance, when he ventured to show himself on the hill of Hachilah, 'on the right hand of the wilderness,'—i. e., the south side of Ziph—sent in haste to Saul, to tell him of the lurking-place of his enemy' (*Van de Velde*).

25. David . . . came down into a rock, and abode in the wilderness of Maon. Tell Mā'in, the

hillock on which was situated the ancient Maon (*Josh. xv. 55*), and from which the adjoining wilderness took its name, is one mile north, ten east, from Carmel. The mountain plateau seems here to end. It is true the summit ridge of the southern hills runs out a long way farther towards the south-west; but towards the south-east the ground sinks more and more down to a table-land of a lower level, which is called 'the plain to the right hand (i. e., to the south) of the wilderness' (*Van de Velde*). 'On descending,' says *Dr. Robinson* ('Biblical Researches,' i., p. 275), 'the hills south-east of Maon, a wide prospect is opened up before us over the country towards the Dead Sea and on the south. The extensive tract we now overlooked had much of the general character of that around Beer-sheba, with which, indeed, it is connected, stretching off in that direction around the south-western termination of the long ridge which we were now crossing. This tract has apparently a lower level than the enclosed plain behind us around Carmel. This is the country now occupied by the Jehālin, who are sometimes called the Hebron Arabs' (cf. *Wilson's 'Lands of the Bible,'* ii., p. 710). 26. Saul went on this side of the mountain, and David and his men on that side of the mountain. Saul was busily engaged in surrounding the hill where David and his little band of followers lay encamped, with a cordon of troops, and hoped soon to cut off all means of their escape, when intelligence unexpectedly reached him of a fresh invasion of the Philistines on the western side of the country; so that, being obliged to subordinate his private feelings for the defence of the public safety, he was obliged to abandon his project, and direct his arms against the Philis-

- 28 have ⁷invaded the land. Wherefore Saul returned from pursuing after David, and went against the Philistines: therefore they called that place
- 29 ⁸Sela-hammahlekoth. And David went up from thence, and dwelt in strong holds at ⁹En-gedi.
- 24 AND it came to pass, ^awhen Saul was returned from ¹following the Philistines, that it was told him, saying, Behold, David *is* in the wilderness
- 2 of En-gedi. Then Saul took three thousand chosen men out of all Israel, and ^bwent to seek David and his men upon the rocks of the wild goats.
- 3 And he came to the sheep-cotes by the way, where *was* a cave; and Saul went in to ^ccover his feet: and ^dDavid and his men remained in the sides
- 4 of the cave. And ^ethe men of David said unto him, Behold the day of which the LORD said unto thee, Behold, I will deliver thine enemy into thine hand, that thou mayest do to him as it shall seem good unto thee.
- 5 Then David arose, and cut off the skirt of ²Saul's robe privily. And it came to pass afterward, that David's ^fheart smote him, because he had
- 6 cut off Saul's skirt. And he said unto his men, ^gThe LORD forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the LORD's anointed, to stretch
- 7 forth mine hand against him, seeing he *is* the anointed of the LORD. So David ³stayed his servants with these words, and suffered them not to rise against Saul. But Saul rose up out of the cave, and went on *his* way.
- 8 David also arose afterward, and went out of the cave, and cried after Saul, saying, My lord the king. And when Saul looked behind him,
- 9 David stooped with his face to the earth, and bowed himself. And David said to Saul, ^hWherefore hearest thou men's words, saying, Behold, David

B. C. '011.

⁷ spread themselves up'n. etc.

⁸ That is The rock of divisions

⁹ 2 Chr 20 2.

CHAP. 24.

^a ch. 23. 28.

¹ after.

^b Ps. 38. 12.

^c Judg. 3. 21.

^d Ps. 57. title

^e 1's. 112. title.

^f ch. 26. 8.

² The robe which was Saul's.

³ 2 Sam. 21. 10.

^g ch 23. 11.

³ cut off

Ps 7. 4.

Matt. 5. 44.

^h Ps. 141. 6.

Pro. 16. 28.

tine invaders. 28. therefore they called that place Sela-hammahlekoth [שֵׁלָה הַמַּחֲלֵקוֹת, rock of escapes (*Gesenius*). The Septuagint renders it Πέτρα ἡ μερισθεῖσα, the rock divided; probably in allusion to the natural features of the rock.] 29. David . . . dwelt in strong holds at En-gedi [Septuagint, ἐν τοῖς στενοῖς Ἐγγαδῶδι—in the straits, the rugged cliffs of En-gedi; *i. e.*, 'the spring of the wild goats or gazelles:'] a name given to it from the vast number of ibexes, or Syrian chamois, which inhabit these cliffs on the western shore of the Dead Sea (Josh. xv. 62). It is now called Ain Jiddy. On all sides the country is full of caverns, which might then serve as lurking-places for David and his men, as they do for outlaws at the present day (*Robinson*).

CHAP. XXIV. 1-7.—DAVID, IN A CAVE AT EN-GEDI, CUTS OFF SAUL'S SKIRT, BUT SPARES HIS LIFE.

2. Saul . . . went to seek David . . . upon the rocks of the wild goats. Nothing but the blind infatuation of fiendish rage could have led the king to pursue his outlawed son-in-law among those craggy and perpendicular precipices, where were inaccessible hiding-places. The large force he took with him seemed to give him every prospect of succeeding. But the overruling providence of God frustrated all his vigilance. 3. he came to the sheep-cotes by the way, where was a cave. On all sides, as *Dr. Robinson* states, the country is full of caverns, which might then serve as lurking-places for David and his men, as they do for outlaws at the present day. They are unchanged since the days of the first king of Israel, when, entering into one of them, Saul lay down to rest in the heat of the day; there are the same side-vaults too, where David and his men concealed, when, accustomed to the obscurity of the cavern, they saw Saul enter, while, blinded by the glare of light outside, he saw nothing of him whom he so bitterly persecuted. 'The largest cave,' says Lieutenant Lynch, of the American Ex-

ploration of the Dead Sea, 'that we entered at En-gedi could contain thirty men, and has a long, low, and narrow gallery running from one side, which would be invisible when the sun does not shine through the entrance.' 4. the men of David said . . . Behold the day. God had never made any promise of delivering Saul into David's hands; but, from the general and repeated promises of the kingdom to him, they concluded that the king's death was to be effected by taking advantage of some such opportunity as the present. David steadily opposed the urgent investigations of his followers to put an end to his and their troubles by the death of their persecutor. A revengeful heart would have followed their advice; but David rather wished to overcome evil with good, and heap coals of fire upon his head: he, however, cut a fragment from the skirt of the royal robe. It is easy to imagine how this dialogue could be carried on, and David's approach to the king's person could have been effected without arousing suspicion. The bustle and noise of Saul's military men and their beasts, the number of cells or divisions in these immense caverns, and some of them far interior, being enveloped in darkness, while every movement could be seen at the cave's mouth; the probability that the garment David cut from might have been a loose or upper cloak lying on the ground, and that Saul might have been asleep,—these facts and presumptions will be sufficient to account for the incidents detailed.

S-15.—HE URGES THEREBY HIS INNOCENCY.

8. David also arose afterward, and went out of the cave, and cried after Saul. The closeness of the precipitous cliffs, though divided by deep wadies, and the transparent purity of the air, enable a person standing on one rock to hear distinctly the words uttered by a speaker standing on another (Judg. ix. 7). The expostulation of David, followed by the visible tokens he furnished of his cherishing no evil design against either the person or the government of the king, even when he had the monarch in his power, smote the heart

10 seeketh thy hurt? Behold, this day thine eyes have seen how that the LORD had delivered thee to-day into mine hand in the cave: and *some* bade me kill thee; but *mine eye* spared thee; and I said, I will not put
 11 forth mine hand against my lord; for he *is* the LORD's anointed. Moreover, my father, see, yea, see the skirt of thy robe in my hand: for in that I cut off the skirt of thy robe, and killed thee not, know thou and see that *there is* neither ¹evil nor transgression in mine hand, and I have
 12 not sinned against thee; yet thou ²huntest my soul to take it. The ³LORD judge between me and thee, and the LORD avenge me of thee: but
 13 mine hand shall not be upon thee. As saith the proverb of the ancients, Wickedness proceedeth from the wicked: but mine hand shall not be
 14 upon thee. After whom is the ⁴king of Israel come out? after whom dost
 15 thou pursue? ⁵after a dead dog, after ⁶a flea? The LORD therefore be judge, and judge between me and thee, and ⁷see, and plead ⁸my cause, and ⁹deliver me out of thine hand.
 16 And it came to pass, when David had made an end of speaking these words unto Saul, that Saul said, ¹⁰Is this thy voice, my son David? And
 17 Saul lifted up his voice, and wept. And he said to David, Thou art ¹¹more righteous than I; for ¹²thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have
 18 rewarded thee evil. And thou hast showed this day how that thou hast dealt well with me: forasmuch as, when the LORD had ¹³delivered me into
 19 thine hand, thou killedst me not. For if a man find his enemy, will he let him go well away? wherefore the LORD reward thee good for that thou
 20 hast done unto me this day. And now, behold, ¹⁴I know well that thou shalt surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established
 21 in thine hand. Swear now therefore unto me by the LORD, that thou wilt not cut off my seed after me, and that thou wilt not destroy my name
 22 out of my father's house. And David sware unto Saul. And Saul went home; but David and his men gat them up unto the hold.
 25 AND ¹⁵Samuel died; and all the Israelites were gathered together, and ¹⁶lamented him, and buried him in his house at Ramah.

B. C. 1061.

1 Ps. 7. 3.
 2 Ps. 7. 7.
 3 ch. 23. 11, 23.
 4 ch. 26. 20.
 5 Job 10. 16.
 6 Gen. 16. 5.
 7 Judg 11. 27.
 8 Job 5. 8.
 9 Job 32. 9.
 10 Fro. 5. 23.
 11 ch 17. 43.
 12 2 Sam. 9. 8.
 13 ch. 26. 20.
 14 2 Chr 21. 22.
 15 Ps. 35. 1.
 16 Ps. 43. 1.
 17 Ps 119. 154.
 18 Mic. 7. 9.
 19 judge.
 20 ch. 21. 17.
 21 Gen. 38. 16.
 22 Ex. 9. 27.
 23 Matt. 5. 44.
 24 Luke 6. 27.
 25 shut up.
 26 ch. 26. 8.
 27 ch. 23. 17.
 28 2 Sam 3. 17.
 29 Job 15. 25.
 30 Matt. 2. 2-6, 13, 16.
 CHAP. 25.
 1 ch. 28. 3.
 2 Isa. 57. 1, 2.
 3 Gen. 50. 11.
 4 Num. 20. 29.
 5 Deut. 34. 8.
 6 Acts 8. 2.

of Saul in a moment, and disarmed him of his fell purpose of revenge. He owned the justice of what David said, acknowledged his own guilt, and begged kindness to his house. He seems to have been naturally susceptible of strong, and, as in this instance, of good and grateful impressions. The improvement on his temper, indeed, was but transient—his language that of a man overwhelmed by the force of impetuous emotions, and constrained to admire the conduct and esteem the character of one whom he hated and dreaded. But God overruled it for ensuring the present escape of David. Consider his language and behaviour. This language, “a dead dog, a flea”—terms by which, like Eastern people, he strongly expressed a sense of his lowliness, and the entire committal of his cause to Him who alone is the judge of human actions, and to whom vengeance belongeth—his steady repulse of the vindictive counsels of his followers, the relentings of heart which he felt even for the apparent indignity he had done to the person of the Lord's anointed, and the respectful homage he had paid the jealous tyrant who had set a price on his head—evince the magnanimity of a great and good man, and strikingly illustrate the spirit and energy of his prayer ‘when he was in the cave,’ (Ps. cxlii.)

CHAP. XXV. 1-9.—SAMUEL DIES.

1. Samuel died—after a long life of piety and public usefulness, having left behind him a reputation which ranks him amongst the greatest of Scripture worthies. He stamped his own character on that of his age and country, being the foremost man, the great influential leader in the political,

ecclesiastical, literary, and religious world. As a man, he was remarkable through life for his eminent holiness, his energy, and indefatigable activity, his dignified consistency, and his devotional habits, which, commencing in his childhood, grew with his growth and strengthened with his strength. As a magistrate, he embodied in all his public acts the principles of the theocratic constitution; and, called as he was to hold the reins of government at a time of newly-acquired liberty and independence from foreign domination, his uniform object was to realize amongst his countrymen the idea of the ‘chosen generation, the holy nation, the royal priesthood, the peculiar people.’ In relation to the Church, his influence was no less beneficial than lasting; for, at a period of great and prevailing corruption, he effected a thorough reformation of religion, re-establishing the authority of the Mosaic law, by enforcing the regular observance of the ordinances of worship, especially by instituting the schools of the prophets, from which a supply of young teachers, duly qualified for instructing the people in sacred knowledge and psalmody, was obtained, and in the formation as well as subsequent continuance of which a great step was taken in the progressive development of the scheme of grace (*Edwards's* ‘History of Redemption’). In short, Samuel's ministry was an epoch in Israel (Acts iii. 21; xiii. 20); and many of the lessons taught, or measures contemplated by the prophet, and which David learned while resident with him at Naioth, were afterwards introduced by that king, amongst other arrangements he made for improving the

2 And David arose, and went down to ^cthe wilderness of Paran. And *there was* a man ^ain Maon, whose ¹possessions *were* in ^cCarmel; and the man *was* very great, and he had three thousand sheep, and a thousand
3 goats: and he was ¹shearing his sheep in Carmel. Now the name of the man *was* Nabal, and the name of his wife Abigail: and *she was* a ^gwoman of good understanding, and of a beautiful countenance: but the man *was* ^hchurlish and evil in his doings; and he *was* of the house of Caleb.
4 And David heard in the wilderness that Nabal did ¹shear his sheep.
5 And David sent out ten young men; and David said unto the young men, Get you up to Carmel, and go to Nabal, and ²greet him in my
6 name: and thus shall ye say to him that liveth *in prosperity*, ¹Peace *be* both to thee, and peace *be* to thine house, and peace *be* unto all that
7 thou hast. And now I have heard that thou hast shearers: now thy shepherds which were with us, we ³hurt them not, neither was there

B. C. 10 0.

° Gen. 21. 21.

a ch. 23. 24.

1 Or,

business.

° Josh. 15. 55.

f Gen. 33. 13.

g Pro. 31. 10.

h Isa. 32. 5, 7.

i Gen. 33. 13.

2 Sam. 13.

23.

2 ask him in

my name

of peace.

Gen. 37. 11.

j 1 Chr. 12. 13.

3 shamed.

sacred music. It is difficult to determine with accuracy the period of Samuel's death. *Bishop Horsley* ('Biblical Criticism,' i., p. 335) says, 'That Samuel was dead at the time of David's final flight from the court of Saul, seems probable from this circumstance, that from this time forward it does not appear that David sought or received advice from Samuel. When he flees from the court he repairs to Nob, where he is entertained, not by Samuel, but by Ahimelech the priest.' But a closer approximation towards ascertaining the actual date of the prophet's death can be made than is furnished by this inferential reasoning. *Josephus*, in winding up the history of this judge, records ('Antiquities,' b. vi., ch. xiii., sec. 5) that 'Samuel governed and presided over the people alone, after the death of Eli the high priest, twelve years, and eighteen years in conjunction with Saul the king.' *Jahn* ('History of the Hebrew Commonwealth') calculates that 'Samuel governed the nation forty years. Supposing Eli's death to occur in the 425th year after Joshua, and adding to these the sixty years between Eli and the close of Samuel's administration, the sum is 485.' So that according to these data the prophet died in the seventieth year of his age, and all the Israelites were gathered together, and lamented him [יִתְעַבְּדוּ]—and mourned for him. This verb is used for the most part with reference to the dead. Higher tribute could not be paid to the worth of a public magistrate. So powerful was the hold which the character and administration of Samuel had taken of the affections of the country, that all classes of people, high and low, volunteered to form a funeral procession, and carried him with almost royal honours to the tomb. buried him in his house at Ramah—i. e., not his dwelling-house, but a building contiguous to it, built as a family cemetery; his own mausoleum. The Hebrews took as great care to provide sepulchres anciently as people do in the East still, where every respectable family has its own house of the dead; and often this is in a little detached garden, consisting of a small stone building, where there is no rock, resembling a house, which is called the sepulchre of the family. It has neither door nor window (cf. 1 Ki. ii. 34; Job xxx. 23; see *Jewett's* 'Christian Researches in the Countries of the Levant').

David arose, &c. This removal had probably no connection with the prophet's death, but was probably occasioned by the necessity of seeking provision for his numerous followers. Some, however, do maintain that as David is related in this passage to have departed from En-gedi imme-

diately after receiving intelligence of Samuel's death, the one event followed the other, as cause and effect; for whatever influence the thought of the living prophet might have imposed on the wayward king was removed, now that the venerable man was dead; and as there was reason to apprehend that Saul's furious outbursts of jealousy and vengeance, formerly restrained, would become more frequent and vehement, David deemed it necessary for his safety to remove to a great distance. [The Vatican copy of the Septuagint has *κατέβη εἰς τὴν ἐρημὸν Μαὼν*, went down to the wilderness of Maon. The Alexandrine has *ἐρημὸν παραν*] the wilderness of Paran—stretching from Sinai to the borders of Palestine, in the southern territories of Judah. Like other wildernesses, it presented large tracts of natural pasture, to which the people sent their cattle at the grazing season, but where they were liable to constant and heavy depredations by the prowling Arabs. David and his men earned their subsistence by making reprisals on the cattle of these freebooting Ishmaelites; and frequently, for their useful services, they obtained voluntary tokens of acknowledgment from the peaceful inhabitants. 2. there was a man in Maon. This city, which belonged to the tribe of Judah (John xv. 55), was situated on the brow of a conical hill, now Tell Mā'in, which is covered with ruins. It lay two days' journey from Zoar, and twenty-five miles south-east of Hebron. in Carmel [כַּרְמֵל]—in the park (fertile or cultivated region: see on ch. xv. 12: cf. 2 Chr. xxvi. 10), near Maon, now Karmil. The district takes its name from this town (see *Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' ii., p. 200; *Van de Velde*, ii., pp. 77-79). the man was very great. His property consisted in cattle, and he was considered wealthy, according to the ideas of that age. he had three thousand sheep, and a thousand goats. Similar are the possessions of his modern successors, the Jehālin Arabs, who have no herds of large cattle, but flocks of sheep and goats (*Wilson's* 'Lands of the Bible,' ii., p. 710). 3. he was of the house of Caleb—of course, of the same tribe with David himself; but many versions consider Caleb (dog) not as a proper, but a common noun, and render it 'he was snappish as a dog.' 4. Nabal did shear his sheep. 5. And David sent out ten young men, &c. David and his men lurked in these deserts, associating with the herdsmen and shepherds of Nabal and others, and doing them good offices, probably in return for information and supplies obtained through them. Hence, when Nabal held his annual sheep-shearing in Carmel, David felt himself entitled to share in the festival, and sent

- 8 ought missing unto them, all the while they were in Carmel. Ask thy young men, and they will show thee. Wherefore let the young men find favour in thine eyes: for we come in ^ka good day: give, I pray thee, whatsoever cometh to thine hand unto thy servants, and to thy son David.
- 9 And when David's young men came, they spake to Nabal according to 10 all those words in the name of David, and ⁴ceased. And Nabal answered David's servants, and said, ¹'Who is David? and who is the son of Jesse? There be many servants now-a-days that break away every man from 11 his master. Shall ^mI then take my bread, and my water, and my ⁵flesh that I have killed for my shearers, and give it unto men whom I know 12 not whence they *be*? So David's young men turned their way, and went 13 again, and came and told him all those sayings. And David said unto his men, Gird ye on every man his sword. And they girded on every man his sword; and David also girded on his sword: and there went up after David about four hundred men; and two hundred ⁿabode by the stuff.
- 14 But one of the young men told Abigail, Nabal's wife, saying, Behold, David sent messengers out of the wilderness to salute our master; and he 15 ⁶railed on them: but the men *were* very good unto us, and we were not ⁷hurt, neither missed we any thing, as long as we were conversant with 16 them, when we were in the fields: they were ^oa wall unto us, both by 17 night and day, all the while we were with them keeping the sheep. Now therefore know and consider what thou wilt do; for evil is determined against our master, and against all his household: for he is *such* a son of Belial, that *a man* cannot speak to him.
- 18 Then Abigail made haste, and ²took two hundred loaves, and two bottles of wine, and five sheep ready dressed, and five measures of parched corn, and an hundred ⁸clusters of raisins, and two hundred cakes of figs, 19 and laid them on asses. And she said unto her servants, ⁹Go on before me; behold, I come after you. But she told not her husband Nabal.
- 20 And it was *so*, as she rode on the ass, that she came down by the covert of the hill, and, behold, David and his men came down against her; and she met them.

B. C. 1030.
^k Neh. 8. 10-12.
 Esth 9. 19.
 Eccl. 11. 2.
 Luke 11. 41.
 Luke 14. 12, 14.
 Rev. 11. 10.
⁴ rested.
¹ Ex. 5. 2.
 Judg. 9. 28.
 ch. 10. 30.
 ch. 22. 7, 8.
 2 Sam. 10. 1.
 1 Ki. 12. 16.
 Ps. 73. 7, 8.
 Ps. 123. 3, 4.
 Isa. 32. 5, 7.
^m Deut. 8. 17.
 Judg. 8. 6.
 ch. 24. 13.
 Job 31. 17.
 Ps. 73. 7, 8.
 Pro. 18. 23.
 1 Pet. 4. 9.
⁵ slaughter.
ⁿ ch. 30. 24.
⁶ flew upon them.
⁷ shamed.
^o Ex. 14. 22.
 Job 1. 10.
 Jer. 13. 20.
 Zech. 2. 5.
² Gen. 32. 13, 20.
 Gen. 43. 11.
 14.
 2 Sam. 17. 28, 29.
 Pro. 18. 16.
 Pro. 21. 14.
⁸ Or lumps.
⁹ Gen. 3. 16.

a message, recounting his own services, and asking for a present. 'In all these particulars we were deeply struck with the truth and strength of the Biblical description of manners and customs almost identically the same as they exist at the present day. On such a festive occasion, near to a town or village, even in our own time, an Arab sheikh of the neighbouring desert would hardly fail to put in a word either in person or by message; and his message, both in form and substance, would be only a transcript of that of David' (*Robinson, 'Biblical Researches,'* ii., p. 201).

10-13.—THE CHURLISH ANSWER PROVOKES HIM.

10. Who is David? &c. Nabal's answer seems to indicate that the country was at that time in a loose and disorderly state. David's own good conduct, however, as well as the important services rendered by him and his men, were readily attested by Nabal's servants. The preparations of David to chastise his insolent language and ungrateful requital are exactly what would be done in the present day by Arab chiefs, who protect the cattle of the large and wealthy sheep-masters from the attacks of the marauding border tribes or wild beasts. Their protection creates a claim for some kind of tribute, in the shape of supplies of food and necessaries, which is usually given with great good-will and gratitude; but when withheld, is enforced as a right. Nabal's refusal, therefore, was a violation of the established usage

of the place. 13. two hundred abode by the stuff. This addition to his followers was made after his return into Judah (see on ch. xxii. 2).

14-35.—ABIGAIL PACIFIES HIM.

18. Then Abigail made haste. The prudence and address of his wife was the means of saving himself and family from utter destruction. She acknowledged the demand of her formidable neighbours; but, justly considering that to atone for the insolence of her husband, a greater degree of liberality had become necessary, she collected a large amount of food, accompanying it with the most valued products of the country. bottles—goat-skins, capable of holding a great quantity. parched corn [קֵלֶן]. It was customary to eat parched corn when it was fully grown, but not ripe (see on Lev. ii. 16; xxiii. 14; Ruth ii. 14). and laid them on asses [עַל־הַחֲמֹרִים]—on the asses, perhaps in piles or heaps (see on ch. xvi. 20; Judg. xv. 16). 19. Go on before me; behold, I come after you. People in the East always try to produce an effect by their presents, loading on several beasts what might be easily carried by one, and bringing them forward, article by article, in succession. Abigail not only sent her servants in this way, but resolved to go in person, following her present, as is commonly done, to watch the impression which her munificence would produce.

21 Now David had said, Surely in vain have I kept all that this fellow hath in the wilderness, so that nothing was missed of all that pertained unto him: and he hath requited me evil for good.

22 So and more also do God unto the enemies of David, if I leave of all that pertain to him, by the morning light, any that pisseth against the wall.

23 And when Abigail saw David, she hasted, and lighted off the ass, and

24 fell before David on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, and fell at his feet, and said, Upon me, my lord, upon me let this iniquity be; and let thine handmaid, I pray thee, speak in thine audience, and hear

25 the words of thine handmaid. Let not my lord, I pray thee, regard this man of Belial, even Nabal: for as his name is, so is he; Nabal is his name, and folly is with him: but I thine handmaid saw not the young men of my

26 lord, whom thou didst send. Now therefore, my lord, as the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, seeing the LORD hath withholden thee from coming to shed blood, and from avenging thyself with thine own hand, now let thine enemies, and they that seek evil to my lord, be as Nabal.

27 And now this blessing, which thine handmaid hath brought unto my

28 lord, let it even be given unto the young men that follow my lord. I pray thee, forgive the trespass of thine handmaid: for the LORD will certainly make my lord a sure house; because my lord fighteth the battles of the LORD, and evil hath not been found in thee all thy days.

29 Yet a man is risen to pursue thee, and to seek thy soul: but the soul of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of life with the LORD thy God; and the souls of thine enemies, them shall he sling out, as out of the

30 middle of a sling. And it shall come to pass, when the LORD shall have done to my lord according to all the good that he hath spoken concerning

31 thee, and shall have appointed thee ruler over Israel, that this shall be no grief unto thee, nor offence of heart unto my lord, either that thou hast shed blood causeless, or that my lord hath avenged himself: but when the LORD shall have dealt well with my lord, then remember thine handmaid.

32 And David said to Abigail, Blessed be the LORD God of Israel, which

33 sent thee this day to meet me: and blessed be thy advice, and blessed be thou, which hast kept me this day from coming to shed blood, and from

34 avenging myself with mine own hand. For in very deed, as the LORD God of Israel liveth, which hath kept me back from hurting thee, except thou hadst hasted and come to meet me, surely there had not been left

35 unto Nabal by the morning light any that pisseth against the wall. So David received of her hand that which she had brought him, and said unto her, Go up in peace to thine house; see, I have hearkened to thy voice, and have accepted thy person.

B. C. 1000.

r Gen. 44. 4.
Ps. 109. 6.
Pro. 17. 13.
Jer. 18. 20.
1 Pet. 2. 20.
1 Pet. 3. 17.
Ruth 1. 17.
ch. 3. 17.
ch. 20. 17.
16.
Josh 15. 18.
Judg 1. 14.
9 ears.
10 lay it to his heart.
11 That is, Fool.
12 2 Ki. 2. 2.
13 Gen. 20. 6.
14 saving thyself.
Rom. 12. 19.
15 2 Sam. 18. 32.
16 Gen. 33. 11.
17 Or, present.
18 walk at the feet of, etc.
19 2 Sam. 7. 11.
1 Ki. 9. 5.
1 Ki. 17. 9.
20 ch. 21. 11.
21 Ps. 66. 9.
22 Matt. 10. 29.
30.
23 Acts 17. 23.
24 Jer. 10. 18.
25 in the midst of the bow of a sling.
26 no staggering, or, stumbling.
27 Ex. 18 10.
28 Ezra 7. 27.
29 Luke 1. 68.
30 2 Cor. 8 16.
31 ch. 10. 42.
32 2 Sam. 15. 9.
33 2 Ki. 5. 19.
34 Luke 7. 50.
35 Gen. 19. 21.

21. Now David had said . . . 22. So and more also do God unto the enemies of David. In making this vow utterly to destroy Nabal's house, David committed sin. The fulfilment of it by the execution of his vindictive threat was clearly opposed to the will of God.

23. she hasted, and lighted off the ass, and fell before David on her face. Dismounting in presence of a superior is the highest token of respect that can be given; and it is still an essential act of homage to the great. Accompanying this act of courtesy with the lowest form of prostration, she not only by her attitude, but her language, made the fullest amends for the disrespect shown by her husband, as well as paid the fullest tribute of respect to the character and claims of David. 25. Nabal—signifying fool, gave pertinence to his wife's remarks. 26. let thine

enemies . . . be as Nabal—be as foolish and contemptible as he. 29. the soul of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of life—an Orientalism, expressing the perfect security of David's life from all the assaults of his enemies, under the protecting shield of Providence, who hath destined him for high things.

32. David said to Abigail, Blessed be the Lord. Transported by passions, and blinded by revenge, he was on the eve of perpetrating a great injury; and, doubtless, the timely appearance and prudent address of Abigail were greatly instrumental in changing his purpose. At all events, it was the means of opening his eyes to the moral character of the course on which he had been impetuously rushing; and, in accepting her present, he speaks with lively satisfaction, as well as gratitude, to Abigail for having prevented him contracting the guilt of bloodshed.

36 And Abigail came to Nabal: and, behold, ¹he held a feast in his house, like the feast of a king; and Nabal's heart *was* merry within him, for he *was* ²very drunken: wherefore she told him nothing, less or more, until

37 the morning light. But it came to pass in the morning, when the wine was gone out of Nabal, and his wife had told him these things, that his ³heart died within him, and he became *as* a stone.

38 And it came to pass about ten days *after*, that ⁴the LORD smote Nabal, that he died. And when David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, Blessed *be* the LORD, that hath ⁵pleaded the cause of my reproach from the hand of Nabal, and hath kept his servant from evil: for the LORD hath ⁶returned the wickedness of Nabal upon his own head.

And David sent and communed with Abigail, to take her to him to

40 wife. And when the servants of David were come to Abigail to Carmel, they spake unto her, saying, David sent us unto thee, to take thee to him

41 to wife. And she arose, and bowed herself on *her* face to the earth, and said, Behold, *let* thine ⁷handmaid *be* a servant to wash the feet of the

42 servants of my lord. And Abigail hastened, and arose, and rode upon an ass, with five damsels of hers that went ⁸after her; and she went after

43 the messengers of David, and became his wife. David also took Ahinoam

44 ⁹of Jezreel; and ¹⁰they were also both of them his wives. But Saul had given ¹¹Michal his daughter, David's wife, to ¹²Phalti the son of Laish, which *was* of ¹³Gallim.

26 AND the Ziphites came unto Saul to Gibeah, saying, ¹⁴Doth not David hide himself in the hill of Hachilah, *which is* before Jeshimon?

2 Then Saul arose, and went down to the wilderness of Ziph, having three thousand chosen men of Israel with him, to seek David in the wilderness

3 of Ziph. And Saul pitched in the hill of Hachilah, *which is* before Jeshimon, by the way: but David abode in the wilderness; and he saw

B. C. 1050.
 f 2 Sam. 13.
 23.
 g Pro. 20. 1.
 Pro. 23. 19.
 Isa. 5. 11.
 Isa. 23. 1-3.
 Hos. 4. 11.
 Luke 21. 31.
 Eph. 5. 18.
 h Deut. 28. 24.
 Job 15. 21.
 i 2 Sam. 6. 7.
 Job 12. 10.
 Job 31. 14.
 15.
 Ps. 104. 23.
 Acts 12. 23.
 j 1 ro. 22. 23.
 k 1 Ki. 2. 44.
 Esth. 7. 10.
 l Ps. 7. 16.
 m Ruth 2. 10.
 13.
 Pro. 15. 33.
 n at her feet.
 o Josh. 15. 56.
 2 Sam. 3. 2.
 p ch. 27. 3.
 ch. 30. 5.
 q 2 Sam. 3. 14.
 r Phal'tiel.
 2 Sam. 3. 15.
 s Isa. 10. 10.
 CHAP. 26.
 u ch. 23. 19.
 v s. 54.
 title.

36-44.—NABAL'S DEATH.

36. he held a feast in his house, like the feast of a king. The sheep shearing season was always a very joyous occasion. Masters usually entertained their shepherds; and even Nabal, though of a most niggardly disposition, prepared festivities on a scale of sumptuous liberality. The modern Arabs celebrate the season with similar hilarity. 37. in the morning . . . his wife . . . told him these things. He probably fainted, from horror at the perilous situation in which he had unconsciously placed himself; and such a shock had been given by the fright to his whole system, that he rapidly pined and died.

39. the Lord hath returned the wickedness of Nabal upon his own head. If this was an expression of pleasure, and David's vindictive feelings were gratified by the intelligence of Nabal's death, it was an instance of human infirmity which we may lament; but perhaps he referred to the unmerited reproach (*vs.* 10, 11), and the contempt of God implied in it.

David sent and communed with Abigail, to take her to . . . wife. This unceremonious proceeding was quite in the style of Eastern monarchs, who no sooner take a fancy for a lady than they despatch a messenger to intimate their royal wishes that she should henceforth reside in the palace; and her duty is implicitly to obey. David's conduct shows that the manners of the Eastern nations were already imitated by the great men in Israel; and that the morality of the times, which God permitted, gave its sanction to the practice of polygamy. His marriage with Abigail brought him a rich estate; and the fact of a woman in her wealthy circumstances so willingly

forming a matrimonial relation with David, shows that the position he occupied, while expatriated in the wilderness, was far more elevated and comfortable than is generally imagined. 44. Michal. By the unchallengeable will of her father, she who was David's wife was given to another; but she returned, and sustained the character of his wife when he ascended the throne. Phalti the son of Laish, which was of Gallim [פַּלְתִּי לַיִשׁ]. Some render this, 'native of Laish,' which was close to, and dependent upon, Gallim. The position of this town is unknown, though from the places with which Isaiah has associated it (*x.* 30), it was probably in the territory of Benjamin. The name "Gallim" was probably derived from the vicinity of bubbling springs.

CHAP. XXVI. 1-4.—SAUL COMES TO THE HILL OF HACHILAH AGAINST DAVID.

1. the Ziphites came unto Saul to Gibeah. This people seem to have thought it impossible for David to escape, and therefore had recommended themselves to Saul by giving him secret information of the refugees' hiding-place (see on *ch.* xxiii. 19). The knowledge of their treachery makes it appear strange that David should return to his former haunt in their neighbourhood; but perhaps he did it to be near Abigail's possessions, and under the impression that Saul had become mollified. But the king had relapsed into his old enmity. Though Gibeah, as its name imports, stood on an elevated position, and the desert of Ziph, which was in the hilly region of Judea, may have been higher than Gibeah, it was still necessary to descend in leaving the latter place; thence Saul, *v.* 2, "went down to the wilderness of Ziph."

4 that Saul came after him into the wilderness. David therefore sent out spies, and understood that Saul was come in very deed.

5 And David arose, and came to the place where Saul had pitched: and David beheld the place where Saul lay, and Abner ^bthe son of Ner, the captain of his host: and Saul lay in the ¹trench, and the people pitched round about him. Then answered David, and said to Ahimelech the Hittite, and to Abishai ^cthe son of Zeruiah, brother to Joab, saying, Who will ^ago down with me to Saul to the camp? And Abishai said, I will go down with thee.

7 So David and Abishai came to the people by night: and, behold, Saul lay sleeping within the trench, and his spear stuck in the ground at his 8 bolster: but Abner and the people lay round about him. Then said Abishai to David, God hath ²delivered thine enemy into thine hand this day: now therefore let me smite him, I pray thee, with the spear even to the earth at once, and I will not *smite* him the second time.

9 And David said to Abishai, Destroy him not: for who can stretch forth his 10 hand against the LORD's anointed, and be guiltless? David said furthermore, As the LORD liveth, ^ethe LORD shall smite him; or ^fhis day 11 shall come to die; or he shall ^ddescend into battle, and perish. The ³LORD forbid that I should stretch forth mine hand against the LORD's anointed: but, I pray thee, take thou now the spear that *is* at his bolster, 12 and the cruse of water, and let us go. So David took the spear and the

B C 1^{ro}.

^b ch. 14. 59.
ch 17. 55.
2 Sam. 2. 8.
1 Chr 9. 39.
¹ Or, midst of his carriages.
ch. 17. 20.
^d 1 Chr. 2. 16.
^e Judg 7. 10.
² shut up.
ch 21. 18.
^c ch 25. 3^s.
Ps. 91. 1.
Luke 18. 7.
Rom 12. 19.
Heb. 10. 33.
^f Gen 47. 29.
Deut 31. 14.
Job 7. 1.
Job 14. 5.
Ps. 37. 13.
^g ch. 31. 6.
Deut 32. 35.
^h ch 21. 6. 12.
Rom. 12. 17.
19
Jas. 5. 5-11.

5-25.—DAVID STAYS ABISHAI FROM KILLING SAUL, BUT TAKES HIS SPEAR AND CRUSE.

5. came to the place where Saul had pitched. Having obtained certain information respecting the locality of the king's encampment, he seems, accompanied by his nephew (*v. 6*), to have hid himself, perhaps disguised, in a neighbouring wood or hill, on the skirts of the royal camp towards night, and waited to approach it under covert of the darkness. the place where Saul lay, and Abner the son of Ner. The Hebrew *ab* signifies father; but the captain of Saul's host may have been called *Abner* in honour of some ancestor, without any reference to the meaning of the name. Another explanation has been suggested. 'In *Abner* there are two pure Gomic roots, and *ab* is the contrary of *father*; for it is expressly explained, "Abner, son of Ner, captain of David's host." This *ab* is of course the *ab* or *ap* of the Appii of Italy, and of the Cymry of Britain—son; *Abner*, son of strength; or in Latin, Appius Nero; and as we know that the Appii Claudii Neroni were a pure Umbrian family, we have in the centre of Palestine, B.C. 1000, and in the centre of Italy, B.C. at least 700, two Gomic families of precisely the same name, derived from their common family language (Japhetic) in the most natural way conceivable. It is utterly impossible that the Jewish writer, whoever he was, of the books of Samuel, could have devised such a coincidence, or imagined its ethnological significance. He wrote down the simple fact. We know how to explain it; but this very knowledge is a confirmation of the prophetic utterance of Noah' (Gen. ix. 27) ('Vindication of the Mosaic Ethnology of Europe'). Saul lay in the trench [חַבְּרֹתַי]—in the wagon, rampart (see on ch. xvii. 20). and the people lay round about him. Among the nomad people of the East the encampments are usually made in a circular form; the circumference is lined by the baggage and the men, while the chief's station is in the centre, whether he occupied a tent or not. His spear, stuck in the ground at his bolster head, indicates his position (see *Moriez*, 'Second Journey through Persia,' p. 115, where is a similar

description of a Persian governor reposing from the fatigues of a journey, with his attendants around him). Similar was the disposition of Saul's camp. In his hasty expedition he seems to have carried no tent, but to have slept on the ground. The whole troop were sunk in sleep around him.

8. said Abishai. . . God hath delivered thine enemy into thine hand. This midnight stratagem shows the activity and heroic enterprise of David's mind; and it was in unison with the style of warfare in ancient times. let me smite him . . . even to the earth at once. The ferocious vehemence of the speaker is sufficiently apparent from his language; but David's magnanimity soared far above the notions of his followers. Though Saul's cruelty and perfidy, and general want of right principle, had sunk him to a low pitch of degradation, yet that was no reason for David imitating him in doing wrong. Besides, he was the sovereign; David was a subject; and though God had rejected him from the kingdom, it was every way the best and most dutiful course, instead of precipitating his fall by imbruing their hands in his blood, and thereby contracting the guilt of a great crime, to await the awards of that retributive Providence which sooner or later would take him off by some sudden and mortal blow. He who with impetuous haste was going to exterminate Nabal, meekly spared Saul. But Nabal refused to give a tribute to which justice and gratitude, no less than custom, entitled David. Saul was under the judicial infatuation of heaven. Thus David withheld the hand of Abishai; but at the same time directed him to carry off some things which would show where they had been, and what they had done. Thus he obtained the best of victories over him, by heaping coals of fire on his head. 11. the spear that is at his bolster, and the cruse of water. The Oriental spear had, and still has, a spike at the lower extremity, intended for the purpose of sticking the spear into the ground when the warrior is at rest. This common custom of Arab sheikhs was also the practice of the Hebrew chiefs. at his bolster—*lit.*, 'at his head.' But perhaps Saul, as a sove-

- cruse of water from Saul's bolster; and they gat them away, and no man saw *it*, nor knew *it*, neither awaked: for they *were* all asleep; because ^aa deep sleep from the LORD was fallen upon them.
- 13 Then David went over to the other side, and stood on the top of an hill
 14 afar off, a great space *being* between them: and David cried to the people, and to Abner the son of Ner, saying, Answerest thou not, Abner? Then
 15 Abner answered and said, Who *art* thou *that* criest to the king? And David said to Abner, *Art* not thou a *valiant* man? and who *is* like to thee in Israel? wherefore then hast thou not kept thy lord the king? for
 16 there came one of the people in to destroy the king thy lord. This thing *is* not good that thou hast done. *As* the LORD liveth, ye *are* ³worthy to die, because ye have not kept your master, the LORD's anointed. And now see where the king's spear *is*, and the cruse of water that *was* at his bolster.
- 17 And Saul knew David's voice, and said, *Is* ^jthis thy voice, my son
 18 David? And David said, *It is* my voice, my lord, O king. And he said, ^kWherefore doth my lord thus pursue after his servant? for what
 19 have I done? or ^lwhat evil *is* in mine hand? Now therefore, I pray thee, let my lord the king hear the words of his servant. If the LORD have
^mstirred thee up against me, let him ⁴accept an offering: but if *they be* the children of men, cursed *be* they before the LORD; ⁿfor they have driven me out this day from ⁵abiding in the ^oinheritance of the LORD,
 20 saying, Go, serve other gods. Now therefore, let not my blood fall to the earth before the face of the LORD; for the king of Israel is come out to seek ²a flea, as when one doth hunt a partridge in the mountains.
- 21 Then said Saul, ⁹I have sinned: return, my son David; for I will no more do thee harm, because my soul was ^rprecious in thine eyes this day: behold, I have played the fool, and have erred exceedingly. And David answered and said, Behold the king's spear! and let one of the
 23 young men come over and fetch it. The ⁶LORD render to every man his righteousness and his faithfulness: for the LORD delivered thee into *my* hand to-day; but I would not stretch forth mine hand against the LORD's
 24 anointed. And, behold, as thy life was much set by this day in mine eyes,

B. C. 1060.
 Gen. 2. 21.
 Gen. 15. 12.
 Esth. 6. 1.
 Isa. 21. 10.
 the sons of death.
 2Sam. 12. 5.
 ch. 21. 16.
 k ch. 21. 9. 11.
 1's. 7. 3-5.
 Ps. 35. 7.
 Ps. 63. 4.
 l ch. 17. 29.
 Ps. 7. 3.
 John 8. 46.
 John 11. 32.
 John 18. 25.
 m 2 Sam. 16. 11.
 2 Sam. 21. 1-4
 smell.
 Gen. 8. 21.
 Lev. 26. 31.
 n Deut. 4. 28.
 1's. 120. 5.
 5 cleavi'g.
 o 2 Sam. 14. 16.
 2 Sam. 20. 19.
 Isa. 19. 25.
 p ch. 24. 14.
 q Ex. 9. 27.
 ch. 15. 21.
 r ch. 18. 30.
 Ps. 49. 8.
 s Ps. 7. 8.
 Ps. 19. 20.
 Ps. 23. 4.
 Ps. 62. 12.
 Fecl. 8. 12.
 Isa. 3. 10.
 11.

reign, had the distinguished luxury of a bolster carried for him. A "cruse of water" is usually, in warm climates, kept near a person's couch, as a draught in the night-time is found very refreshing. Saul's cruse would probably be of superior materials, or more richly ornamented than common ones, and therefore by its size or form be easily distinguished.

13. Then David . . . stood on the top of an hill afar off . . . 14. And . . . cried to the people—(see on Judg. ix. 7.) The extraordinary purity and elasticity of the air in Palestine enable words to be distinctly heard that are addressed by speakers from the top of one hill to people on that of another, from which it is separated by a deep intervening ravine. Hostile parties can thus speak to each other while completely beyond the reach of each other's attack. It results from the peculiar features of the country in many of the mountain districts. 15. David said to Abner, Art not thou a valiant man? . . . wherefore then hast thou not kept thy lord the king? The circumstance of David having penetrated to the centre of the encampment, through the circular rows of the sleeping soldiers, constituted the point of this sarcastic taunt. 16. ye are worthy to die [בְּיָמֵי]—sons of death. This new evidence of David's moderation and magnanimous forbearance, together with his earnest and kindly expostulation, softened the obduracy of Saul's heart.

19. If the Lord have stirred thee up against me—by the evil spirit He hath sent, or by any spiritual offences by which we have mutually displeased Him. let him accept an offering—*i. e.*, let us conjointly offer a sacrifice for appeasing His wrath against us. if they be the children of men. The prudence, meekness, and address of David in ascribing the king's enmity to the instigations of some malicious traducers, and not to the jealousy of Saul himself, is worthy of notice. saying, Go, serve other gods. This was the drift of their conduct. By driving him from the laud and ordinances of the true worship, into foreign and heathen countries, they were exposing him to all the seductions of idolatry. 20. as when one doth hunt a partridge. The allusion is to the ancient method of taking these birds by throwing sticks. Wild animals of a large size were generally captured in nets and pitfalls. Dogs do not appear to have been employed in the chase at all. As to fowls, people in the East, in hunting the partridge and other game birds, pursue them till observing them becoming languid and fatigued; after they have been put up two or three times, they rush upon the birds stealthily, and knock them down with bludgeons (*Shaw's 'Travels'*). It was exactly in this manner that Saul was pursuing David: he drove him from time to time from his hiding-place, hoping to render him weary of his life, or obtain an opportunity of accomplishing his destruction.

so let my life be much set by in the eyes of the LORD, and let him deliver me out of all tribulation. Then Saul said to David, Blessed be thou, my son David: thou shalt both do great things, and also shalt still prevail. So David went on his way, and Saul returned to his place.

27 AND David said in his heart, I shall now ¹perish one day by the hand of Saul: *there is* nothing better for me than that I should speedily escape into the land of the Philistines; and Saul shall despair of me, to seek me 2 any more in any coast of Israel: so shall I escape out of his hand. And David arose, ^aand he passed over with the six hundred men that *were* 3 with him ^bunto Achish, the son of Maach, king of Gath. And David dwelt with Achish at Gath, he and his men, every man with his household, *even* David with his two wives, Abinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail 4 the Carmelitess, Nabal's wife. And it was told Saul that David was fled to Gath: and he sought no more again for him.

5 And David said unto Achish, If I have now found grace in thine eyes, let them give me a place in some town in the country, that I may dwell there: for why should thy servant dwell in the royal city with thee? 6 Then Achish gave him Ziklag that day: wherefore ^cZiklag pertaineth 7 unto the kings of Judah unto this day. And ²the time that David dwelt in the country of the Philistines was ³a full year and four months.

8 And David and his men went up, and invaded ^dthe Geshurites, ^eand the ^fGezerites, and the ^gAmalekites: for those *nations were* of old the inhabitants of the land, ^has thou goest to Shur, even unto the land of

R. C. 1060.

ⁱ Gen 32 29
Isa 51, 17.
Hos. 12, 4.
Rom. 8, 35.
37

CHAP. 27.

¹ be consumed.
^a ch 25, 13.
ch. 30, 9.
^b ch. 21, 10.
¹ Ki 2, 40.
^c Josh 15, 31.
Josh 19, 5.
² the number of days.
³ a year of days.
ch. 29, 3.
1111 10:6.
^d Josh 13, 2.
^e Judg 1, 29.
^f Or, Gerzites,
Josh. 16, 3.
^g Ex. 17, 16.
ch. 15, 7, 8.
^h Gen. 26, 18.

25. So David went on his way. Notwithstanding this sudden relenting of Saul, David placed no confidence in his professions or promises, but wisely kept at a distance, and awaited the course of Providence.

CHAP. XXVII. 1-4.—SAUL, HEARING THAT DAVID WAS FLED TO GATH, SEEKS NO MORE FOR HIM.

1. *there is nothing better for me than that I should speedily escape into the land of the Philistines.* This resolution of David's was in every respect wrong.—1. Because it was removing from the place where the Divine oracle intimated to him to remain (ch. xxii. 5); 2. It was rushing into the idolatrous land, for driving him into which he had denounced an imprecation on his enemies (ch. xxvi. 19); and it was a withdrawal of his counsel and aid from God's people. It was a movement, however, overruled by Providence to detach him from his country, and to let the disasters impending over Saul and his followers be brought on by the Philistines. 2. *Achish, the son of Maach, king of Gath.* The particular description of this king's family creates a presumption that he was a different king from the reigning sovereign on David's first visit to Gath. Whether David had received a special invitation from him, or a mere permission to enter his territories, cannot be determined. It is probable that the former was the case; as, from the universal notoriety given to the feud between Saul and David, which had now become irreconcilable, it might appear to Achish good policy to harbour him as a guest, and so the better pave the way for the hostile measures against Israel which the Philistines were at this time meditating. 3. *David dwelt . . . he and his men.* He was now in very different circumstances from those of his first arrival in the Philistine country. Then he was a lonely fugitive; now he had the prestige of a great name, and was the head of an organized band, all the soldiers of which, as well as their leader, transported their families along with them. In numbers they were sufficient to form a little colony.

5-12.—DAVID BEGS ZIKLAG OF ACHISH.

5. *let them give me a place in some town in the country.* It was a prudent arrangement on the part of David: for it would prevent him being an object of jealous suspicion or of mischievous plots among the Philistines. It would place his followers more beyond the risk of contamination by the idolatries of the court and capital; and it would give him an opportunity of making reprisals on the freebooting tribes that infested the common border of Israel and the Philistines. 6. *Ziklag.* Though originally assigned to Judah (Josh. xv. 31), and subsequently to Simeon (Josh. xix. 5: cf. 1 Chr. iv. 30), this town had never been possessed by the Israelites. It belonged to the Philistines, who gave it to David. It remained ever after a private possession of the kings of Judah. Ziklag was a border fortress. 'From its neighbourhood (Josh. xix. 5) to Beth-marcaboth (the house of chariots) and Hazar-susah (the village of horses), it appears to have been a kind of fortress for protection from the Bedouin marauders of the caravans, such as Nukhl and Akabah, on the Haj route at the present day' (*Drew's 'Scripture Lands,'* p. 124).

7. *And the time that David dwelt in the country of the Philistines [זִיקְלָג]—field of the Philistines,* so called from its beauty and productiveness (cf. Judg. xv. 5: see *Robinson's 'Biblical Researches,'* i., p. 291). *was a full year and four months.* [The Septuagint has *τρεσσαρτας μηνας, four months*; but see on ch. xxix. 3, Septuagint.] *Josephus ('Antiquities,'* b. vi., ch. xiii., sec. 10) states it to have been four months and twenty days.

8. *David . . . went up, and invaded the Geshurites (see Josh. xiii. 2), and the Gezerites—or the Gerizi (Gesenius: Josh. xii. 12), some Arab horde which had once encamped there, and the Amalekites.* Part of the district occupied by them lay on the south of the land of Israel (Judg. v. 14; xii. 15); but after the overthrow of their national strength by Saul (ch. xv.) they dispersed and became a horde of desert marauders, *as thou goest to Shur [Septuagint, Γελαμψούρ]—(see on*

- 9 Egypt. And David smote the land, and left neither man nor woman alive, and took away the sheep, and the oxen, and the asses, and the camels, and the apparel, and returned, and came to Achish. And Achish said, ⁵Whither have ye made a road to-day? And ²David said, Against the south of Judah, and against the south of ¹the Jerahmeelites, and ¹¹against the south of the Kenites. And David saved neither man nor woman alive, to bring *tidings* to Gath, saying, Lest they should tell on us, saying, So did David, and so *will be* his manner all the while he ¹²dwellth in the country of the Philistines. And Achish believed David, saying, He hath ⁶made his people Israel utterly to abhor him; therefore he shall be my servant for ever.
- 28 AND ^ait came to pass in those days, that the Philistines gathered their armies together for warfare, to fight with Israel: and Achish said unto David, ¹Know thou assuredly, that thou shalt go out with me to battle, ²thou and thy men. And David said to Achish, ^bSurely thou shalt know what thy servant can do. And Achish said to David, Therefore will I make thee keeper of mine head for ever.
- 3 Now ^cSamuel was dead, and all Israel had lamented him, and buried him in Ramah, even in his own city.

And Saul had put away ^dthose that had familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land.

B. C. 1058.

⁵ Or, Did you not make a road, etc.
¹ Gen. 27. 19, 20, 24.
² Sam. 17. 10.
 Ps. 141. 3.
 Pro 29. 25.
¹ 1 Chr 2. 9.
⁶ made himself to stink to his people Israel

CHAP. 23.

^a ch. 29. 1.
¹ Knowing, know.
^b Rom. 12. 9.
^c ch 23. 1.
^d Ex 22. 13.
 Lev. 19. 31.
 Lev. 20. 27.
 Deut. 18. 10.

Gen. xiii. 10; xvi. 7; xx. 1; xxv. 18.) 9. David smote the land, and left neither man nor woman alive. 'Occupying the high plateau (er-Kakmah) which overhangs the Philistine plain to the west, and Wady Murreh to the south; while the mention of oxen among the spoil shows that the predatory hordes that David chastised on this occasion must have penetrated far into the interior; for south and east of the Judean mountains the country is not adapted to the sustenance of cattle' ('Negeb,' p. 206; cf. *Drew's* 'Scripture Lands,' p. 6; *Stewart's* 'Tent and Khan,' p. 222; *Wilson's* 'Lands of the Bible,' i., pp. 346, 347). 10. Achish said, Whither have ye made a road to-day? [עַד־אֵי־לָהֶם]—Whither have you spread yourselves out to-day? Against whom have you made a hostile *raid* to-day? David said, Against the south of Judah (i. e., Negeb of Judah), and against the south of the Jerahmeelites. Jerahmeel was the great-grandson of Judah, and his posterity occupied the southern portion of that tribal domain. 'The Negeb of the Jerahmeelites' answered to that of the Sa'idiyeh, which extends south-westwards until it meets the Negeb of the Cherethites, or Philistines, near Wady er-Ruheibeh,' and against the south of the Kenites—the possession of Jethro, who occupied a portion in the Negeb of Judah, the smallest of the three districts into which that region was divided, and comprised the region immediately adjacent to 'Arad. 'It now answers to the country of the Dhullam Arabs, including the southern extremity of the Jehalin territory' (*Wilson's* 'Negeb,' pp. 22-24). It will be observed that, in his reply to Achish, David misleads the king as to the scene of his adventure, and names a different set of people from those whom he had actually attacked. [The Septuagint has for Jerahmeelites, Ἰερμεεγῆ, and for Kenites, Κενεζῆ.] 11. David saved neither man nor woman alive [the Septuagint has correctly rendered this clause, καὶ οὐκ ἐξωσγόνει ἄνδρα ἢ γυναῖκα], to bring tidings to Gath, saying. [The Septuagint represents this as a part of David's answer to Achish, καὶ ἄνδρα καὶ γυναῖκα οὐκ ἐξωσγόνει τοῦ εἰσαγαγεῖν εἰς Γεθ, and I have not saved man or woman alive, saying, &c.] But

Josephus ('Antiquities,' b. vi., ch. xiii., sec. 10), in his concern for the reputation of David, glosses over the cruel massacre, and merely says, as if nothing more had been done than carrying off booty, 'he took much prey of their beasts and camels, and then returned home; but David abstained from the men, as fearing they should discover him to king Achish.' 12. Achish believed David. Achish was deceived by the tale, and considered that, as so great an outrage upon his countrymen would alienate all Israel from David, he might now employ him as a useful auxiliary in the expeditionary enterprise he had been meditating against the kingdom of Saul. The gross deception practised upon his royal host, and the indiscriminate slaughter which David had committed, lest any one should escape to tell the real truth, exhibit an unfavourable view of his integrity and uprightness at this period.

CHAP. XXVIII. 1-6.—ACHISH'S CONFIDENCE IN DAVID.

1. The Philistines gathered their armies together for warfare, to fight with Israel. The death of Samuel, the general dissatisfaction with Saul, and the absence of David, instigated the cupidity of those restless enemies of Israel, and they prepared to invade the kingdom. Know thou assuredly, that thou shalt go out with me to battle. This was evidently to try him. Achish, however, seems to have thought he had gained the confidence of David, and had a claim on his services. 2. Surely thou shalt know what thy servant can do. This answer, while it seemed to express an apparent cheerfulness in agreeing to the proposal, contained a studied ambiguity, a wary and politic generality. Therefore will I make thee keeper of mine head—or my life; i. e., captain of my body-guard—an office of great trust and high honour.

3. Now Samuel was dead, &c. This event is alluded to as affording an explanation of the secret and improper methods by which Saul sought information and direction in the present crisis of his affairs. Overwhelmed in perplexity and fear, he yet found the common and legitimate channels of communication with heaven shut against him; and, under the influence of that

4 And the Philistines gathered themselves together, and came and pitched in ^eShunem: and Saul gathered all Israel together, and they 5 pitched in ^fGilboa. And when Saul saw the host of the Philistines, he 6 was ^gafraid, and his heart greatly trembled. And when Saul enquired of the LORD, the ^hLORD answered him not, neither ⁱby dreams, nor ^jby 7 Urim, nor by prophets. Then said Saul unto his servants, Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit, that I may go to her, and enquire of

B. C. 1056.

• Josh. 19. 18.

2 Ki. 4. 8.

f ch. 31. 1.

g Job 18. 11.

h Isa. 57. 10.

i ch. 14. 17.

j Num. 12. 6.

k Ex. 8. 30.

dark, distempered, superstitious spirit which had overmastered him, resolved in desperation to seek the aid of one of the fortune-telling impostors whom, in accordance with the Divine command (Lev. xix. 31; xx. 6, 27; Deut. xviii. 11), he had set himself formerly, and with a show of pious zeal, to exterminate from his kingdom.

4. the Philistines . . . pitched in Shunem.

Having collected their forces for a last grand effort, they marched up from the sea coast, and encamped in the "valley of Jezreel." The spot on which their encampment was fixed was Shunem (Josh. xix. 18), now Sölam, a village which is situated on the slope of a range called 'little Hermon.' On the opposite side, on the rise of mount Gilboa, hard by "the spring of Jezreel," was Saul's army. The Philistines clung, as usual, to the plain, which was most suitable for those war-chariots of which their military armament principally consisted, and they took up an advantageous position for the free and effective use of that force in action. That of the Hebrews was badly selected. The ground slopes down gradually from Shunem to the very base of Gilboa at the fountain, while the hillside rises steeply from the plain. The Philistines had all the advantage of the gentle descent in their attack; both front and flanks of the Israelites were exposed to their onset, and the prospect of flight almost completely cut off by the steep hill behind' (*Porter's Handbook*, p. 355).

5. And when Saul saw . . . he was afraid, and his heart greatly trembled.

There is in this description of Saul's emotions a paronomasia, or play on the name of the place, which was called 'the well or spring of Harod,' from the fear and trembling which once at that spot seized the army of Gideon (Judg. vii. 3). 6. And when Saul enquired of the Lord. As it was a part of the official duty of the high priest to ask counsel for rulers in all matters affecting the national interests of Israel, we find Joshua in early, as well as David at a later period, frequently employing the agency of that high dignitary for consulting God in emergencies where his own sagacity was an insufficient guide. It appears that Saul also, in the brief period of his theocratic allegiance, enquired of the Lord through the same medium (ch. xiv. 18, 19). But he had long discontinued such applications, his impulsive and wayward temper driving him to neglect them, probably from the day that God gave him no answer (ch. xiv. 37). The Lord answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets. These were the three recognized modes of Divine revelation (Jer. xxiii. 25-28; Joel ii. 28). A knowledge of God's will with reference to present duty, no less than to future events, was communicated in dreams sometimes to private persons (Gen. xx. 3; xxviii. 12; xxxvii. 5-11; xl. 5-21; xli. 1-32; cf. Dan. iv. 5-17), at other times by means of the high priest's Urim (see on Exod. xxviii. 29, 30; Lev. viii. 5-9; Num. xxvii. 21), and by prophets (Num. xii. 16; Isa. xxix. 10). The latter two modes are specified as distinct from the former. But in consequence of Saul's persistent rebellion and apostasy, these privileges were all withdrawn from him. No vision from the Lord was given him in

trance or dream (ch. xix. 24); no announcement of the Divine will could be obtained by Urim, for the high priest's family had been barbarously massacred, and Abiathar, the only survivor, who carried an ephod with him in his flight from Nob (ch. xxii. 20; xxiii. 6), was associated with David's exiled followers; and no prophet was there to guide and support him, for Samuel, his faithful counsellor, had sorrowfully left him to himself, and was now dead. In the extremity of his distress, how intensely did Saul long for the restoration of those forfeited privileges,—to learn the will of God at the mouth of the prophet, or by the pectoral of the high priest, or to be told what he should do through some vision of the night! The saddest and most melancholy aspect of the case is, that in his agony of mind he never dreamt of asking for pardon of his sins, but only for counsel in his backsliding fortunes. His real character was now unveiled, and his resolution to consult a witch, one of those traders in unlawful arts, whom he had formerly set himself with apparent zeal to extirpate, was the re-action of his hypocrisy—a wild and desperate expedient for relieving himself from the misery which he despaired of relieving by legitimate means.

7-25.—SAUL SEEKS TO A WITCH, WHO, BEING ENCOURAGED BY HIM, RAISES UP SAMUEL.

7. Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit [אִשָּׁה שֹׁמְרֵי רֹחַ אֲדָמָה]—a woman, a mistress of Ob; i. e., in whom is a divining spirit. Ob signifies properly a *leathern bottle*, and is applied in several passages of Scripture to magicians, because, being possessed with an evil spirit, and swollen by the inhalation of some gaseous substances, which made them pant and heave, they spoke with a soft hollow voice, as out of a bottle. [The Septuagint has *εγγαστριμύζων*, a ventriloquist.] They were called ventriloquists because the voice seemed to proceed out of their belly (see *Goodwin*, 'Moses and Aaron,' lib. iv., p. 193). He specifies a woman, not a man. The wizards, or male practitioners, being well known, had probably been searched out and extirpated. But women were more in privacy; and as they were addicted to magical and necromantic arts, some of these might be still surviving, and in a clandestine manner pursuing their unlawful and nefarious trade. Necromancy (the holding intercourse with spirits, which was considered a science, 'falsely so called,' and extensively relied on by the credulous votaries of superstition) was condemned and interdicted in the law of Moses, and is classed in the New Testament amongst "the works of the flesh" (Gal. v. 20). From the energetic measures which he himself had taken for extirpating the dealers in magical arts, the profession having been declared a capital offence, his most attached courtiers might have had reason to doubt the possibility of gratifying their master's wish. Anxious enquiries, however, led to the discovery of a woman living very secluded in the neighbourhood, traditionally believed by the Jews to have been Abner's mother, who, probably on that account, had escaped, and who had the credit of possessing the

her. And his servants said to him, Behold, *there is a woman that hath a familiar spirit at En-dor.*
 8 And Saul disguised himself, and put on other raiment, and he went, and two men with him, and they came to the woman by night: and ^khe said, I pray thee, divine unto me by the familiar spirit, and bring me
 9 *him up whom I shall name unto thee.* And the woman said unto him, Behold, thou knowest what Saul hath done, how he hath cut off those that have familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land: wherefore
 10 then layest thou a snare for my life, to cause me to die? And Saul swore to her by the LORD, saying, *As the LORD liveth, there shall no*
 11 *punishment happen to thee for this thing.* Then said the woman, Whom shall I bring up unto thee? And he said, Bring me up Samuel.
 12 And when the woman saw ^lSamuel, she cried with a loud voice: and the woman spake to Saul, saying, Why hast thou deceived me? for
 13 thou *art* Saul. And the king said unto her, Be not afraid: for what sawest thou? And the woman said unto Saul, I saw ^mgods ascending
 14 out of the earth. And he said unto her, ⁿWhat form is he of? And she said, An old man cometh up; and he *is* covered with ^oa mantle. And Saul perceived that it *was* Samuel, and he ^ostooped with *his* face to the ground, and bowed himself.
 15 And Samuel said to Saul, Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me up? And Saul answered, ^pI am sore distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God ^qis departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither ^rby prophets, nor by dreams: therefore I have called
 16 thee, that thou mayest make known unto me what I shall do. Then

B C. 1057.
^k Deut. 18. 11.
 1 Chr. 10. 13.
 Isa. 8. 19.
^l Isa. 57. 2.
 Rev. 14. 13.
^m Ex. 22. 28.
 Ps. 138. 1.
ⁿ What is his form?
^o ch. 16. 27.
 2 Ki. 2. 8, 13.
^o 2 Thes. 2. 10, 11.
^p Num. 5. 27.
 Pro. 5. 11, 13.
 Pro. 14. 11.
 Jer. 2. 17, 18.
 1 Cor. 5. 4, 5.
^q Judg. 16. 20.
 ch. 16. 13, 14.
 ch. 18. 12.
 Ps. 51. 11.
 Hos. 9. 12.
 Matt. 25. 41.
^r by the hand of prophets.

forbidden powers; and to her house he repaired by night in disguise, accompanied by two faithful servants, who are said, in Jewish tradition, to have been Abner and Amasa. En-dor—the fountain of Dor—was situated directly on the other side of the Gilboa range, opposite Tabor; so that, in this midnight adventure, Saul had to pass over the shoulder of the ridge on which the Philistines were encamped, till he reached, by a circuitous route, the hut of the sorceress, perhaps in one of the caves which abound in the neighbourhood of the present village. He probably kept to the east of Jezreel, crossed the valley below Ain Jalud, and thence over the shoulder of this Jebel ed-Dûly to En-dor; but it must have been perilous in the extreme; and nothing could have induced Saul to venture thither but the agony of despair ('Land and Book,' p. 168).

8. bring me him up whom I shall name unto thee. This pythoness united to the arts of divination a claim to be considered a necromancer (Deut. xviii. 11); and it was her supposed power in calling back the dead, of which Saul was desirous to avail himself. Though she at first refused to listen to his request, she accepted his pledge that no risk would be incurred by her compliance. And it is probable that his extraordinary stature, the deference paid him by his attendants, the easy distance of his camp from En-dor, and the proposal to call up the great prophet and first magistrate in Israel—a proposal which no private individual would venture to make—had awakened her suspicions as to the true character and rank of her visitor. 10. Saul swore to her by the Lord. It is evident that the oath, "as the Lord liveth," had, as used by such a person as Saul, become a common and established form of swearing in Israel. Even this pledge must have convinced her of the rank and quality of her visitor; for none but the king himself could give her an absolute promise of security. 11. Then said the woman, Whom shall I bring

up unto thee?—i. e., evoke from Sheol, Hades, the invisible subterranean world, which, according to the popular ideas of the Hebrews, was the abode of departed spirits till they were delivered from that quiet, though imperfect and temporary, state of bliss [hence the phrases which are frequently used in the Septuagint, *πρὸ χθονός*, under the earth, and *κατ' ἄδου*, down in Hades; and the spirits existing in the state of the dead are in the New Testament termed *καταχθονίους* (Phil. ii. 10) and *πρόκωτα τῆς γῆς* (Rev. v. 3).] 'The question here is not what was expressly revealed to that people on this subject, but what appear to have been the notions commonly entertained concerning it? or what was it which the learned Bishop Louth styles the *infernum poeticum* of the Hebrews? Indeed, the artifice employed by their wizards and necromancers of returning answers in a feigned voice, which appeared to those present as proceeding from under the ground (Isa. xxix. 4: cf. ch. viii. 10), is a demonstration of the prevalency of the sentiments I have been illustrating, in regard both to the existence and to the abode of souls departed,' (Campbell's 'Preliminary Dissertation,' vol. vi., part ii.)

13. I saw gods ascending out of the earth [אֱלֹהִים]. The Septuagint has *θεοὺς ἐκπορεύσαντας ἀναβαίνοντας*; which our translators have followed. But it is evident from the following verse that it should be rendered 'a god,' a dignitary or ruler.] 14. And he said unto her, What form is he of? [מַה צֶּמֶרְוֹ]—What is his appearance? An old man—seen to be so from his white Nazarite locks (ch. i. 2; xii. 2). and he is covered with a mantle [מִכְתָּל]—an exterior tunic, longer than the common, without sleeves, worn by persons of rank (ch. xviii. 4; xxiv. 5, 11), and especially by those engaged in the divine service (Exod. xxviii. 31; xxxix. 22; Lev. viii. 7). Josephus ('Antiquities,' b. vii. ch. xiv. sec. 2) calls Samuel's dress 'a sacerdotal mantle' (cf. ch. ii. 15; xv. 27).

said Samuel, Wherefore then dost thou ask of me, seeing the LORD is departed from thee, and is become thine enemy? And the LORD hath done ⁴ to him ⁷ as he spake by ⁵ me: for the LORD hath rent the kingdom out of thine hand, and given it to thy neighbour, *even* to David: because ⁸ thou obeyedst not the voice of the LORD, nor executedst his fierce wrath upon Amalek, therefore hath the LORD done this thing unto thee this day. Moreover the LORD will also deliver Israel with thee into the hand of the Philistines; and to-morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me: the LORD also shall deliver the host of Israel into the hand of the Philistines.

20 Then Saul ⁶ fell straightway all along on the earth, and ⁴ was sore afraid, because of the words of Samuel: and there was no strength in him; for he had eaten no bread all the day, nor all the night. And the woman came unto Saul, and saw that he was sore troubled, and said unto him, Behold, thine handmaid hath obeyed thy voice, and I have ⁹ put my life in my hand, and have hearkened unto thy words which thou spakest unto me: now therefore, I pray thee, hearken thou also unto the voice of thine handmaid, and let me set a morsel of bread before thee; and eat, that thou mayest have strength when thou goest on thy way.

23 But he refused, and said, ¹⁰ I will not eat. But his servants, together with the woman, compelled him; and he hearkened unto their voice. So he arose from the earth, and sat upon the bed. And the woman had a fat calf in the house; and she hastened, and killed it, and took flour, and

B. C. 1055
⁴ Or. for himself.
 1 Ro. 16. 4.
⁷ ch. 2. 31.
 ch. 13. 23.
⁵ mine hand.
⁶ ch. 15. 9.
 1 Ki 20. 42.
 1 Chr. 10. 13.
 Jer. 48. 10.
⁸ made has'e and fell with the fulness of his stature.
⁹ Job 15. 20-21.
 Job 6. 5.
 Fs. 50. 21.
¹⁰ Judg. 12. 3.
 ch. 19. 5.
 Job 17. 14.
¹¹ Gen. 4. 5-8.
 1 Ki 21. 4.
¹² Gen. 18. 7.
 Luk's 15. 25.
 27. 30.

17. the Lord hath done to him as he spake by me—*i. e.*, to or for Himself; for the accomplishment of His counsel in the preservation of the theocratic kingdom. 19. to-morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me—*i. e.*, in the state of the dead. The expression "with me" does not imply that the condition of Saul and his sons would be the same as that of Samuel, but that they would be, like the prophet, in the receptacle of departed spirits, though each would have his own place.

20. Then Saul fell straightway all along on the earth [חָפַץ אֶרֶץ]—his full stature. [The Septuagint has *καὶ ἔπεσεν σαρκῶς ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν*, and he fell, having stood (*i. e.*, at standing length) upon the earthen floor.] 21. And the woman came unto Saul. During the performance of the necromantic scene she had occupied a place in the farthest recess of the cave, and then when it was done, drew near to Saul. 22. hearken . . . unto the voice of thine handmaid, and let me set a morsel of bread before thee. Her great and hospitable attentions to the king probably arose neither from humanity nor respect alone, but from a prudential regard to her own safety, lest, if he were found dead in her house, she might be implicated in the charge of his blood. 23. his servants, together with the woman, compelled him—*i. e.*, did labour to persuade him by their importunities and entreaties, and at length succeeded. So he arose from the earth, and sat upon the bed—*i. e.*, upon the divan. 24. the woman had a fat calf in the house. The flesh of the herd was reckoned, when young, one of the greatest delicacies. The houses in the village of Endor are built at the entrance to the caves, and the cattle are stabled in them, along with their owners. she hastened, and killed it. The cookery was performed with singular despatch, for the animal must have been slaughtered, and the bread baked (unleavened, of course, there being no time for the leavening process), after midnight. But this was not uncommon (see on Gen. xviii. 7, 8; Judg. xiii. 1; Luke xv. 27-29), and is still practised in the tents of the Bedouins. In less than half an hour

a sheep or calf is brought and killed in presence of the guest, and then, having been thrust into a large cauldron swung over the fire, the contents are taken out and placed on an immense tray, and served up amid a mass of roasted corn (Bürghäl), boiled rice, and leban (curdled or sour milk). Exhausted by long abstinence, overwhelmed with mental distress, and now driven in despair, the cold sweat broke on his anxious brow, and he had sunk helpless on the ground. But the kind attentions of the woman and his servants having revived him, Saul returned to the camp refreshed in body, but with a sad depression of spirits, which was ominous of his approaching doom.—This story has led to much discussion, as involving several topics about which a difference of opinion is naturally entertained. These topics are:—1st. Whether the scene described was the device of an artful sorceress, or there was an actual apparition. 2dly. Whether, there being an apparition, it was called up by the incantations of the necromancer. 3dly. Whether it was produced by demoniacal agency, or was allowed by the special interposition of God. On the one hand, the woman's profession, which was forbidden by the divine law; her pretended ignorance of her visitor (though the stature of Saul, and the deference paid to him by his two attendants, must have betrayed his real rank); the refusal of God to answer Saul; the well-known age, figure, and dress of Samuel, which she could easily represent herself or by an accomplice—the alleged figure being evidently at some distance, the head and shoulders only rising above the ground, being muffled, and not actually seen by Saul [שָׂמַח וְרָאָה], and Saul understood, concluded; Septuagint, *εγνων*, knew], whose attitude of prostrate homage, moreover, must have prevented him distinguishing the person, though he had been near; and the voice seemingly issuing out of the ground, and coming along to Saul, with the vagueness of the information, imparting nothing as to the past, but what must have been notorious throughout all Israel, regarding the alienation of Samuel from Saul, with the causes

25 kneaded *it*, and did bake unleavened bread thereof: and she brought *it* before Saul, and before his servants; and they did eat. Then they rose up, and went away that night.

29 NOW ^athe Philistines gathered together all their armies ^bto Aphek: 2 and the Israelites pitched by a fountain which *is* in Jezreel. And the lords of the Philistines passed on by hundreds and by thousands; but 3 David and his men passed on in the rereward ^cwith Achish. Then said the princes of the Philistines, What *do* these Hebrews *here*? And Achish said unto the princes of the Philistines, *Is* not this David, the servant of Saul the king of Israel, which hath been with me these ^ddays, or these years, and I have found ^eno fault in him since he fell *unto me* unto this 4 day? And the princes of the Philistines were wroth with him; and the

B. C. 1066.
 CHAP. 29.
^a ch. 24. 1.
^b Josh. 19. 9.
 ch. 4. 1.
^c 1 Ki 20. 50.
^d ch. 24. 1, 2.
^e ch. 14. 21.
 ch. 27. 7.
 1 Chr 12. 19.
 Luke 16. 8.
^f Dan 6. 5.
 John 19. 6.
 Rom. 12. 17.
 1 Pet. 3. 16.

of it, and nothing as to the future but what might have been reached by natural conjecture as to the probable issue of the approaching conflict; together with the fact that all the sons of Saul did not perish in the battle—the want of the word “when” in the original (2 Sam. ii. 9) text, indicating that the “loud voice” was not the effect, but a sequence merely, of her seeing Samuel, and the customary tone (*triste et acutum*; Horace, ‘Sat.’ viii., lib. i.) which was employed by sorceresses; and, lastly, the woman’s coolness in ministering to Saul, as if nothing unusual in her experience had occurred;—all these circumstances have led many to think that the whole scene was a deception—the imposture of a necromancer—somewhat akin to the pretensions of mesmerism, the tricks of medium clairvoyantes. But many, perhaps, are firmly of opinion that this is a wrong view, because it appears that before the woman had begun her incantations there was the appearance of something extraordinary, which struck her with astonishment and terror; and, though they cannot suppose that God would allow the spirits of the just made perfect to be called from their rest in glory at the bidding of a witch, it must be admitted that she was either the cause or the instrument of evoking an unusual object. But what was that object? Was it Samuel, exhibited to the eye and imagination only—a *deceptio visus*—or the prophet in *propria persona*? Some consider that Satan, in whose service this enchantress was employed, conjured up a personified likeness of Samuel, and that there was an apparition, though a fictitious one (*Willet*, ‘Harmonic,’ p. 319, followed by *Poole*, *Henry*, *Brown*, and other popular commentators). But undoubtedly the historian would have mentioned Satan by name, had this been the case, and not have so repeatedly spoken of Samuel, when the father of lies was meant. To adopt such an hypothesis is, as *Henderson* (‘Inspiration,’ pp. 140-145) justly remarks, ‘contrary to the style of the sacred writers, and to unsettle the entire basis of the divinely-inspired narrative.’ Besides, however sagacious and penetrating Satan may be, from his lengthened observation and experience, to anticipate the issue of many events, there is no reason to believe that he can predict what is to happen in the future [תָּמָּר, to-morrow, is taken by some in an indefinite sense here, as meaning *soon*. But there is no example of such a use of the term (see *Gesenius*, sub voce)]. Not a few eminent writers, therefore, considering that the apparition came before the witch’s arts were put in practice—that it is called in the Hebrew text (v. 14) [שָׂמַעְתָּ אֶת-דָּוִד] Samuel *himself*—that the woman herself was surprised and alarmed at what she saw—that the prediction of Saul’s own death, and the defeat of his forces, were confidently and truthfully made,—are

of opinion that the literal interpretation of this narrative is the true one, and that Samuel really appeared. If he did (and no one can deny God’s power of reinvesting the soul of Samuel with some kind of corporeal covering), it is a solitary instance in which God permitted the dead to reappear to the living, for the purpose of confirming truths previously revealed, and of condemning the conduct of those consulted persons claiming to have “a familiar spirit.” The rejection of Saul is ascribed, amongst other causes, to his consulting of the witch (1 Chr. x. 13: cf. 2 Ki. xxi. 11). The purposes to which the miraculous appearance of Samuel on this occasion contributed are summarized by *Dr. Hales* (‘New Analysis of Chronology’) as follows:—1. To make Saul’s crime the instrument of his punishment, in the dreadful denunciation of his approaching doom. 2. To show to the heathen world the infinite superiority of the ORACLE OF THE LORD, inspiring his prophets, over the powers of darkness, and the delusive prognostics of their wretched votaries in their false oracles. 3. To confirm the belief in a future state by ‘one who rose from the dead, even under the Mosaic dispensation.’ Having submitted these different views, we leave the decision of this puzzling narrative to the judgment of the enlightened and reflecting reader.

CHAP. XXIX. 1-5.—DAVID MARCHING WITH THE PHILISTINES TO FIGHT WITH ISRAEL.

1. **Aphek** (Josh. xii. 8)—in the tribe of Issachar, and in the plain of Esdraelon. A person who compares the Bible account of Saul’s last battle with the Philistines with the region around Gilboa, has the same sort of evidence that the account relates what is true, that a person would have that such a battle as Waterloo really took place. Gilboa, Jezreel, Shunem, En-dor, are all found still bearing the same name. They lie within sight of each other. Aphek is the only one of the cluster not yet identified. Jezreel is on the northern slope of Gilboa; and at the distance of twenty minutes to the east is a large fountain, and a smaller one still nearer—just the position which a chieftain would select, both on account of its elevation and the supply of water needed for his troops (*Hackett’s* ‘Scripture Illustrations’). 2. **David and his men passed on in the rereward with Achish**—as the commander of the life-guards of Achish, who was general of this invading army of the Philistines. 3. **these days, or these years**. He had now been a full year and four months (ch. xxvii. 7), and also some years before. It has been thought that David kept up a private correspondence with this Philistine prince, either on account of his native generosity or in the anticipation that an asylum in his territories would sooner or later be needed. 4. **the princes of the Philistines were wroth with him**. It must be considered a happy circum-

- princes of the Philistines said unto him, ^fMake this fellow return, that he may go again to his place which thou hast appointed him, and let him not go down with us to battle, lest in ^gthe battle he be an adversary to us: for wherewith should he reconcile himself unto his master? *should it*
- 5 not *be* with the heads of these men? *Is* not this David, of whom they sang one to another in dances, saying, ^hSaul slew his thousands, and David his ten thousands?
- 6 Then Achish called David, and said unto him, Surely, *as* the LORD liveth, thou hast been upright, and ⁱthy going out and thy coming in with me in the host *is* good in my sight: for I have not found evil in thee since the day of thy coming unto me unto this day: nevertheless ^lthe lords
- 7 favour thee not. Wherefore now return, and go in peace, that thou
- 8 ²displease not the lords of the Philistines. And David said unto Achish, But what have I done? and what hast thou found in thy servant, so long as I have been ³with thee unto this day, that I may not go fight against
- 9 the enemies of my lord the king? And Achish answered and said to David, I know that thou *art* good in my sight, ⁴as an angel of God: notwithstanding the princes of the Philistines have said, He shall not go up
- 10 with us to the battle. Wherefore now rise up early in the morning with thy master's servants that are come with thee; and as soon as ye be up early in the morning, and have light, depart.
- 11 So ^kDavid and his men rose up early to depart in the morning, to return into the land of the Philistines: ^land the Philistines went up to Jezreel.
- 30 AND it came to pass, when David and his men were come to Ziklag on the third day, that the ^aAmalekites had invaded the south, and Ziklag, and smitten Ziklag, and burnt it with fire; and had taken the women captives that *were* therein: ^bthey slew not any, either great or small, but
- 3 carried *them* away, and went on their way. So David and his men came to the city, and, behold, *it was* burnt with fire; and their wives, and their
- 4 sons, and their daughters, were taken captives. Then David and the people that *were* with him ^clifted up their voice and wept, until they had

B. C. 10th.

1 Chr. 12. 19.

Luke 16. 8.

ch. 14. 21.

ch. 18. 7.

ch. 21. 11.

Fro. 27. 14.

Num. 27. 17.

2 Sam. 3. 25.

2 Ki. 19. 17.

Fs. 121. 8.

Isa. 37. 29.

1 thou art not good in the eyes of the lords.

2 do not evil in the eyes of the lords.

3 before thee.

2 Sam. 14. 17.

2 Sam. 19. 27.

Isa. 37. 21.

1 Cor. 10. 3.

2 Sam. 4. 4.

CHAP. 30.

4 Dent. 25. 17. 19.

ch. 15. 7.

ch. 27. 8.

ch. 28. 18.

1 Chr. 4. 47.

Eze. 25. 15.

Job 33. 11.

Isa. 27. 8.

Hab. 3. 2.

Num. 14. 1.

stance in the overruling providence of God to rescue David out of the dangerous dilemma in which he was now placed. But David is not free from censure in his professions to Achish (v. 8) to do what is most probable he had not the smallest purpose of doing—of fighting with Achish against his enemies. It is just an instance of the unhappy consequences into which a false step—a departure from the straight course of duty—will betray every one who commits it.

6. Achish called David, and said unto him, Surely, as the Lord liveth—(cf. v. 9, “as an angel of God.”) Were these phrases actually used by Achish, or are they to be considered as translations from the Philistine dialect? These questions are more easily asked than answered. It has been suggested that Achish might, in speaking to David, use the former, just as many an Englishman has, in imitation of the French, interlarded his conversation with the interjection of ‘*mon Dieu*.’

9. Achish answered . . . I know that thou art good in my sight, as an angel of God. This phrase, which occurs several times in the books of Samuel (2 Sam. xiv. 17, 20; xix. 27), seems apparently common amongst the Hebrews as a standard of comparison in the estimate of great wisdom; but it seems strange in the mouth of Achish. Perhaps it arose from the intercourse of the early Philistines with Abraham and Isaac. notwithstanding, the princes of the Philistines have said. The Philistine government had constitutional checks, or at least the king was not an absolute sove-

reign, but his authority was limited, his proceedings liable to be controlled by the powerful barons of that rude and early period—much as the kings of Europe in the middle ages were, by the proud and lawless aristocracy which surrounded them (Chalmers).

CHAP. XXX. 1-5.—THE AMALEKITES SPOIL ZIKLAG.

1. the Amalekites had invaded the south, and Ziklag. While the strength of the Philistine forces was poured out of their country into the plain of Esdraelon, the Amalekite marauders seized the opportunity of the defenceless state of Philistia to invade the southern territory (Negeb) of the Cherethites (Philistines) and of Judah (vv. 14-26). Of course, David's town suffered from the ravages of these nomad plunderers, in revenge for his recent raid upon their territory. 2. slew not any . . . but carried them away. Their conduct seems to stand in favourable contrast to that of David (ch. xxvii. 11). But their apparent clemency did not arise from humane considerations. It is traceable to the ancient war usages of the East, where the men of war, on the capture of a city, were unsparingly put to death; but there were no warriors in Ziklag at the time, and the women and boys were reserved for slaves, and the old people were spared out of respect to age. 3. came to the city, and, behold, it was burnt with fire. The language implies that the smoke of the conflagration was still visible, and the sacking very recent.

- 5 no more power to weep. And David's ^atwo wives were taken captives, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail the wife of Nabal the Carmelite.
- 6 And David was greatly distressed; ^bfor the people spake of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was ¹grieved, every man for his sons and for his daughters: but ^cDavid encouraged himself in the LORD his God.
- 7 And ^dDavid said to Abiathar the priest, Ahimelech's son, I pray thee, bring me hither the ephod. And Abiathar brought thither the ephod to
- 8 David. And ^eDavid enquired at the LORD, saying, Shall I pursue after this troop? shall I overtake them? And he ²answered him, Pursue; for
- 9 thou shalt surely overtake *them*, and without fail recover *all*. So David went, he and the six hundred men that *were* with him, and came to the
- 10 brook Besor, where those that were left behind stayed. But David pursued, he and four hundred men: for two hundred abode behind, which were so faint that they could not go over the brook Besor.
- 11 And ³they found an Egyptian in the field, and brought him to David, and gave him bread, and he did eat; and they made him drink water;
- 12 and they gave him a piece of a cake of figs, and two clusters of raisins: ⁴and, when he had eaten, his spirit came again to him: for he had eaten
- 13 no bread, nor drunk *any* water, three days and three nights. And David said unto him, To whom *belongest* thou? and whence *art* thou? And he said, I *am* a young man of Egypt, servant to an Amalekite; and my
- 14 master left me, because three days ago I fell sick. We made an invasion *upon* the south of ⁵the Cherethites, and upon *the coast* which *belongeth* to Judah, and upon the south of ⁶the Caleb; and we burnt Ziklag
- 15 with fire. And David said to him, Canst thou bring me down to this company? And he said, Swear unto me by God, that thou wilt neither kill me, nor deliver me into the hands of my master, and I will bring thee down to this company.

B. C. 1056.

^d ch. 25. 42.
² Sam. 2. 2.
^e Ex. 17. 4.
 John 8. 59.
¹ bitter.
 Judg. 18. 25.
 ch. 1. 10.
² Sam. 17. 8.
² Ki. 4. 27.
^f Ps. 56. 3, 4.
 11
 Ps. 110. 81.
 Ps. 146. 5.
 Jer. 17. 7.
 17.
 Lam. 3. 24.
 25.
 oel 3. 16.
 Hab. 3. 17.
 Rom. 4. 23.
^g ch. 23. 6, 9.
^h ch. 23. 2, 4.
ⁱ Ps. 22. 4, 5.
 Ps. 28. 6.
 Ps. 50. 15.
 Ps. 91. 15.
^j Ps. 111. 2.
 Fro. 3. 5, 6.
^k Judg. 15. 9.
 ch. 14. 27.
² Sam. 8. 18.
 1 Ki. 1. 38,
 44.
 Eze. 25. 16.
 Zeph. 2. 5.
^m Josh. 14. 13.
 Josh. 15. 13.

6-15.—**THE DAVID, ENCOURAGED BY GOD, PURSUES THEM.**

6. David was greatly distressed. He had reason, not only on his own personal account (v. 5), but on account of the vehement outcry and insurrectionary threats against him for having left the place so defenceless that the families of his men fell an unresisting prey to the enemy. Under the pressure of so unexpected and widespread a calamity, of which he was upbraided as the indirect occasion, the spirit of any other leader, guided by ordinary motives, would have sunk; "but David encouraged himself in the Lord his God." His faith supplied him with inward resources of comfort and energy, and through the reasonable enquiries he made by Urim, he inspired confidence by ordering an immediate pursuit of the plunderers.

9. came to the brook Besor—supposed to be Wady Sheriah, the deep bed of a winter torrent, which is distinctly traceable from the adjoining heights, in its sinuous course up to its source, far away in the distant hills of Judah. It is about thirty yards in width, and is flanked on both sides by a range of steep precipitous banks, pouring in the raining season a copious volume of muddy water to the sea; but with the return of spring this full current dwindles down to a few stagnant pools, and the wady becomes entirely dry. The verdant bank of a stream naturally offered a convenient rest to the soldiers, who, through fatigue, were unable to continue the pursuit. But the torrent was probably full, and from the impetuosity of its swollen current difficult to be forded, so that 200 of the men, faint and exhausted with the previous forced and long-continued pursuit, declared their total inability to proceed

any farther, and sank down on the grass. This was a new trial to the faith of David, to pursue the enemy with the diminution of his little army by one-third. But as the occasion demanded energy and despatch, he determined to advance as rapidly as possible with his reduced forces, relying on the encouraging oracle of the Lord.

11. they found an Egyptian . . . 12. he had eaten no bread, nor drunk any water, three days and three nights. According to the Oriental mode of reckoning, three consecutive parts of days were counted three days (Jon. i. 17; Matt. xii. 40; xxvii. 63; Mark viii. 31). Old and home-born slaves are usually treated with great kindness. But a purchased or captured slave must look to himself; for, if feeble or sick, his master will leave him to perish rather than encumber himself with any additional burden. This Egyptian seems to have recently fallen into the hands of an Amalekite; and his master having belonged to the marauding party that had made the attack on Ziklag, he could give useful information as to the course taken by them on their return. 14. the Cherethites—i. e., the Philistines (Ezek. xxv. 16; Zeph. ii. 5). 15. David said . . . Canst thou bring me down to this company? The Hebrews were led, from the physical conformation of Palestine, to regard the north as higher, and the south as lower. Thus David was brought down to the country of the Amalekites which lay south from Israel. Swear unto me by God. Whether there was still amongst these idolatrous tribes a lingering belief in one God, or this Egyptian wished to hind David by the God whom the Hebrews worshipped, the solemn sanction of an oath was mutually recognized.

16 And when he had brought him down, behold, *they were spread abroad* upon all the earth, ¹eating and drinking, and dancing, because of all the great spoil that they had taken out of the land of the Philistines, and out of the land of Judah. And David ²smote them from the twilight even unto the evening of ³the next day: and there escaped not a man of them, 18 save four hundred young men, which rode upon camels, and fled. And David ⁴recovered all that the Amalekites had carried away; and David rescued his two wives. And there was nothing lacking to them, neither small nor great, neither sons nor daughters, neither spoil, nor any *thing* that they had taken to them: David recovered all. And David took all the flocks and the herds, *which* they drave before those *other* cattle, and said, *This is David's spoil.*

21 And David came to the two hundred men, which were so faint that they could not follow David, whom they had made also to abide at the brook Besor: and they went forth to meet David, and to meet the people that *were* with him: and when David came near to the people, he ⁵saluted them. Then answered all the wicked men and *men* ⁶of Belial, of ⁷those that went with David, and said, Because they went not with us, we will not give them *ought* of the spoil that we have recovered, save to every man his wife and his children, that they may lead *them* away, and depart.

23 Then said David, Ye shall not do so, my brethren, with that which the LORD hath given us, who hath preserved us, and delivered the company that came against us into our hand. For who will hearken unto you in this matter? but ⁸as his part *is* that goeth down to the battle, so *shall* his part *be* that tarrieth by the stuff: they shall part alike. And it was so from that day ⁹forward, that he made it a statute and an ordinance for Israel unto this day.

26 And when David came to Ziklag, he sent of the spoil unto the elders of Judah, *even* to his friends, saying, Behold a ¹⁰present for you of the spoil of the enemies of the LORD; to *them* which *were* in ¹¹Beth-el, and to *them* which *were* in ¹²south Ramoth, and to *them* which *were* in ¹³Jattir, and to *them* which *were* in ¹⁴Aroer, and to *them* which *were* in Siphmoth, and to *them* which *were* in ¹⁵Eshtemoa, and to *them* which *were* in Rachal, and to *them* which *were* in the cities of ¹⁶the Jerahmeelites, and to *them* which

B. C. '06.
¹ Ex. 32. 6.
 17, 19.
 Dan. 5. 1-4.
 50.
 Luke 12. 19.
 20.
 Luke 17. 27-
 29.
 Luke 21. 3.
 1 Thes. 5. 3.
 Rev. 11. 10.
 13.
² Job 20. 5.
³ their
 morrow.
⁴ Gen. 14. 16.
 Ps. 34. 9.
⁵ Or, aske I
 them how
 they did.
 Judg. 14. 15.
⁶ Deut. 13. 13.
 Judg. 19. 23.
 ch. 22. 2.
 ch. 25. 17.
 25.
 1 Ki. 21. 10.
 13.
⁷ men.
⁸ Num. 31. 27.
 Jo-h. 22. 8.
⁹ and
 forward.
¹⁰ blessing.
 Gen. 13. 11.
 ch. 25. 27.
 Gen. 12. 8.
 Judg. 1. 2.
 23.
¹¹ Josh. 19. 8.
¹² Josh. 15. 43.
¹³ Josh. 11. 16.
¹⁴ Jo-h. 13. 0.
¹⁵ z ch. 27. 10.

16-31.—AND RECOVERS HIS TWO WIVES, AND ALL THE SPOIL.

16. they were spread abroad upon all the earth. Believing that David and all his men of war were far away, engaged with the Philistine expedition, they deemed themselves perfectly secure, and abandoned themselves to all manner of barbaric revelry [דָּנְסוּ, dancing in circles]. The promise made in answer to the devout enquiries of David (v. 8) was fulfilled. The marauders were surprised and panic-stricken. A great slaughter ensued. 17. there escaped not a man of them, save four hundred young men, which rode upon camels, and fled—rather dromedaries (see a story exactly parallel, *Robinson's 'Biblical Researches,'* ii., p. 584). The people as well as the booty taken from Ziklag was recovered, and, besides, a great amount of spoil which they had collected in a wide freebooting excursion.

21. David came to the two hundred men, which were so faint, &c. This unexpected accession of spoil was nearly proving an occasion of quarrel, through the selfish cupidity of some of his followers, and serious consequences might have ensued had they not been prevented by the prudence of the leader, who enacted as a standing ordinance the equitable rule that all the soldiers should share alike (see on Num. xxxi. 11, 27).

26. when David came to Ziklag, he sent of the spoil unto the elders of Judah—*i. e.*, as appears from the following list of the places, in the south and east of Judah. This was intended as an acknowledgment to the leading men in those towns and villages of Judah which had ministered to his necessities in the course of his various wanderings. It was the dictate of an amiable and grateful heart; and the effect of this well-timed liberality was to bring a large accession of numbers to his camp (1 Chr. xii. 22). The enumeration of these places shows what a numerous and influential party of adherents to his cause he could count within his own tribe. 27. To *them* which *were* in Beth-el—called sometimes Bethul, and Chésil; a town in the southern part of Judah (see on Josh. xii. 16; xv. 30; xix. 4: cf. 1 Chr. v. 29, 30). south Ramoth. Four MSS. of acknowledged authority read Ramoth-negeb (see on Josh. xi. 8), a fortified town situated on a low ridge (*Robinson's 'Biblical Researches,'* ii., p. 615; *Wilson's 'Lands of the Bible,'* i., p. 342; *Lord Lindsay's 'Letters,'* ii., p. 47; *Van de Velde, ii.*, p. 130). Jattir—a town in the highlands of Judah (see on Josh. xv. 48). 28. Aroer—the modern 'Ar'ar'ah, situated somewhere in Wady 'Ar'ar'ah, which was not far from Beer-sheba. Siphmoth—not identified. Eshtemoa—now Sem'a (see on Josh. xv. 50; xxi. 14). 29. Rachal—not identified. the cities of the Jerahmeelites—(see on ch. xxvii.

- 30 were in the cities of the ³Kenites, and to them which were in ²Hormah, and to them which were in Chor-ashan, and to them which were in Athach,
- 31 and to them which were in ^aHebron, and to all the places where David himself and his men were wont to haunt.
- 31 NOW ^athe Philistines fought against Israel: and the men of Israel fled from before the Philistines, and fell down ¹slain in mount ^bGilboa.
- 2 And the Philistines followed hard upon Saul and upon his sons; and the Philistines slew ^cJonathan, and Abinadab, and Melchi-shua, Saul's sons.
- 3 And ^dthe battle went sore against Saul, and the ²archers ³hit him; and
- 4 he was sore wounded of the archers. Then ^esaid Saul unto his armour-bearer, Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith; lest ^fthese uncircumcised come and thrust me through, and ⁴abuse me. But his armour-bearer would not; for he was sore afraid. Therefore Saul took a
- 5 sword, and ^gfell upon it. And when his armour-bearer saw that Saul
- 6 was dead, he fell likewise upon his sword, and died with him. So Saul ^hdied, and his three sons, and his armour-bearer, and all his men, that same day together.
- 7 And when the men of Israel that were on the other side of the valley, and they that were on the other side Jordan, saw that the men of Israel fled, and that Saul and his sons were dead, they forsook the cities, and fled; and the Philistines came and dwelt in them.
- 8 And it came to pass on the morrow, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his three sons fallen in mount Gilboa.
- 9 And they cut off his head, and stripped off his armour, and sent into the

B C. 10. 6.

^y Judg. 1. 16.^z Judg. 1. 17.^a Josh. 14. 13.

2 Sam. 2. 1.

CHAP. 31.

^a ch. 28. 1.

15.

ch. 29. 1.

1 Chr. 10. 1.

1 Or.

wounded.

^b ch. 28. 4.^c 1 Chr. 9. 33.^d 2 Sam. 1. 6.^e shooters,

men with

bows.

^f found

him.

^g Judg. 9. 54.^h ch. 14. 6.ⁱ Or. mock

me.

^j 2 Sam. 1. 10.^k ch. 12. 17.

25.

1 Chr. 10. 6.

Hos. 13. 10.

11.

Rom. 6. 23.

10.) Kenites—(see on ch. xxvii. 10.) 30. Hormah—or Zephath (see on ch. xv. 30). Chor-ashan—not identified. Athach—unknown. 31. Hebron—(see on Gen. xiii. 18; xiv. 15; xxiii. 19; Josh. xxi. 11.)

CHAP. XXXI. 1-7.—SAUL, HAVING LOST HIS ARMY AT GILBOA, AND HIS SONS BEING SLAIN, HE AND HIS ARMOUR-BEARER KILL THEMSELVES.

1. Now the Philistines fought against Israel—in a regular engagement, in which the two armies met (ch. xxviii. 1-4). The battle probably began upon the great plain, the south-eastern extremity of which is bisected by the low range of mount Gilboa; but in the course of the conflict the scene was shifted to the hill. The fortune of the day was decided by the great superiority of the Philistines in one species of military weapons, which could be used at a distance, viz., archery; for although incidental notices in the sacred history prove the Hebrews were familiar with the bow from a very early period, it does not appear to have been hitherto used as a regular part of their offensive armour in war. In this memorable contest the Israelites were forced to give way, being annoyed by the arrows of the enemy, which, destroying them at a distance, before they came to close combat, threw them into panic and disorder. Taking advantage of the heights of mount Gilboa, they attempted to rally, but in vain. Saul and his men, though hotly pursued, fought like heroes; but the onset of the Philistines being at length mainly directed against the quarter where the king and his body-guard were maintaining the combat, Jonathan and his two brothers, Abinadab or Ishui (ch. xiv. 49), and Melchi-shua, overpowered by numbers, were killed on the spot. 3. The battle went sore against Saul . . . and he was sore wounded of the archers. [The Septuagint has εἰς τὰ ὑστρούθρια, in the bowels.] He seems to have bravely maintained his ground for some time longer, but exhausted with fatigue and loss of blood, and dreading that if he fell alive into the enemy's

hands they would insolently maltreat him (Josh. viii. 29; x. 24; Judg. viii. 21), he requested his armour-bearer to despatch him, which, however, that officer refused to do. Saul then, falling on the point of his sword, killed himself, and the armour-bearer, who, according to Jewish writers, was Doeg, following the example of his master, put an end to his life also. 6. So Saul died, and his three sons. Thus ended the troubled reign of Saul, who was elected to be the first king of Israel by a wisdom superior to human (2 Sam. xxi. 6); and in the wayward exercise of his untheocratic government he fulfilled the special purposes of his appointment (Hos. xiii. 11). The influence of a directing Providence is evidently to be traced in permitting the death of Saul's three eldest and most energetic sons, particularly that of Jonathan, for whom, had he survived his father, a strong party would undoubtedly have risen, and thus obstructed the path of David to the throne. and all his men, that same day together—i. e., his servants or body-guard (1 Chr. x. 6).

7. the men of Israel that were on the other side of the valley—probably the valley of Jezreel, the largest and most southern of the valleys that run between little Hermon and the ridges of the Gilboa range direct into the Jordan valley. It was very natural for the people in the towns and villages there to take fright and flee; for had they waited the arrival of the victors, they must, according to the war usages of the time, have been deprived either of their liberty or their lives.

8-10.—THE PHILISTINES TRIUMPH OVER THEIR DEAD BODIES.

8. on the morrow, when the Philistines came to strip the slain. On discovering the corpses of the slaughtered princes on the battle-field, the enemy reserved them for special indignities. They deposited the armour of the king and his sons as votive offerings in the temple [בית אשתרות, in the house of Ashtaroth (Astarte): see on Gen. xiv. 5; Judg. ii. 13], and fastened their mutilated

land of the Philistines round about, to 'publish *it in* the house of their
10 idols, and among the people. And ^jthey put his armour in the house of
^kAshtaroth; and they fastened his body to the wall of 'Beth-shan.

11 And when the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead heard ⁵of that which the
12 Philistines had done to Saul, all the valiant men arose, and went all
13 night, and took the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons from the
wall of Beth-shan, and came to Jabesh, and ^mburnt them there. And
they took their bones, and buried *them* under a tree at Jabesh, and fasted
seven days.

B. C. 1056.

f 2 Sam. 1. 20.

g ch. 21. 9.

h Judg 2 13.

i Josh. 17. 11.

j Judg. 1. 27.

k Or, concern-

ing him.

l 2 Chr. 16. 14.

m Jer. 31. 5.

bodies on the wall of Beth-shan (Scythopolis). This fortified town, situated at about five or six miles' distance from the battle-field, on a truncated hill, was the principal city of the district in the possession of the Philistines, and overlooking the Jordan valley. On the wall ("street," 2 Sam. xxi. 12, which led to the wall) of the acropolis they suspend the royal corpses, gibbeting them as a ghastly spectacle, visible on this conspicuous eminence from a great distance on either side of the river, and a lasting memorial of Israel's ignominious defeat and subjugation. The royal heads, as we learn, 1 Chr. x. 10, were fixed in the temple of Dagon. Thus the trophies of their great victory were divided amongst their several deities.

11, 12.—THE MEN OF JABESH-GILEAD RECOVER THE BODIES, AND BURY THEM AT JABESH.

11. when the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead heard of that which the Philistines had done. This city was situated nearly opposite Beth-shan, on the other side of Jordan; and its people, mindful of the important services which Saul had rendered them, gratefully and heroically resolved not to suffer such indignities to be inflicted on the royal family. 'They deemed it,' says *Josephus* ('Antiquities,' b. vi. ch. xiv., sec. 8), 'so horrid a thing to overlook this barbarity, and to suffer them to be without funeral rites, that the most

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courageous and hardy amongst them (and indeed that city had in it men that were very stout both in body and mind), formed the benevolent design of rescuing the mangled corpses of Saul and his sons from dishonourable exposure.' 12. and went all night. Considering that Beth-shan is about three hours' distance, and by a narrow upland passage, to the west of the Jordan, the whole being a journey of about twelve miles, they must have made all expedition to travel thither, to carry off the headless bodies, and return to their own side of the Jordan in the course of a single night. But loyal and devoted hearts prompted them to brave all danger; and having surprised the guard at Beth-shan, they succeeded in effecting their generous purpose. burnt them. This was not a Hebrew custom. It was probably resorted to on this occasion to prevent all risk of the Beth-shanites coming to disinter the royal remains for further insult. 13. and buried them under a tree at Jabesh. [תחת תמר, under the tamarisk: cf. 1 Chr. x. 12, where the word used is תמר, a terebinth; any strong tree. The Septuagint has ὑπὸ τὴν ἄρουραν ἐν 'Ιαβίς, under the soil, ground, at Jabesh.] 'Thus do the circumstances of the Biblical narrative consist, not merely with the relative position of the places, but with the natural peculiarities of the spot' (*T'rail's* 'Josephus').

THE
SECOND BOOK OF SAMUEL.

OTHERWISE CALLED,
THE SECOND BOOK OF THE KINGS.

1 **N**OW it came to pass after the death of Saul, when David was returned from the ^aslaughter of the Amalekites, and David had abode two days in Ziklag; it came even to pass on the third day, that, behold, ^ba man came out of the camp from Saul, ^cwith his clothes rent, and earth upon his head: and *so* it was, when he came to David, that he fell to the earth, and did obeisance. And David said unto him, From whence comest thou? And he said unto him, Out of the camp of Israel am I escaped. And David said unto him, ¹How went the matter? I pray thee, tell me. And he answered, That the people are fled from the battle, and many of the people also are fallen and dead; and Saul and Jonathan his son are dead also.

5 And David said unto the young man that told him, How knowest thou that Saul and Jonathan his son be dead? And the young man that told him said, ²As I happened by chance upon ^amount Gilboa, behold, ^cSaul leaned upon his spear; and, lo, the chariots and horsemen followed hard after him. And when he looked behind him, he saw me, and called unto me: and I answered, ³Here *am* I. And he said unto me, Who *art* thou? And I answered him, I *am* an Amalekite. He said unto me again, Stand, I pray thee, upon me, and slay me; for

10 ⁴anguish is come upon me, because my life *is* yet whole in me. So I stood upon him, and ^dslew him, because I was sure that he could not live after that he was fallen: and I took the crown that *was* upon his head, and the bracelet that *was* on his arm, and have brought them hither unto my lord.

11 Then David took hold on his clothes, and ^erent them; and likewise

12 all the men that *were* with him. And they mourned and wept, and fasted until even, for Saul, and for Jonathan his son, and for the people of the LORD, and for the house of Israel; because they were fallen by the sword.

13 And David said unto the young man that told him, Whence *art* thou?

14 And he answered, I *am* the son of a stranger, an Amalekite. And David said unto him, ^hHow wast thou not afraid to stretch forth thine hand to destroy the LORD's anointed? And ⁱDavid called one of the young

B. C. 1056.
CHAP. I.
" 1 Sam. 50.
17, 26.
1 Ki. 20, 29, 30.
^b ch. 4, 10.
^c Gen. 37, 29, 34.
Gen. 44, 13.
Num. 14, 6.
Josh. 7, 6.
Judg. 11, 35.
1 Sam. 4, 12.
¹ What was, e'c
1 Sam. 4, 16.
² Meeting, I met.
^d 1 Sam. 51, 1.
1 Chr. 10, 1, 3.
^e 1 Sam. 31, 2-4.
³ Behold me.
⁴ Or, my coat of mail, or, my embroidered coat hindereth me, that my, etc.
^f Judg. 9, 51.
^g ch. 3, 31.
ch. 13, 31.
2 Chr. 31, 27.
Ezra 9, 3.
^h Num. 12, 8.
1 Sam. 24, 6.
ⁱ ch. 4, 10.
1 Ki. 2, 25, 34, 46.

CHAP. I. 1-16.—AN AMALEKITE BRINGS TIDINGS OF SAUL'S DEATH.

1. David had abode two days in Ziklag. Though greatly reduced by the Amalekite incendiaries, that town was not so completely sacked and destroyed, but David and his 600 followers, with their families, could still find some accommodation. 2. a man came out of the camp from Saul. As the narrative of Saul's death, given in the last chapter, is inspired, it must be considered the true account, and the Amalekite's story a fiction of his own, invented to ingratiate himself with David, the presumptive successor to the throne. David's question, "How went the matter?" evinces the deep interest he took in the war—an interest that sprang from feelings of high and generous patriotism, not from views of ambition. The Amalekite, however, judging him to be ac-

tuated by a selfish principle, fabricated a story improbable and inconsistent, which he thought would procure him a reward. Having probably witnessed the suicidal act of Saul, he thought of turning it to his own account, and suffered the penalty of his grievously-mistaken calculation (cf. v. 9 with 1 Sam. xxxi. 4, 5).

10. the crown—a small metallic cap or wreath, which encircled the temples, serving the purpose of a helmet, with a very small horn projecting in front, as the emblem of power. the bracelet that was on his arm—the armet worn above the elbow, an ancient mark of royal dignity. It is still worn by kings in some Eastern countries.

13. Whence art thou? The man had at the outset stated who he was. But the question was now formally and judicially put. 14. How wast thou not afraid to stretch forth thine hand to

- men, and said, Go near, and fall upon him. And he smote him that he died. And David said unto him, Thy blood be upon thy head; for thy mouth hath testified against thee, saying, I have slain the LORD's anointed.
- 17 And David lamented with this lamentation over Saul and over Jonathan his son: (also he bade them teach the children of Judah the use of the bow: behold, it is written in the book of Jasher.)
- 18 The beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places: How are the mighty fallen!
- 19 Tell it not in Gath,—publish it not in the streets of Askelon; Lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, Lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph.
- 20 Ye mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew, Neither let there be rain upon you, nor fields of offerings: For there the shield of the mighty is vilely cast away, The shield of Saul, as though he had not been anointed with oil.
- 21 From the blood of the slain,—from the fat of the mighty,

B. C. 1056.

1 Sam. 21. 9.
1 Ki. 2. 32.
Eze. 18. 13.
Matt. 27. 25.
Acts 20. 26.
Luke 19. 22.
Rom. 3. 19.
5 Or, the ode of the bow.
6 Josh 10 13.
6 Or, of the upright.
7 Judg 16. 23.
Mic 1. 10
8 Ex. 15. 10
Judg 11. 34.
9 1 Sam. 31. 4.
10 Judg 5. 2. 1.
Job 1. 3. 4.
Jer. 20. 14.
11 1 Sam 10. 1.

destroy the Lord's anointed? This phrase, "the Lord's anointed," was so much used by David, and perhaps his men also, that the neighbouring nations came to use it as a title of the Hebrew monarch. 16. David said . . . Thy blood [דָּמָךְ, thy bloods]—i. e., blood-guiltiness. The punishment inflicted on the Amalekite may seem too severe, but the respect paid to kings in the West must not be regarded as the standard for that which the East may think due to royal station. David's reverence for Saul, as the Lord's anointed, was in his mind a principle on which he had faithfully acted on several occasions of great temptation. In present circumstances it was especially important that his principle should be publicly known; and to free himself from the imputation of being in any way accessory to the execrable crime of regicide, was the part of a righteous judge, no less than of a good politician.

17-27.—DAVID LAMENTS SAUL AND JONATHAN. 17. David lamented with this lamentation. It has always been customary for Eastern people, on the death of great kings and warriors, to celebrate their qualities and deeds in funeral songs. This inimitable pathetic elegy, of which *J. Olshausen* ('Die Psalter, Einleitung,' p. 8) says, from internal evidence, it was David's—for no other poet than he could be the author—is supposed by many writers to have become a national war song, and to have been taught to the young Israelites under the name of 'The Bow,' in conformity with the practice of Hebrew and many classical writers in giving titles to their songs from the principal theme (Ps. xxii., lvi., xlv., lx., lxxx., c.). Although the words "use of" are a supplement by our translators, they may be rightly introduced; for the natural sense of this parenthetical verse is, that David took immediate measures for instructing the people in the knowledge and practice of archery, their great inferiority to the enemy in this military arm having been the main cause of the late national disaster. But the former is most probably the right view, since it is added, "behold, it is written in the book of Jasher"—i. e., embodied in the Hebrew anthology, or book of popular national songs (see on Josh. x. 13).

19. The beauty of Israel—*lit.*, the gazelle or antelope of Israel (cf. ch. ii. 18; 1 Chr. xii. 8; Song ii. 7; iii. 5). In Eastern countries that animal is the chosen type of beauty and symmetrical elegance of form. how are the mighty fallen! This forms the chorus.

20. Tell it not in Gath, &c. In David's time Gath was one of the principal towns in the Philistine territory, ranking, in point of population, prosperity, and strength, with Askelon. In the age of Micah it had fallen into obscurity and insignificance, if it existed at all. Yet the poetical apostrophe of David, which had become proverbial, was still used by the Hebrews, as it often is by ourselves, although its original application has ceased. lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph—(see on 1 Sam. xviii. 25, where the discrepancy between the language of Scripture and the statement of *Herodotus*, b. ii., 104, as to the early practice of circumcision, is shown to be easily reconcilable.)

21. Ye mountains of Gilboa [גִּלְבּוֹאֵי הַרְיָהוּ]. Gilboa is called a mountain, 1 Sam. xxxi. 8, but here is described, in the plural, as a chain or ridge of low-lying hills. let there be no dew, neither . . . rain. To be deprived of the genial atmospheric influences which, on those anciently cultivated hills, seem to have reared plenty of first-fruits in the corn harvests, was specified as the greatest calamity the lacerated feelings of the poet could imagine. The curse seems still to lie upon them, for the mountains of Gilboa are naked and sterile. the shield of the mighty is vilely cast away. To cast away the shield was counted a national disgrace. Yet, on that fatal battle of Gilboa, many of the Jewish soldiers who had displayed unflinching valour in former battles, forgetful of their own reputation and their country's honour, threw away their shields and fled from the field. This dishonourable and cowardly conduct is alluded to with exquisitely touching pathos. the shield of Saul, as though he had not been anointed with oil. This supplement in our translation is improper. The clause should stand thus: 'the shield of Saul, not anointed (un-anointed) with oil,' which was besmeared or rubbed over it, to render the leather more tough and less penetrable (cf. Isa. xxi. 5). [The suggestion of *Dr. Delany* has been adopted by many—that for דָּבָר, not, the reading in the text should be אֵשֶׁת, weapons, 'the armour of him anointed with oil.']

22. From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty [בַּדָּמָם וּבַשְּׁמֵן]. Some think that this term was intended to describe the gigantic size of the Philistines; but as it is applied, *v.* 25, to Saul and Jonathan, it must be considered as expressive

- ⁷The bow of Jonathan turned not back,
And the sword of Saul returned not empty.
- 23 Saul and Jonathan *were* lovely and ⁷pleasant in their lives,
And in their death they were not divided:
They were swifter than eagles,—they were ⁶stronger than lions.
- 24 Ye daughters of Israel, weep over Saul,
Who clothed you in scarlet, with *other* delights;
Who put on ornaments of gold upon your apparel.
- 25 How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle!
O Jonathan, *thou wast* slain in thine high places.
- 26 I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan
Very pleasant hast thou been unto me:
⁴Thy love to me was wonderful,—passing the love of women.
- 27 How are the mighty fallen,—and the weapons of war perished
- 2** AND it came to pass after this, that David ^aenquired of the LORD,
saying, Shall I go up into any of the cities of Judah? And the LORD
said unto him, Go up. And David said, Whither shall I go up? And
2 he said, Unto ^bHebron. So David went up thither, and his two wives
also, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail, Nabal's wife, the Carmelite.
- 3 And ^chis men that *were* with him did David bring up, every man with
4 his household: and they dwelt in the ¹cities of Hebron. And ^dthe men
of Judah came, and there they anointed David king over the house of
Judah.
- And they told David, saying, *That* ^ethe men of Jabesh-gilead *were they*
5 that buried Saul. And David sent messengers unto the men of Jabesh-
gilead, and said unto them, Blessed ^fbe ye of the LORD, that ye have
showed this kindness unto your lord, *even* unto Saul, and have buried
6 him. And now ^gthe LORD show kindness and truth unto you: and ^hI
also will requite you this kindness, because ye have done this thing.

	E. C. 10 6.
⁷	1 Sam 14, 6.
	1 Sam. 18, 4.
⁷	Or, sweet.
	Isa. 34, 6.
	7.
⁶	Judg 11, 13.
^c	1 Sam. 18, 1-3.
	1 Sam. 23, 16.
	1 Sam 19 2.
	1 Sam 10.
	17.
	CHAP. 2.
^a	Num 27 21.
	Judg 1, 1.
	1 Sam. 23, 2, 4, 9.
	1 Sam 30, 7.
	8.
	ch 5, 19,
	23.
	Ps. 25, 4, 5.
	Ps 27, 4.
	Ps 113, 8.
^b	1 Sam. 30, 31.
	1 Ki. 2, 11.
^c	1 Sam 27, 2.
	1 That is, suburbs.
^d	ch. 5, 5.
^e	1 Sam. 31, 11.
^f	Ps 115, 15.
^g	2 Tim 1, 16.
^h	Matt. 5, 44.

of physical strength and courage, more than extraordinary stature.

24. *Ye daughters of Israel.* The reference is to the bauds of young women, belonging to the cities of Israel, who flocked in great numbers to meet the general and his victorious army on their return from a war, and celebrated his gallant deeds in jubilant strains, receiving as their rewards part of the spoil, in the form of gay dresses and various ornaments. *clothed you in scarlet, with other delights, &c.* The fondness for dress which anciently distinguished Oriental women is their characteristic still. It appears in their love of bright, gay, and divers colours, in profuse display of ornaments, and in various other forms. The inmost depths of the poet's feelings are stirred, and his amiable disposition appears in the strong desire to celebrate the good qualities of Saul as well as Jonathan. But the praises of the latter form the burden of the poem, which begins and ends with that excellent phrase.

CHAP. II. 1-7.—DAVID, BY GOD'S DIRECTION, GOES UP TO HEBRON, AND IS MADE KING OVER JUDAH.

1. *David enquired of the Lord*—by Urim (1 Sam. xxiii. 6, 9; xxx. 7, 8). He knew his destination, but he knew also that the providence of God would pave the way, and therefore would take no step in such a crisis of his own and the nation's history without asking and obtaining the Divine direction. He was told to go into Judah and fix his head-quarters in Hebron, whither he accordingly repaired with his family and two wives. (Polygamy was tolerated in Hebrew society, but interdicted to the king (Deut. xvii. 17); and David's adoption of that practice, by the establishment of

a harem, like Oriental princes, sowed the seeds of disorder and disunion in his household, which produced a rank harvest of bitter fruit in after-life.) There his interests were very powerful; for he was not only within his own tribe, and near chiefs with whom he had been long in friendly relations (see on 1 Sam. xxx. 26-31), but Hebron was the capital and centre of Judah, and one of the Levitical cities hallowed by patriarchal memories, as well as by its being the special inheritance of Caleb. Moreover, the inhabitants of Hebron were strongly attached to him, both from sympathy with his cause, ever since the massacre at Nob, and from the prospect of realizing in his person their promised pre-eminence among the tribes. The princes or elders, representatives of Judah, therefore, offered him the crown, to reign over their tribe, and it was accepted; so that forthwith he was "anointed king over the house of Judah," whether by the instrumentality of Abiathar, or of some other, as Samuel the prophet (1 Sam. x. i.), is not said. Psalm xxvii. refers to this period, if the title prefixed by the Septuagint [Πρό τοῦ χρισθῆναι, before the anointing—viz., at Hebron] be correct.

5. *David sent messengers unto the men of Jabesh-gilead.* There can be no doubt that this message of thanks for their bold and dangerous enterprise in rescuing the bodies of Saul and his sons was an expression of David's personal and genuine feeling of satisfaction. At the same time it was a stroke of sound and timely policy. In this view the announcement of his royal power in Judah, accompanied by the pledge of his protection to the men of Jabesh-gilead, should they be exposed to danger for their adventure at Beth-

- 7 Therefore now let your hands be strengthened, and ²be ye valiant: for your master Saul is dead, and also the house of Judah have anointed me king over them.
- 8 But ¹Abner the son of Ner, captain of ³Saul's host, took ⁴Ish-bosheth the son of Saul, and brought him over to ⁵Mahanaim; and he made him king over Gilead, and over the Ashurites, and over Jezreel, and over Ephraim, and over Benjamin, and over all Israel. Ish-bosheth, Saul's son, was forty years old when he began to reign over Israel, and reigned 11 two years. But the house of Judah followed David. And the ⁵time that David was king in Hebron over the house of Judah was seven years and six months.
- 12 And Abner the son of Ner, and the servants of Ish-bosheth the son of Saul, went out from Mahanaim to ⁶Gibeon. And Joab the son of Zeruiah, and the servants of David, went out, and met ⁶together by ⁷the pool of Gibeon: and they sat down, the one on the one side of the pool, and the other on the other side of the pool. And Abner said to Joab, ⁸Let the young men now arise and play before us. And Joab said, Let ⁹them arise. Then there arose and went over by number twelve of Benjamin, which *pertained* to Ish-bosheth the son of Saul, and twelve 16 of the servants of David. And they caught every one his fellow by the

	B. C. 1015.
²	be ye the sons of valour.
¹	1 Sam. 14. 50.
	1 Sam. 17. 55.
³	the host which was Saul's
⁴	Esh-baal,
	1 Chr. 8. 33.
⁵	Gen. 32. 2. ch 17. 27.
⁵	number of days
⁶	Josh. 9. 3. Josh. 10. 12. Josh. 18. 25. Isa 23. 21.
⁶	them together
⁷	Jer. 41. 12.
⁸	Pro. 13. 10.
	Iro. 20. 3.

shan, would bear an important significance in all parts of the country, and hold out an assurance that he would render them the same timely and energetic succour that Saul had done at the beginning of his reign.

8-17.—ABNER MAKES ISH-BOSHETH KING OVER ISRAEL.

8. Abner the son of Ner, captain of Saul's host, took Ish-bosheth. Here was the establishment of a rival kingdom, which, however, would probably have had no existence but for Abner. "Ish-bosheth"—or Esh-baal (*i. e.*, man of Baal), 1 Chr. viii. 33; ix. 39. The Hebrews usually changed names ending with Baal into Bosheth (*shame*): cf. Judg. ix. 53 with ch. xi. 11. This prince, being not mentioned with the other sons of Saul (1 Sam. xiv. 40), was probably not born till his father had violated his duty as a theocratic king, and the Spirit of the Lord had departed from him. (1 Sam. xv.) Esh-baal was the proper name of this young son, while Ish-bosheth (man of shame) was a popular nickname, most probably applied to him, as *bosheth*, shame, abomination, is uniformly in the sacred writings, with reference to the idol after whom he was called (cf. Judg. vi. 32 with 2 Sam. ix. 21). The name of this son seems to warrant the inference that Saul became in his latter days an unhappy apostate to the worship of Baal (see on 1 Chr. viii. 34). "Abner" was first cousin of Saul, commander of the forces, and held in high respect throughout the country. Loyalty to the house of his late master was mixed up with opposition to David, and views of personal ambition in his originating this factious movement. He, too, was alive to the importance of securing the Eastern tribes; so, taking Ish-bosheth across the Jordan, he proclaimed him king at Mahanaim, a town on the north bank of the Jabbok, hallowed in patriarchal times by the Divine presence (Gen. xxxii. 2). There he rallied the tribes round the standard of the unfortunate son of Saul; and he judged rightly that the interests of the Saulide dynasty would be strongest in the region east of the Jordan, 9. over Gilead—used in a loose sense for the land beyond Jordan. Their declaration in favour of the only remnant of Saul's house was soon followed by the adherence of the other tribes of Israel. Ashurites—the tribe of Asher, in the extreme north. Jezreel—the extensive valley

bordering on the central tribes. over all Israel. David neither could nor would force matters, but was content to wait God's time, and studiously avoided any collision with the rival king till hostilities were threatened from that quarter. 10. Ish-bosheth. . . reigned two years. It was not till seven years and a half after Saul's death that the way was paved for David's elevation to the throne of Israel (*v. 11*). So that if Ish-bosheth had succeeded immediately on the death of his father, his reign in Israel must have been commensurate with that of David in Hebron. The statement, therefore, that 'Ish-bosheth reigned two years' must refer either to the time that elapsed after he was made king, before the war broke out between him and David, or to an interregnum of five years and a half in Israel, when, through the great influence of Abner, he was raised to the throne of his father, and had occupied it two years when he was cut off.

12. Abner . . . and the servants of Ish-bosheth . . . went out from Mahanaim to Gibeon. This town was near the confines of Judah; and as the force with which Abner encamped there seemed to have some aggressive design, David sent an army of observation, under the command of Joab, to watch his movements. 13. Joab the son of Zeruiah. She was one of David's sisters (1 Chr. ii. 16), and mentioned particularly, either from her own personal eminence or from her relationship to the king. The father of Joab was, according to *Josephus*, called Suri. *met together by the pool of Gibeon* (cf. Jer. xli. 12)—doubtless the reservoir still seen on the eastern slope of the hill (*Porter's 'Handbook,' p. 225; Robinson's 'Biblical Researches,' p. 135*). 14. Abner said to Joab, Let the young men now arise, and play before us. Some think that the proposal was only for an exhibition of a little tilting match, a skirmishing or mock fight, for diversion. [The Septuagint takes this view, for it has rendered the original word by *παίζεσθαι*, let them sport.] Accordingly others suppose that both parties being reluctant to commence a civil war, Abner proposed to leave the contest to the decision of twelve picked men on either side. This fight by championship, instead of terminating the matter, inflamed the fiercest passions of the two rival parties; a general engagement ensued, in which Abner

head, and thrust his sword in his fellow's side; so they fell down together: wherefore that place was called ⁷Helkath-hazzurim, which is in Gibeon.

17 And there was a very sore battle that day: ⁸and Abner was beaten, and the men of Israel, before the servants of David.

18 And there were ⁹three sons of Zeruiah there, Joab, and Abishai, and

19 Asahel: and Asahel was ¹⁰as light ¹¹of foot ¹²as a wild roe. And Asahel pursued after Abner; and in going he turned not to the right hand nor to the left ¹³from following Abner. Then Abner looked behind him,

20 and said, *Art thou Asahel?* And he answered, *I am.* And Abner said to him, *Turn thee aside to thy right hand or to thy left, and lay thee hold on one of the ¹⁴young men, and take thee his ¹⁵armour.* But Asahel

21 would not turn aside from following of him. And Abner said again to Asahel, *Turn thee aside from following me: wherefore should I smite thee to the ground? how then should I hold up my face to Joab thy brother?*

22 Howbeit he refused to turn aside: wherefore Abner with the hinder end of the spear smote him ¹⁶under the fifth rib, that the spear came out behind him; and he fell down there, and died in the same place: and it came to pass, *that* as many as came to the place where Asahel fell down

23 and died stood still. Joab also and Abishai pursued after Abner: and the sun went down when they were come to the hill of Ammah, that *lieth* before Giah by the way of the wilderness of ¹⁷Gibeon.

24 And the children of Benjamin gathered themselves together after

25 Abner, and became one troop, and stood on the top of an hill. Then Abner called to Joab, and said, *Shall the sword devour for ever? knowest thou not that it will be bitterness in the latter end? how long shall it be then ere thou bid the people return from following their ¹⁸brethren?*

26 And Joab said, *As God liveth, unless thou ¹⁹hadst spoken, surely then ²⁰in the morning the people had ²¹gone up every one from following his*

27 brother. So Joab blew a trumpet, and all the people stood still, and pursued after Israel no more, neither fought they any more.

28 And Abner and his men walked all that night through the plain, and passed over Jordan, and went through all ²²Bithron, and they came to

29 ²³Mahanaim. And Joab returned from following Abner: and when he had gathered all the people together, there lacked of David's servants

30 nineteen men and Asahel. But the servants of David had smitten of Benjamin, and of Abner's men, *so that* three hundred and threescore men

31 died. And they took up Asahel, and buried him in the sepulchre of his father, which *was in* Beth-lehem. And Joab and his men went all

32 night, and they came to Hebron at break of day.

B C. 1055.

⁷ That is, The field of storg men, or, of rocks.

⁸ 1 Ki. 20. 11.

⁹ 1 Chr. 2. 15, 16.

¹⁰ 1 Chr. 11. 26.

¹¹ 1 Chr. 12. 8.

¹² Ps 147. 1, 11.

¹³ Eccl. 9. 11.

¹⁴ of his feet.

¹⁵ as one of the roes

that are in the field.

¹⁶ Ps. 18. 33.

¹⁷ Song 2. 17.

¹⁸ Song 8. 14.

¹⁹ from after Abner.

²⁰ 1 Sam. 17. 42.

²¹ garment, or, spoil.

²² Judg 11. 19

²³ ch. 3. 27.

ch. 4. 6.

ch 20. 10.

²⁴ Josh. 9. 3.

²⁵ Josh. 10. 2.

²⁶ Job 18. 2.

²⁷ Job 19. 2.

²⁸ Ps. 4. 2.

²⁹ Jer. 4. 22.

³⁰ Acts 7. 26.

³¹ Pro. 17. 14.

³² Pro. 20. 18.

³³ Fro 25. 8.

³⁴ Luke 14. 31, 32.

³⁵ from the morning.

³⁶ Or, gone away.

³⁷ Song 2. 17.

³⁸ Gen. 32. 2.

³⁹ Josh. 21. 33.

ch. 17. 24.

and his forces were defeated and put to flight. 16. that place was called Helkath-hazzurim [הַלְקַתְּ הָאָזְרוּרִים, field of the swords].

19-22.—ASAHEL SLAIN.

19. Asahel pursued after Abner. To gain the general's armour was deemed the grandest trophy. Asahel, ambitious of securing Abner's, had outstripped all other pursuers, and was fast making on the retreating commander, who, conscious of possessing more physical power, and unwilling that there should be "blood" between himself and Joab, Asahel's brother, twice urged him to desist. The impetuous young soldier being deaf to the generous remonstrance, the veteran raised the pointed butt of his lance, as the modern Arabs do when pursued, and with a sudden back-thrust transfixed him on the spot, so that he fell, and lay weltering in his blood. But Joab and Abishai continued the pursuit by another route till sunset. On reaching a rising ground, and receiving a fresh reinforcement of some Benjaminites, Abner rallied

his scattered troops, and earnestly appealed to Joab's better feelings to stop the further effusion of bloodshed, which, if continued, would lead to more serious consequences—a destructive civil war. Joab, while upbraiding his opponent as the sole cause of the fray, felt the force of the appeal, and led off his men; while Abner, probably dreading a renewal of the attack when Joab should learn his brother's fate, and vow fierce revenge, endeavoured, by a forced march, to cross the Jordan that night. On David's side the loss was only 19 men, besides Asahel; but of Ish-bosheth's party there fell 360. This skirmish is exactly similar to the battles of the Homeric warriors, amongst whom, in the flight of one, the pursuit by another, and the dialogue held between them, there is vividly represented the style of ancient warfare. 23. under the fifth rib [תַּחַת הָרִיב, in the abdomen. The Septuagint has ἐπὶ τῆν ψόαν, in the groin]. 27. unless thou hadst spoken—i. e., had you not proposed a trial of strength by championship, there would have been no fighting at all.

- 3** NOW there was long ^awar between the house of Saul and the house of David: but David waxed stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul **2** waxed weaker and weaker. And ^bunto David were sons born in Hebron: **3** and his first-born was Amnon, of ^cAbinoam the Jezreelitess; and his second, ¹Chilcab, of Abigail the wife of Nabal the Carmelite; and the third, Absalom, the son of Maacah the daughter of Talmal, king ^dof Geshur; and the fourth, ^eAdonijah the son of Haggith; and the fifth, ⁵Shephatiah the son of Abital; and the sixth, Ithream, by Eglah, David's wife. These were born to David in Hebron.
- 6** And it came to pass, while there was war between the house of Saul and the house of David, that Abner ^fmade himself strong for the house of **7** Saul. And Saul had a concubine, whose name was ^gRizpah, the daughter of Aiah: and *Ish-bosheth* said to Abner, Wherefore hast thou ^hgone in **8** unto my father's concubine? Then was Abner very wroth for the words of Ish-bosheth, and said, *Am I ⁱa dog's head*, which against Judah do show kindness this day unto the house of Saul thy father, to his brethren, and to his friends, and have not delivered thee into the hand of David, **9** that thou chargest me to-day with a fault concerning this woman? So ^jdo God to Abner, and more also, except, ^kas the LORD hath sworn to **10** David, even so I do to him; to translate the kingdom from the house of Saul, and to set up the throne of David over Israel, and over Judah, **11** ^lfrom Dan even to Beer-sheba. And he could not answer Abner a word again, because he feared him.
- 12** And Abner sent messengers to David on his behalf, saying, Whose *is* the land? saying *also*, Make thy league with me, and, behold, my hand **13** *shall be* with thee, to bring about all Israel unto thee. And he said, Well; I will make a league with thee: but one thing I require of thee,

E. C. 1073.

CHAP. 3.

1^a Ps. 46 9.

Isa. 2. 4.

Mic 4. 3.

Matt. 10 37.

56.

Gal. 5. 17.

^b 1 Chr. 3. 1.^c 1 Sam. 23.

43.

¹ Or. Daniel.

1 Chr 3. 1.

^d 1 Sam. 27. 8.^e 1 Ki. 1. 5.^f Pro. 21. 0.^g ch. 21. 8, 10.^h ch. 12. 8.

ch. 16 21.

ⁱ Deut. 23. 13.

1 Sam. 21.

15.

ch. 9. 8.

ch. 15. 9.

^j Ruth 1. 17.

1 Ki. 19 2.

^k 1 Sam. 15.

28.

1 Sam 16. 1.

12.

1S am. 23.

17.

1 Chr. 12. 23.

^l Judg 10. 1.

ch. 17. 11.

1 Ki. 4 23.

CHAP. III. 1-5.—SIX SONS BORN TO DAVID.

1. there was long war between the house of Saul and the house of David. The rival parties had varying success; but David's interest steadily increased—less, however, by the fortunes of war than a growing adherence of the people to him as the divinely designated king. **2.** unto David were sons born in Hebron. The six sons mentioned had all different mothers. **3.** Chilcab (his father's picture)—called also Daniel (1 Chr. iii. 1). (The Jewish account of the origin of these names is given by *Bochart*, 'Hierozoicon,' ii., 55, p. 663.) Maacah, the daughter of Talmal, king of Geshur—a region in Syria, north of Israel. This marriage seems to have been a political match, made by David with a view to strengthen himself against Ish-bosheth's party, by the aid of a powerful friend and ally in the north. Piety was made to yield to policy, and the bitter fruits of this alliance with a heathen prince he reaped in the life of the turbulent Absalom. Absalom denotes 'father of peace,' or 'father's peace.' The name was a complete misnomer; for the bearer became the disturber of David's happiness and a rebel to his government. **5.** Eglah, David's wife. This addition has led many to think that Eglah was another name for Michal, the first and proper wife, who, though she had no family after her insolent ridicule of David (ch. vi. 23), might have had a child before. [The Septuagint calls her Αἰγάλα.]

6-21.—ABNER REVOLTS TO DAVID.

6. Abner made himself strong for the house of Saul (מְחַזְקֵם בְּיַד שָׁאֵל)—was aiding, vigorously upholding, the interests of Saul's dynasty [מָצַק, followed by מְ, signifies to help.] In the East the wives and concubines of a king are the property of his successor to this extent, that for a private

person to aspire to marry one of them would be considered a virtual advance of pretensions to the crown (see on 1 Ki. ii. 17). It is not clear whether the accusation against Abner was well or ill founded; but he resented the charge as an indignity. **8.** Am I a dog's head?—*i. e.*, a very dog; a proverbial form of expression, denoting a low, despicable character; and, impelled by revenge, determined to transfer all the weight of his influence to the opposite party. He evidently set a full value on his services, and seems to have lorded it over his weak nephew in a haughty, overbearing manner.

12. Abner sent messengers to David on his behalf [שָׁלַח]—instead of him. [The Septuagint renders the clause καὶ ἀπέστειλεν Ἀβνηρ ἀγγέλους πρὸς Δαυὶδ εἰς Θαλαμ, and Abner despatched messengers to Thailam, Telaim or Telem (see on 1 Sam. xv. 4).] But there is nothing in the present Hebrew text corresponding to the last two words; and though Telem was within the range of David's former marauding expeditions, he was now permanently settled in Hebron. Though Abner's language implied a secret conviction that, in supporting Ish-bosheth, he had been labouring to frustrate the Divine purpose of conferring the sovereignty of the kingdom on David, this acknowledgment was no justification either of the measure he was now adopting or of the motives that prompted it. Nor does it seem possible to uphold the full integrity and honour of David's conduct in entertaining his secret overtures for undermining Ish-bosheth, except we take into account the Divine promise of the kingdom, and his belief that the secession of Abner was a means designed by Providence for accomplishing it. The demand for the restoration of his wife Michal was perfectly fair; but David's insisting on it at that particular moment, as an indispensable condition of his

- ²that is, ^mThou shalt not see my face, except thou first bring ⁿMichal, Saul's daughter, when thou comest to see my face. And David sent messengers to Ish-bosheth, Saul's son, saying, Deliver *me* my wife Michal, which I espoused to me for ^oan hundred foreskins of the Philistines. And Ish-bosheth sent, and took her from *her* husband, *even* from ^pPhaltiel the son of Laish. And her husband went with her ³along weeping behind her to ²Bahurim. Then said Abner unto him, Go, return. And he returned.
- 17 And Abner had communication with the elders of Israel, saying, Ye sought for David ⁴in times past *to be* king over you: now then do *it*: for the LORD hath spoken of David, saying, By the hand of my servant David I will save my people Israel out of the hand of the Philistines, and out of the hand of all their enemies. And Abner also spake in the ears ^rof Benjamin: and Abner went also to speak in the ears of David in Hebron all that seemed good to Israel, and that seemed good to the whole house of Benjamin. So Abner came to David to Hebron, and twenty men with him: and David made Abner, and the men that *were* with him, a feast. And Abner said unto David, I will arise and go, and will gather all Israel unto my lord the king, that they may make a league with thee, and that thou mayest reign ^sover all that thine heart desireth. And David sent Abner away; and he went in peace.
- 22 And, behold, the servants of David and Joab came from *pursuing* a troop, and brought in a great spoil with them: but Abner *was* not with David in Hebron; for he had sent him away, and he was gone in peace.
- 23 When Joab and all the host that *was* with him were come, they told Joab, saying, Abner the son of Ner came to the king, and he hath sent him away, and he is gone in peace. Then Joab came to the king, and said, What hast thou done? behold, Abner came unto thee; why *is* it that thou hast sent him away, and he is ⁵quite gone? Thou knowest Abner the son of Ner, that he came to deceive thee, and to know thy ^tgoing out, and thy coming in, and to know all that thou doest.

B. C. 1018.
² saying
^m Gen. 43. 3.
 Gen. 44. 1, 3, 26.
ⁿ 1 Sam. 18. 20.
 1 Sam. 19. 11, 17.
^o 1 Sam. 18. 25, 27.
^p 1 Sam. 25. 44.
 Phalti.
³ going and weeping.
 1 Ro. 9. 17, 18.
 Fro. 20. 25.
⁴ ch. 19. 16.
⁵ both yesterday and the third day.
^r 1 Sam. 10. 20, 21.
 1 Chr. 12. 29.
 Ps. 68. 27.
^s Deut. 14. 26.
 1 Ki. 11. 37.
 Ps. 20. 4.
^t going, gone.
^u Gen. 42. 9, 12, 14.
 Num. 27. 17.
 Deut. 28. 6.
 1 Sam. 25. 6.
 ch. 10. 3.
 1's 121. 8.
 Isa. 3. 23.

entering into any treaty with Abner, seems to have proceeded, not so much from a lingering attachment to her, as from an expectation that his possession of that princess would incline some adherents of the house of Saul to be favourable to his cause.

17. Abner had communication with the elders of Israel. He spoke the truth in impressing their minds with the well-known fact of David's divine designation to the kingdom. But he acted a base and hypocritical part in pretending that his present movement was prompted by religious motives, when it sprang entirely from malice and revenge against Ish-bosheth. The particular appeal to the Benjamites was a necessary policy: their tribe enjoyed the honour of giving birth to the royal dynasty of Saul, and they would naturally be disinclined to lose that *prestige*. They were, besides, a determined people, whose contiguity to Judah might render them troublesome and dangerous. The enlistment of their interest, therefore, in the scheme would smooth the way for the adhesion of the other tribes; and Abner enjoyed the most convenient opportunity of using his great influence in gaining over that tribe while escorting Michal to David with a suitable equipage. The mission enabled him to cover his treacherous designs against his master—to draw the attention of the elders and people to David as uniting in himself the double recommendation of being the nominee of Jehovah, no less than a connection of the royal house of Saul, and, without suspicion of any dishonourable motive, to

advocate the policy of terminating the civil discord, by bestowing the sovereignty on the husband of Michal. In the same character of public ambassador he was received and *felted* by David; and while, ostensibly, the restoration of Michal was the sole object of his visit, he busily employed himself in making private overtures to David for bringing over to his cause those tribes which he had artfully seduced. Abner pursued a course unworthy of an honourable man; and though his offer was accepted by David, the guilt and infamy of the transaction were exclusively his.

22-30.—JOAB KILLS ABNER.

24. Joab came to the king. . . What hast thou done? Joab's knowledge of Abner's wily character might have led him to doubt the sincerity of that person's proposals, and to disapprove the policy of relying on his fidelity. But undoubtedly there were other reasons of a private and personal nature which made Joab displeased and alarmed by the reception given to Abner. The military talents of that general, his popularity with the army, his influence throughout the nation, rendered him a formidable rival; and in the event of his overtures being carried out, the important service of bringing over all the other tribes to the king of Judah would establish so strong a claim on the gratitude of David, that his accession would inevitably raise a serious obstacle to the ambition of Joab. To these considerations was added the remembrance of the blood feud that existed between them since the death of his brother Asahel (ch. ii. 23). Determined, there-

26 And when Joab was come out from David, he sent messengers after Abner, which brought him again from the well of Sirah: but David knew
 27 it not. And when Abner was returned to Hebron, Joab ^utook him aside in the gate, to speak with him ⁶quietly, and smote him there ^vunder the fifth rib, that he died, for the blood of ^wAsahel his brother.
 28 And afterward when David heard it, he said, I and my kingdom are guiltless before the LORD for ever from the ⁷blood of Abner the son of Ner: let ^xit rest on the head of Joab, and on all his father's house; and let there not ⁸fail from the house of Joab one ^ythat hath an issue, or that is a leper, or that leaneth on a staff, or that falleth on the sword, or that lacketh bread. So Joab and Abishai his brother slew Abner, because he had slain their brother ^zAsahel at Gibeon in the battle.
 31 And David said to Joab, and to all the people that *were* with him, ^aRend your clothes, and ^bgird you with sackcloth, and mourn before
 32 Abner. And king David *himself* followed the ⁹bier. And they buried Abner in Hebron: and the king lifted up his voice, and wept at ^cthe
 33 grave of Abner; and all the people wept. And the king lamented over Abner, and said,

Died Abner as a ^dfool dieth?

34 Thy hands *were* not bound,—nor thy feet put into fetters: As a man falleth before ¹⁰wicked men,—*so* fellest thou.

35 And all the people wept again over him. And when all the people came ^eto cause David to eat meat while it was yet day, David sware, saying, ^fSo do God to me, and more also, if I taste bread, or ought else,
 36 ^gtill the sun be down. And all the people took notice ^hof it, and it ¹¹pleased them: as whatsoever the king did pleased all the people.

37 For all the people, and all Israel, understood that day, that it was not
 38 of the king to slay Abner the son of Ner. And the king said unto his servants, Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this
 39 day in Israel? And I *am* this day ¹²weak, though anointed king; and these men the sons of Zeruiah ⁱbe too hard for me: ¹³the LORD shall reward the doer of evil according to his wickedness.

4 AND when Saul's son heard that Abner was dead in Hebron, his hands
 2 were feeble, and all the Israelites were troubled. And Saul's son had two men *that were* captains of bands: the name of the one *was* Baanah, and the name of the ¹other Rechab, the sons of Rimmon a Beerothite, of the

fore, to get Abner out of the way, Joab feigned some reason, probably in the king's name, for recalling him ^afrom the well of Sirah, probably Ayun Derwa, about three miles from Hebron, and going out to meet him, stabbed him unawares; not within Hebron, for it was a city of refuge, but at a noted well in the neighbourhood. The modern history of the East furnishes an instance of treacherous murder exactly parallel to this of Abner by Joab, in the assassination, by one of the Pashas, of Ali Pasha of Yanina, when engaged in conducting a secret negotiation for the advancement of a neighbouring prince (see *Dr. Walsley's 'Travels'*).

31. Rend your clothes, and gird you with sackcloth—an outer garment of coarse haircloth, worn by mourners. It was commonly nothing more than a large square piece of cloth wrapped round the person, and fastened at the waist by a girdle. David's sorrow was sincere and profound; and he took occasion to give it public expression by the funeral honours he appointed for Abner. ^{king David himself followed the bier}—a sort of wooden frame, partly resembling a coffin and partly a hand-barrow. 33. the king lamented over Abner. This brief elegy is an effusion of indignation as much as of sorrow. As Abner had stabbed Asahel in open war, Joab had not the right of

the Göl; and, besides, had adopted a lawless and execrable method of obtaining satisfaction (see on 1 Ki. ii. 5), not waiting for the legal formalities according to which only satisfaction could be obtained for the relatives of a slain person in the land of Israel. Died Abner as a fool dieth? [דָּבַחַת כְּחֵלֶבֶת]—as Nabal dieth, or as a felon dieth. This deed was an insult to the authority, as well as most damaging to the prospects of the king. But David's feelings and conduct on hearing of the death, together with the whole character and accompaniments of the funeral solemnity, tended not only to remove all suspicion of guilt from him, but even to turn the tide of popular opinion in his favour, and to pave the way for his reigning over all the tribes more honourably than by the treacherous negotiations of Abner, whose services, in consequence of his vile conduct, the Lord did in so important a transaction employ. In the neighbourhood of Hebron, at a spot now covered by the house of a Moslem inhabitant, is shown the traditional grave of Abner, who, according to the legend, belonged to the race of giants (*Van de Velle*, 'Syria and Palestine,' ii., p. 67).

CHAP. IV. 1-8.—BAANAH AND RECHAB SLAY ISH-BOSHETH, AND BRING HIS HEAD TO HEBRON.

B. C. 1048.

^u ch. 20. 9, 10.¹ Ki. 2. 5.⁶ Or, peaceably.^v ch. 4. 6.^w ch. 20. 10.^x ch. 2. 23.⁷ bloods.^z 1 Ki. 2. 32.

31.

Ps. 7. 11, 16.

⁸ be cut off^y Lev. 15. 2.^a ch. 2. 13.^b Josh. 7. 6.

ch. 1. 2, 11.

⁶ Gen. 37. 34.² Ki. 19. 1.⁹ bed.^c Job 31. 23.

29.

Pro. 24. 17.

Luke 19. 41.

42.

^d ch. 13. 12.

13.

¹⁰ children

of iniquity

^e ch. 12. 17.

Jer. 16. 7.

^f Ruth 1. 17.¹ Ki. 2. 23.^g ch. 1. 12.¹¹ was good

in their

eyes.

¹² tender.^h ch. 19. 7.ⁱ ch. 19. 13.¹ Ki. 2. 5, 6.

33, 34.

Ps. 28. 4.

Ps. 62. 12.

2 Tim. 4. 14.

CHAP. 4.

1 second.

- 3 children of Benjamin: (for ^aBeeroth also was reckoned to Benjamin: and the Beerothites fled to ^bGittaim, and were sojourners there until this day.)
- 4 And ^cJonathan, Saul's son, had a son *that was lame of his feet*. He was five years old when the tidings came of Saul and Jonathan ^dout of Jezreel, and his nurse took him up, and fled: and it came to pass, as she made haste to flee, that he fell, and became lame. And his name was ^eMephibosheth.
- 5 And the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, Rechab and Baanah, went, and came about the heat of the day to the house of Ish-bosheth, who lay
- 6 on a bed at noon. And they came thither into the midst of the house, ^fas though they would have fetched wheat; and they smote him ^gunder the fifth *rib*: and Rechab and Baanah his brother escaped. For when they came into the house, he lay on his bed in his bed-chamber, and they smote him, and slew him, and beheaded him, and took his head,
- 8 and ^hgave them away through the plain all night. And they brought the head of Ish-bosheth unto David to Hebron, and said to the king, Behold the head of Ish-bosheth the son of Saul thine enemy, ⁱwhich sought thy life; and the LORD hath avenged my lord the king this day of Saul, and of his seed.
- 9 And David answered Rechab and Baanah his brother, the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, and said unto them, As the LORD liveth, ^jwho hath redeemed my soul out of all adversity, when ^kone told me, saying, Behold, Saul is dead, ^lthinking to have brought good tidings, I took hold of him, and slew him in Ziklag, ^mwho thought that I would have
- 11 given him a reward for his tidings: how much more, when wicked men have slain a righteous person in his own house upon his bed? shall I not therefore now ⁿrequire his blood of your hand, and take you away from
- 12 the earth? And David commanded his young men, and they slew them, and cut off their hands and their feet, and hanged *them* up over the pool in Hebron: but they took the head of Ish-bosheth, and buried *it* in the ^osepulchre of Abner in Hebron.

B C. 1048.

^a Josh. 9. 17.
 Josh. 18. 25.
^b 1 Sam. 31. 7.
 Neh. 11. 33.
 ch. 9. 3.
^d 1 Sam. 29. 1.
^e Or, Merib-bial,
 1 Chr. 8. 34.
 1 r. 9. 40.
^f Judg 5. 25.
 Ps. 147. 14.
^g ch. 2. 23.
 ch. 3. 27.
 ch. 20. 10.
^h 1 Sam. 31. 9.
 Matt. 14. 11.
 Mark 6. 23.
 29.
ⁱ 1 Sam. 19. 2.
 1 Sam. 21.
 15.
 Matt. 20. 20.
^j Gen. 48. 16.
 1 Ki. 1. 29.
 Ps. 31. 7.
^k ch. 1. 2.
^l he was in his own eyes as a bringer, etc.
^m Or, which was the reward I gave him for his tidings.
ⁿ Gen. 9. 5, 6.
^o ch. 3. 32.

4. Jonathan, Saul's son, had a son that was lame of his feet. This is mentioned as a reason for his being considered, according to Oriental notions, unfit for exercising the duties of sovereignty.

5. Rechab and Baanah, went, and came about the heat of the day, &c. It is still a custom in the East to allow their soldiers a certain quantity of corn, together with some pay; and these two captains very naturally went to the palace the day before to fetch wheat, in order to distribute it to the soldiers, that it might be sent to the mill at the accustomed hour in the morning. 6. And they came thither into the midst of the house. [The Septuagint says, *καὶ ἰδοὺ ἡ θυρωρὸς τοῦ οἴκου ἐκάθαιρε πυρὸς καὶ εὐστάξε καὶ ἐκάθευθε*, and, behold, the porteress at the gate had been winnowing wheat; she became drowsy and fell asleep. *καὶ Ῥηχαβ καὶ Βαανὰ οἱ ἀδελφοὶ διέλαβον*, and the brothers Rechab and Baanah went through (got access into) the palace.] 7. when they came into the house, he lay on his bed. Rechab and Baanah came in the heat of the day, when they knew that Ish-bosheth, their master, would, according to custom, be resting on his divan; and as it was necessary, for the reason just given, to have the corn the day before it was needed, their coming at that time, though it might be a little earlier than usual, created no suspicion, and attracted no notice. They took advantage of these circumstances to execute an infamous plot they had formed against the life of their master; and having assassinated him while

reposing on his couch, they cut off his head, to be carried as a trophy to David in Hebron. *gave them away through the plain all night* [מְרַחֵק]

—i. e., the valley of the Jordan, through which their way lay from Mahanaim to Hebron. 8. Behold the head of Ish-bosheth. Such bloody trophies of rebels and conspirators have always been acceptable to princes in the East, and the carriers been liberally rewarded. Ish-bosheth being a usurper, the two assassins thought they were doing a meritorious service to David by removing the only existing obstacle to the union of the two kingdoms.

10-12.—DAVID CAUSES THEM TO BE PUT TO DEATH.

12. slew them, and cut off their hands and their feet. The cutting off the hands and feet of criminals convicted of treason was an ancient custom in the East, and is still continued. and hanged them up over the pool in Hebron. Outside the town of Hebron is a pool of good water, which, being below the level of the adjoining ground, is accessible by flights of steps at each corner; and there is another reservoir at a little distance, both of which are very ancient. One or other of these must certainly be the pool referred to. The exposure of the mutilated relics of the two assassins at the pool was owing to its being a place of public resort. The exposure of the mutilated remains were intended as not only a punishment of their crime, but also the attestation of David's abhorrence. *took the head of Ish-bosheth, and buried it in the sepulchre of*

- 5 THEN ^a came all the tribes of Israel to David unto Hebron, and spake,
 2 saying, Behold, ^b we are thy bone and thy flesh. Also in time past, when
 Saul was king over us, ^c thou wast he that leddest out and broughtest in
 Israel: and the LORD said to thee, ^d Thou shalt feed my people Israel, and
 3 thou shalt be a captain over Israel. So ^e all the elders of Israel came to
 the king to Hebron; ^f and king David made a league with them in Hebron
 4 ^g before the LORD: and they anointed David king over Israel. David was
 thirty years old when he began to reign; ^h and he reigned forty years.
 5 In Hebron he reigned over Judah ⁱ seven years and six months; and in
 Jerusalem he reigned thirty and three years over all Israel and Judah.

B. C. 1018.
CHAP. 5.
^a 1 Chr 12. 23.
^b Gen 29. 14.
^c 1 Sam. 18.
13.
^d 1 Sam. 16. 1.
ch 7. 7.
^e 1 Chr 11. 3.
^f 2 Ki. 11. 17.
^g Judg. 11. 11.
^h 1 Chr. 23. 31.
ⁱ 1 Chr. 3. 4.

Abner in Hebron. This sepulchre is still shown at a spot a few yards from the mosque (see on ch. iii. 39).

CHAP. V. 1-5.—THE TRIBES ANOINT DAVID KING OVER ISRAEL.

1. Then came all the tribes of Israel—a combined deputation of the leading authorities in every tribe. David possessed the first and indispensable qualification for the throne—viz., that of being an Israelite (Deut. xvii. 15). Of his military talent he had furnished ample proof; and the people's desire for his assumption of the government of Israel was further increased by their knowledge of the will and purpose of God, as declared by Samuel (1 Sam. xvi. 11-13). Indeed, there is something very remarkable in the elevation of David to the throne of all Israel. It was in the fulfilment of God's decree; but it was brought about in a most natural way through the representatives of the people, who spontaneously elected him. Consider, too, the preparatory discipline by which Providence had educated him for this influential position in the kingdom of Israel and the Church. Raised from the humble condition of a shepherd, familiar by experience with every variety of feeling and every phase of life, he was qualified above all his contemporaries for the high and onerous office of ruler over men. Behold, we are thy bone and thy flesh. The deputies introduced the subject of their embassy in a somewhat singular, though, in the circumstances, not unnatural, manner. Their language points to the past course both of David's conduct and of their own experience. The alliance of David with the Philistines had raised so painful a suspicion respecting his patriotic attachment to Israel, and his protracted residence within the Philistine territory had led to so wide-spread a belief that he had become a naturalized Philistine, as to have created powerful obstacles to the universal recognition of his claims to the throne. The people of Israel had to a large extent taken up this impression, and acted in opposition to him as a supposed alien. But time, as well as the tenor of David's administration in Judah, had dispelled their doubts, and proved him to their satisfaction to be in heart and soul an Israelite; so that they (the representatives of the people) had come to offer him the kingdom, conformably to that statute of the divine law (Deut. xvii. 15) which required that "one from among their brethren" should be set up king over them. 2. Also in time past, when Saul was king over us, thou wast he that leddest out and broughtest in Israel—i. e., thou wast chief commander in the military expeditions against the Philistines, and proved thyself, by thy brilliant successes, to be well qualified to undertake the government and defence of the kingdom. and the Lord said to thee (see on 1 Sam. xvi. 11-13, where the Divine appointment of David to the throne is recorded), Thou shalt feed my people Israel [תִּזְנוֹן]—Thou

shalt shepherd, i. e., rule, them. [Septuagint, ποιμαίνεις.] and thou shalt be a captain over Israel [לְמַדְרֵיךָ לְיִשְׂרָאֵל]—thou shalt be for a leader or a prince (see on 1 Sam. x. 1). This is the first occasion in which the figurative application of a shepherd's office to that of a king occurs in Scripture. It is a phrase very common also in Homer, who frequently describes his royal heroes as 'shepherds of the people.' It evidently arose in times of pastoral and primitive simplicity, and was suggested by its natural fitness to express to men in a primordial state of society the idea of gentle rule and careful supervision. It is applied to the Saviour Himself, who is called the Shepherd, the chief Shepherd of Israel.—The purport of the ambassadors' address to David, then, was, that believing him to be in heart as well as by hereditary descent a Hebrew, coupled with the fact of his having been Divinely designated to the kingdom—a fact which had directed all eyes in the nation to him—they had now come to convey to him information of the national choice, and to promise allegiance to his person and government. 3. and they anointed David king over Israel—(see on 1 Sam. x. 1.) 5. In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months—(see on ch. xi. 10.) 'Those were the best days of David; and we know, from his own language, how sacredly he then held the trust of Abraham and the aspirations of Moses; nor can we doubt that, as Abiathar celebrated the divine offices, the high-souled leader of his people raised their confidence in that appointment and destiny for their nation of which he believed the dawn and fulfilment would be seen by them. Conscious of such untiring energy both of soul and body, and stirred by his prophetic insight into the future,—moved also by the great dynastic changes both in Egypt, where at that time the sceptre passed from the twenty-first dynasty into the hands of the "military Pontiffs," whose rule extended over the whole of Egypt (see Wilkinson in Rawlinson's "Herodotus," vol. ii., p. 375), and in the far East, where a long series of conflicts resulted in the extension of the Assyrian empire as far westward as the Mediterranean,—we cannot doubt that, during those seven years, the mightiest purposes were contemplated by the youthful king; or that, with the contagion of such enthusiasm, he was diffusing amongst his valiant but rude soldiery aspirations like his own; while he was organizing and instructing them in preparations for warfare of far higher pretensions and character than any which yet had been meditated by his countrymen' (Drew's "Scripture Lands," p. 136). 3. king David made a league with them—(see on 1 Sam. x. 25.) This formal declaration of the constitution, as well as defining the limitations of the royal power and prerogative, was chiefly made at the commencement of a new dynasty, or at the restoration of the royal family after a usurpation (2 Ki. xi. 17), though circumstances sometimes led to its being renewed on the

6 And the king and his men went to Jerusalem unto the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land; which spake unto David, saying, Except thou take away the blind and the lame, thou shalt not come in hither: 7 thinking, David cannot come in hither. Nevertheless David took the 8 strong hold of Zion: the same is the city of David. And David said on that day, Whosoever getteth up to the gutter, and smiteth the Jebusites, and the lame and the blind, *that are* hated of David's soul, *he shall be chief and captain.* ¹Wherefore they said, The blind and the lame shall not come into the house.

B. C. 1018.

¹ Or, Because they had said, even the blind and the lame, He sh ll not come into the house.

accession of any new sovereign (1 Ki. xii. 4). It seems to have been accompanied by religious solemnities.

6-13.—HE TAKES ZION FROM THE JEBUSITES.
6. the king and his men went to Jerusalem unto the Jebusites. The first expedition of David, as king of the whole country, was directed against this place, which had hitherto remained in the hands of the natives. The circumjacent country was barren and uninviting, so that the Hebrews had hitherto made no exertions to dislodge "the inhabitants of the land." But now that the divided tribes of Israel were to be united under one monarchy into a compacted nation, it was necessary to fix the seat of government at a place more northerly than Hebron, as central as could be attained, and withal not too far removed from Judah. Jerusalem, with the sight of which, as visible from the ridge fronting Beth-lehem, he must have been familiar from his earliest years, appeared to the discerning eye of David to combine the military advantage of a strong position with that of convenient communications with all parts of the kingdom, not only for political, but for religious objects. God had distinctly intimated His will that there should be a central place for national worship; and therefore we may reasonably believe that he who had consulted the divine oracle with reference to his repairing to Hebron, would not neglect to make similar enquiry in this more important case of choosing Jerusalem as the future metropolis. Accordingly, having obtained, as we may presume, the Lord's approval of the site chosen, David made it the first act of his policy, after he became king of Israel, to acquire possession of that fortress. Jerusalem was thought to be so much in the midst of the countries and nations around (Ezek. v. 5), that it was called literally, 'the navel of the earth' (*Josephus*, 'Jewish Wars,' b. iii., ch. ii., sec. 5; *Reland's* 'Palæstina,' cap. x., p. 51). (See on v. 9.) Except thou take away the blind and the lame. Of the five heights on which the future city of Jerusalem was built (viz., Akra, Bezetha, Moriah, and Ophel), one only was at that time inhabited (Num. xiii. 29; Josh. xv. 63; Judg. i. 21)—viz., the hill of Zion, the loftiest and largest—and was all that the new king aimed at possessing. It was strongly fortified, and deemed so impregnable that blind and lame persons were sent to man the battlements, in derisive mockery of the Hebrew king's attack, and to shout, 'David cannot come hither.' To understand the full meaning and force of this insulting taunt, it is necessary to bear in mind the depth and steepness of the valley of Gihon, and the lofty walls of the ancient Canaanitish fortress. Looking down from the summit of the rock to the bottom, it appeared a dizzy height which no assailants, however adventurous, would succeed in scaling; and the inhabitants, therefore, feeling themselves secure in their inaccessible position, sneered at what they considered the vain attempts of David and his army to besiege their fort. This we take to be the true import of the passage.

Some learned men, indeed, amongst whom is *Selden* ('De Diis Syris, Syntag.,' i., cap. ii.), followed by *Delaney* ('Life of David'), think that there is a reference to the custom of ancient heathen people, in laying the foundations of a city, to deposit in some sequestered spot brass images as the palladium, the tutelary protection, of the place; that "the blind and the lame" spoken of here were the idols which, with a view to its defence, the Jebusites had set up in a recess of the fort; and that they were buoyed up with the conviction of perfect security, so long as those lares of their stronghold were not discovered and abstracted. There is one objection to this interpretation. It is this, that "the blind and the lame" were specified by the Jebusites themselves, who would not be very likely to characterize their own idols, in contemptuous terms, as defective and impotent. It is true, that these 'blind and lame' are called the 'hated of David's soul,' a strong expression of disgust and horror, which, while it could scarcely be called forth by the bodily distresses even of human antagonists, appears very pertinent and applicable on the part of David to heathen idols. Notwithstanding, the former interpretation is preferable for various reasons, which are stated at large by *Kennicott* in his 'Dissertation.' 7. Nevertheless David took the strong hold of Zion [צִיּוֹן]—the citadel of the dry or sunny mount. It was the south-western-most of the hills. *Ferguson* ('Topography of Ancient Jerusalem,' pp. 55-58) and *Thrupp* ('Ancient Jerusalem,' pp. 12-30) placed "the strong hold of Zion" on the hill north of the temple mount. But their theories are strenuously opposed by *Porter* ('Handbook,' p. 93) and *Drew* ('Scripture Lands,' p. 157). Although it had long defied the Israelites, it was in a short time reduced by the valiant army of David, and on that commanding site he established the glory of his future metropolis. 8. Whosoever getteth up to the gutter, and smiteth the Jebusites [כִּלְ-יְבוּסִים], whosoever smiteth a Jebusite: so also the Septuagint, Πᾶς τύπτων Ἰεβουσαίων, every one striking a Jebusite; וְכָל-בְּצִיּוֹר, and reacheth by the watercourse (Ps. xlii. 8) the lame and the blind, &c.] *Stanley* ('Sinai and Palestine,' p. 171, note) renders these words, 'dasheth them against the precipice'—not correctly. *Kennicott's* translation of this passage is, —'And David said on that day, Whosoever (first) smiteth the Jebusites, and through the subterranean passage, or gutter, reacheth the blind and the lame, which are hated by David's soul—because the blind and the lame continued to say, "He shall not come into the house?"—shall be head and captain; so Joab, the son of Zeruiah, went up first, and was made chief captain (1 Chr. xi. 6). Wherefore they said, The blind and the lame shall not come into the house. The question here is, Who said this? Those who ascribe it to the Jebusites consider it as meaning, that if the idols did not protect their fort, they should

9 So David dwelt in the fort, and called it, The city of David: and David
 10 built round about from ^jMillo and inward. And David ²went on, and
 grew great, and the LORD God of hosts *was* with him.
 11 And ⁴Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and cedar trees,
 12 and carpenters, and ³masons: and they built David an house. And
 David perceived that the LORD had established him king over Israel, and
 that he had exalted his kingdom ⁴for his people Israel's sake.
 13 And ^mDavid took *him* more concubines and wives out of Jerusalem,
 after he was come from Hebron: and there were yet sons and daughters
 14 born to David. And these *be* the names of those that were born unto
 him in Jerusalem; Shammuah, and Shobab, and Nathan, and Solomon,
 15 Ibhah also, and Elishua, and Nepheg, and Japhia, and Elishama, and
 16 Eliada, and Eliphalet.
 17 But ⁿwhen the Philistines heard that they had anointed David king
 over Israel, all the Philistines came up to seek David; and David heard
 18 of it, ^oand went down to the hold. The Philistines also came and spread
 19 themselves in ^pthe valley of ⁴Rephaim. And David ^qenquired of the
 LORD, saying, Shall I go up to the Philistines? wilt thou deliver them
 into mine hand? And the LORD said unto David, Go up; for I will

B. C. 1018.

¹ 1 Ki. 9. 21.
¹ 1 Ki. 11. 27.
² Chr. 32. 5.
² went going
 and grow-
 ing.
³ 1 Ki. 5. 2.
⁴ 1 Chr. 14. 1.
³ hewers of
 the stone
 of the wall.
⁴ 1 Ki. 10. 9.
² Chr. 2. 11.
 Esth. 4. 14.
 Isa. 45. 4.
^m Deut. 17. 17.
ⁿ 1 Chr. 11. 16.
^o ch. 23. 14.
^p Josh. 15. 8.
 Isa. 17. 5.
^q Or giants.
² Num. 27. 21.
 Josh. 9. 11.
 ch. 2. 1.

not commit the safety of their fortress to such incompetent guardianship in future. But others, regarding the words as spoken by the Hebrews, interpret it as a determination that they (viz., the blind and the lame) should not come into the house (*i. e.*, of the Lord) (cf. Deut. xxiii. 1-3). [The Septuagint renders the whole passage thus, Πᾶς ἀπείσθω ἐν παρασιβίῳ καὶ τοὺς χυλοὺς καὶ τοὺς τυφλοὺς καὶ τοὺς μισούντας τὴν ψυχὴν Δαυὶδ· εἰς τοῦτο ἐροῦσι, τυφλοὶ καὶ χυλοὶ οὐκ εἰσελεύσονται εἰς οἶκον κυρίου—Whosoever shall touch with his dagger the lame and the blind, and those who hate David's life; wherefore they say, Blind and lame people shall not enter into the house of the Lord.]

9. David dwelt in the fort, &c. Having taken it by storm, he changed its name to "The city of David," to signify the importance of the conquest, and to perpetuate the memory of the event. David built round about from Millo and inward—probably a row of stone bastions, placed on the northern side of mount Zion, and built by David to secure himself on that side from the Jebusites, who still lived in the lower part of the city. The house of Millo was, perhaps, the principal corner-tower of that fortified wall. Such was the small beginning of Jerusalem; and although its walls were far from being of so diminutive a size at this time, that, like those of Rome, any one could have leaped over them in contempt, "The city of David" was but the rudiments of what became afterwards the most celebrated in the world. Viewing its site in connection with the limits of the promised land, it was not a happy selection; yet it is constantly spoken of in Scripture as the place which God had chosen to put his name there, (Ps. cxxxii. 13, &c.) There is an apparent difficulty here, which, however, is at once explained when we remember that David utterly failed to realize the Mosaic type and ideal of the Hebrew nation. His empire, as it was constituted, and as he enlarged it by conquest, was formed after the model of the Assyrian kingdom-empires. In reference to the actual circumstances and the after-history of the Jews, Jerusalem was, of all sites in the country, the best that could have been chosen; and yet on its mountain height (2,500 feet above the sea), far away from the roads between the great empires, and accessible only by steep and winding

passes, it was secluded, so that it was freed, as it now is, from any necessary implication in the great movements of the world. So secluded, and yet so central, it was marvellously fitted as the scene of the events that were to be transacted in it (*Drew's* 'Scripture Lands,' p. 147; see also *Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' i., p. 389).

11. Hiram king of Tyre—*i. e.*, old Tyre, which stood on the continent. sent... carpenters, and masons. The influx of Tyrian architects and mechanics affords a clear evidence of the low state to which, through the disorders of long-continued war, the better class of artizans had declined in Israel.

13-16.—ELEVEN SONS BORN TO HIM.

13. David took him more concubines and wives. In this conduct David transgressed an express law, which forbade the king of Israel to multiply wives unto himself (Deut. xvii. 17). David might perhaps suppose that although an Israelitish king was prohibited from multiplying wives, he had not exceeded in taking to himself more wives and concubines, for there was no number specified; and as there was little difference in his day between a wife and a concubine, except in the observance of some nuptial formalities, he might fancy it expedient to strengthen his interest by extending his matrimonial connections with his own nobility and the royal families of the neighbouring kingdoms.

17-25.—HE SMITES THE PHILISTINES.

17. when the Philistines heard that they had anointed David king over Israel. During the civil war between the house of Saul and David, those restless neighbours had remained quiet spectators of the contest; but now, jealous of David, they resolved to attack him before his government was fully established. 18. valley of Rephaim—*i. e.*, of giants (*vs.* 18, 22; 1 Sam. xxiii. 13; 1 Chr. xi. 5; xiv. 9, 13); of the giants (see on Josh. xv. 8; xviii. 16 [Septuagint, εἰς τὴν κοιλίαν τῶν Τιτῶνων, into the valley of the Titans]; a broad and fertile plain, about a mile in length, which descends gradually from the central mountains towards the north-west. It was the southern entrance into Jerusalem, extending northward till a narrow ridge of rocks, which breaks abruptly into the deep ravine of the Hinnom, intercepted further progress (*Robinson*, 'Biblical Researches,' i., p. 323; *ii.*, p. 156; *Porter's* 'Handbook,' pp.

20 doubtless deliver the Philistines into thine hand. And David came to Baal-perazim, and David smote them there, and said, 'The LORD hath broken forth upon mine enemies before me, as the breach of waters.

21 Therefore he called the name of that place ⁵Baal-perazim. And there they left their images, and David and his men ⁶burnt them.

22 And the Philistines came up yet again, and spread themselves in the valley of Rephaim. And when David enquired of the LORD, he said, 'Thou shalt not go up; but fetch a compass behind them, and come upon

24 them over against the mulberry trees. And let it be, when thou hearest the sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees, that then thou shalt bestir thyself: for then shall the LORD go out before thee, to

25 smite the host of the Philistines. And David did so, as the LORD had commanded him; and smote the Philistines from Geba until thou come to Gazer.

6 AGAIN, David gathered together all the chosen men of Israel, thirty 2 thousand. And ^aDavid arose, and went with all the people that were with him from ¹Baale of Judah, to bring up from thence the ark of God, ²whose name is called by the name of The LORD of hosts, that dwelleth between the cherubim.

3 And they ³set the ark of God upon a new cart, and brought it out of

B C. 1013.

⁵ That is, The plain of breaches.

⁶ Or, took them away.

CHAP. 6.

^a 1 Chr 13. 5.

¹ Or, Baalah, that is, Kirjath-jearim, Josh 15. 9.

² Or, at which the name, even the name of the LORD of hosts, was called upon.

³ made to ride.

75, 104). The "hold" to which David went down 'was some fortified place, where he might oppose the progress of the invaders,' and where he signally defeated them [Septuagint, *εις την περιουην*, to the inclosure]. But there is no mention of "the hold" in the parallel passage (cf. 1 Chr. xiv. 8). The time chosen for this invasion was harvest, when the broad, fertile fields would present a great temptation to the cupidity of the restless marauders. 21. there they left their images—probably their lares or household deities, which they had brought into the field to fight for them. These were burnt, as ordained by law (Deut. vii. 5).

22. the Philistines came up yet again. The next year they renewed their hostile attempt with a larger force; but God manifestly interposed in David's favour; at least, a slight occurrence produced a panic, and David was directed to attack them suddenly from behind the mulberry trees. 24. the sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees [ענבים]—now generally thought not to be mulberry trees, but the aspen or trembling poplar, which delights in moist situations, and the leaves of which are rustled by the slightest movement of the zephyr. It abounds in the ravines of southern Palestine, and in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, where, according to tradition, a solitary mulberry in the valley of Jehoshaphat still marks the spot of Isaiah's martyrdom. "Hearst the sound of a going"—viz., of God (cf. 1 Chr. xiv. 15)—"in the tops of the mulberry trees" [ענבים]—at the entrance of the mulberry (poplar) groves [Septuagint, *ἀπό τοῦ ἄλσους τοῦ κλαδύμανος*, from the valley of weeping]. But see on 1 Chr. xiv. 14, where that version regards *becaim* as pear trees. The meaning is, that at the extremity of the mulberry (poplar) forest, God caused a sound to be heard, which, having been mistaken by the Philistines for the march of an army, diffused a sudden panic through their ranks, on which David attacked them, and both in the battle and the long tumultuous rout which followed, committed great havoc on their discomfited hosts. 25. Geba until thou come to Gazer. For Geba, see on 1 Sam. xiv.; Gazer (cf. 1 Chr. xiv. 16), or, as elsewhere, Gezer. It stands in Porter's 'Handbook' in the list of places not yet identi-

fied. 'But,' says Mr. Grove (*Smith's 'Dictionary,'* sub voce), 'its general position is not difficult to infer.' It must have been between the lower Beth-horon and the sea (Mediterranean, Josh. xvi. 3; 1 Ki. iv. 17); therefore on the great maritime plain which lies beneath the hills of which Beitur et-Tahta is the last outpost, and the regular coast road of communication with Egypt (1 Ki. ix. 16). It is therefore appropriately named as the last point to which David's pursuit of the Philistines extended on the occasion referred to in the context.

CHAP. VI. 1-5.—DAVID FETCHES THE ARK FROM KIRJATH-JEARIM ON A NEW CART.

1. Again, David gathered together all the chosen men of Israel—(see ch. v. 1.) The object of this second assembly was to commence a national movement for establishing the ark in Jerusalem, after it had continued nearly fifty years in the house of Abinadab (see on 1 Chr. xiii. 1-5). 2. from Baale of Judah—or Baalah (Josh. xv. 9, 11, 60), or Kirjath-baal (ch. xviii. 14); i.e., Kirjath-jearim, now Kuryet el-'Enab (see on these passages, and 1 Chr. ii. 50, 52). A very large force of picked men was selected for this important work, lest the undertaking might be opposed or obstructed by the Philistines. Besides, a great concourse of people accompanied them, out of veneration for the sacred edifice, it is said, from Baale. The journey to Baale, which is related, 1 Chr. xiii. 6, is pre-supposed, and the historian describes the course of the procession from that place to the capital.

3. they set the ark of God upon a new cart—or covered wagon (see on 1 Sam. vi. 7). This was a hasty and inconsiderate procedure, in violation of an express statute (see on Num. iv. 14, 15; vii. 9; xviii. 3); and although the Philistines, who had conveyed it from their territory to the borders of Israel in a cart, had been allowed, as ignorant heathens, to do so with impunity, the case was very different with those who had been instructed in the divine law. But the whole population were moved to such transports of joy by the prosperous course of national events, that in the delirium of that festive season they did not pause to consider minutely the measures they adopted for attaining their object. They were extremely anxious to have the ark established in Jerusalem,

- the house of Abinadab that *was* in ⁴Gibeah: and Uzzah and Ahio, the
 4 sons of Abinadab, drave the new cart. And they brought it out of the
 house of Abinadab which *was* at Gibeah, ⁵accompanying the ark of God:
 5 and Ahio went before the ark. And David and all the house of Israel
 played before the LORD on all manner of *instruments made of fir wood*,
 even on harps, and on psalteries, and on timbrels, and on cornets, and
 on cymbals.
 6 And when they came to ⁶Nachon's threshing-floor, Uzzah ^bput forth
his hand to the ark of God, and took hold of it; for the oxen ⁷shook it.
 7 And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzzah; and ^cGod smote
 8 him there for *his* ^serror; and there he died by the ark of God. And
 David was displeased, because the LORD had ⁹made a breach upon Uzzah;
 and he called the name of the place ¹⁰Perez-uzzah to this day.
 9 And ^dDavid was afraid of the LORD that day, and said, How shall the
 10 ark of the LORD come to me? So David would not remove the ark of
 the LORD unto him into the city of David; but David carried it aside
 11 into the house of Obed-edom the Gittite. And the ark of the LORD

B. C. 1012.
 4 Or The
 hill.
 1 Sam 7. 1.
 5 with.
 6 Or, hidon.
 1 Chr 13 9.
 that is,
 Destroying
 stroke.
 b Num. 4. 15.
 7 Or.
 c stumb'ed.
 1 Sam 6 19.
 8 Cr
 rashness.
 9 broken.
 10 That is,
 The
 breach of
 Uzzah.
 d Fs. 119. 1:0.

where they could have access to it on all occasions when there was need to pray for counsel and succour; and for the attainment of so precious a treasure, so important a benefit to the national interest, all classes were eager to undertake any trouble, or to submit to any inconvenience. But, unhappily, they 'did evil, that this good might come.' Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, drave the new cart—their services being enlisted probably on account of the inability of their father to accompany the cavalcade, from age or death. 4. brought it out of the house of Abinadab which was at Gibeah [גִּבְעָתוֹן, with the article]—on the hill (1 Sam. vii. 1), or the mount (Josh. xv. 11). Ahio went before the ark—viz., as leading the oxen which drew it. 5. David and all the house of Israel played before the Lord on all manner of instruments made of fir wood. The quality of the wood used in the formation of musical instruments is of the greatest importance. The peculiar fitness of fir wood for that purpose was recognized in very ancient times (*Wilkinson*, 'Ancient Egyptians,' ii., pp. 32, 35; 'Egypt's Testimony,' p. 217), and the knowledge of it probably borrowed from Egypt by the Hebrews. Indeed, a preference still continues to be given to this wood above that of every other tree, in the fabric of musical instruments. [The Septuagint has interpolated *ev aidaís*, with songs]. on harps—(see on 1 Sam. x. 5; xvi. 23.) on psalteries—(see on 1 Sam. x. 5.) on timbrels—(see on Exod. xv. 20; Judg. xi. 34.) on cornets—a musical instrument which gave a tinkling sound on being rapidly moved, (*Wilkinson's* 'Ancient Egyptians,' ii., p. 323, &c.) on cymbals—an instrument of percussion (see on 1 Sam. xviii. 6), two being struck together to produce a clanging sound (*Wilkinson's* 'Ancient Egyptians,' iii., p. 72, 73; cf. *Josephus*, 'Antiquities,' b. vii., ch. xii., sec. 3). The musicians and singers were divided into seven companies (see on 1 Chr. xv.: cf. *Josephus*, 'Antiquities,' b. vii., ch. iv., sec. 2). It has been supposed by some writers that Psalm xxiv. was sung in parts on this occasion.

6-11.—UZZAH SMITTEN.

6. came to Nachon's threshing-floor, Uzzah put forth his hand. Although he was not a priest, he might be a Levite, and as such was interdicted by express statute from touching any holy thing (Num. iv. 15: cf. 1 Sam. vi. 19). The Chaldee version renders the words, 'came to the place prepared for the reception of the ark'—i. e., near

the city of David (v. 13). the oxen shook it—or stumbled (1 Chr. xiii. 9). Fearing that the ark was in danger of being overturned, Uzzah, under the impulse of momentary feeling, laid hold of it. to keep it steady. Whether it fell and crushed him, or some sudden disease attacked him, he lay dead upon the spot; and this melancholy occurrence not only threw a cloud over the joyous scene, but entirely stopped the procession, for the ark was left where it then was, in the near neighbourhood of the capital. It is of importance to observe the proportionate severity of the punishments attending the profanation of the ark. The Philistines suffered by diseases, from which they were relieved by their oblations, because the law had not been given to them; the Bethshemites also suffered, but not fatally, their error proceeding from ignorance or inadvertency; but Uzzah, who was a Levite, and well instructed, suffered death for his breach of the law. The severity of Uzzah's fate may seem to us too great for the nature and degree of the offence; but it does not become us to sit in judgment on the dispensations of God; and, besides, it is apparent that the Divine purpose was to inspire awe of His majesty, a submission to His law, and a profound veneration for the symbols and ordinances of His worship. 8. David was displeased—rather, grieved; for, whatever were his first impressions, he became sensible of the sin that had been committed, and, sincerely repenting, took care that the people should not again fall into the same error (cf. 1 Chr. xv. 2, 13). *Josephus* informs us ('Antiquities,' b. vii., ch. iv., sec. 2) that the name of the place was continued even till his time.

9. David was afraid of the Lord that day, &c. His feelings on this alarming judgment were greatly excited on various accounts,—dreading that the displeasure of God had been provoked by the removal of the ark, that the punishment would be extended to himself and people, and that they might fall into some error or neglect during the further conveyance of the ark. He resolved, therefore, to wait for more light and direction as to the path of duty. An earlier consultation by Urim would have led him right at the first, whereas in this perplexity and distress he was reaping the fruits of inconsideration and neglect. 11. Obed-edom the Gittite—a Levite (1 Chr. xv. 18, 21, 24; xvi. 5; xxvi. 4). He is called a Gittite, either from his residence at Gath, or more probably from Gath-rimmon, one of the Levitical cities (Josh. xxi. 24, 25).

- continued in the house of Obed-edom the Gittite three months: and the LORD ⁶blessed Obed-edom, and all his household.
- 12 And it was told king David, saying, The LORD hath blessed the house of Obed-edom, and all that *pertaineth* unto him, because of the ark of God. So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of
- 13 Obed-edom into the city of David with gladness. And it was so, that, when ⁷they that bare the ark of the LORD had gone six paces, he sacrificed ⁸oxen and fatlings. And David ⁹danced before the LORD with all ¹⁰his might; and David *was* girded with ¹¹a linen ephod. So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet.
- 14 And as the ark of the LORD came into the city of David, Michal, Saul's daughter, looked through a window, and saw king David leaping and dancing before the LORD; and she despised him in her heart.
- 15 And they brought in the ark of the LORD, and set it in ¹⁶his place, in the midst of the tabernacle that David had ¹⁷pitched for it: and David ¹⁸offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD. And as soon as David had made an end of offering burnt offerings and peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD of hosts. And he dealt among all the people, *even* among the whole multitude of Israel, as well to the women as men, to every one a cake of bread, and a

B. C. 1042.
 * Gen. 10. 27.
 Gen 39. 5.
 Ps. 1. 3.
 Pro. 3. 10.
 Isa. 61. 9.
 Mal. 3. 10.
 J Josh. 3. 3.
 1 Chr. 15. 2.
 15.
 1 Ki 8. 5.
 2 Chr. 5. 6.
 Ex. 15. 20.
 Judg 11. 31.
 Judg. 21. 21.
 1 Sam 2. 18.
 1 Chr. 15. 27.
 1 Chr. 15. 1.
 1 Chr. 16. 1.
 2 Chr. 1. 4.
 Ps. 132. 8.
 11 stretched.
 1 Ki 8. 5.
 2 Chr 5. 6.
 2 Chr. 7. 5-7.
 Ezra 6. 16.

12-19. — DAVID AFTERWARDS BRINGS THE ARK TO ZION.

12. it was told king David, &c. The lapse of three months, which had proved that the ark could be kept without either danger or inconvenience, not only restored the agitated mind of the monarch to a tranquil and settled tone, but led to a discovery of his former error. Having learned that the ark was kept in its temporary resting-place, not only without inconvenience or danger, but with great advantage, he resolved forthwith to remove it to the capital, with the observance of all due form and solemnity (1 Chr. xv. 1-13). It was transported now on the shoulders of the priests, who had been carefully prepared for the work, and the procession was distinguished by extraordinary solemnities and demonstrations of joy. 13. when they that bare the ark... had gone six paces. Some think that four altars were hastily raised for the offering of sacrifices at the distance of every six paces (but see 1 Chr. xv. 26). 14. David danced before the Lord. The Hebrews, like other ancient people, had their sacred dances, which were performed on their solemn anniversaries and other great occasions of commemorating some special token of the Divine goodness and favour, (Exod. xv. 20; Judg. xi. 34; xxi. 21; 1 Sam. xviii. 6; Ps. cxlix. 3; cv., &c.) with all his might—intimating a wild movement of the feet, with violent efforts of leaping, and, divested of his royal mantle, in a state of undress—conduct apparently unsuitable to the gravity of age or the dignity of a king—the linen ephod being not exclusively the official habit of priests and Levites, but worn frequently by others (cf. 1 Sam. ii. 18) who were in any capacity engaged in the service of God. But the laying aside of his kingly attire, and the assumption of this light tunic, was unquestionably done as an act of religious homage, his attitudes and dress being symbolic, as they have always been in Oriental countries, of penitence, joy, thankfulness, and devotion. It was customary for bands of women to meet warriors on their return home (1 Sam. xviii. 7, 8) with music and dancing, one leading the rest, as Miriam also did before the Lord, as "a man of war" (Exod. xv. 20). On this occasion

David acted himself as the leader, in lieu of Michal, who ought to have led the female choir (see on iv. 16, 20).

16. Michal... saw king David leaping and dancing... and she despised him in her heart. The pride of her aristocratic rank was grievously offended by her husband's public exhibition of himself in a character so undignified, and resembling, as she thought, rather the conduct of a mountebank or buffoon than the sovereign of Israel. But Michal's thought was different from the ludicrous ideas which our imaginations are apt to associate with a man of grave character and dignified rank indulging in wild gestures and grotesque attitudes. The dance consisted in serious and solemn measures, and was associated in the minds of Eastern people with sentiments of religious worship. But Michal, who had no proper sense of religion, considered that David was exalting the priesthood above the throne, or, in other words, giving undue honour—an excess of élat—to the officials of the sanctuary.

17. in the midst of the tabernacle that David had pitched for it. The old tabernacle remained at Gibeon (1 Chr. xvi. 39; xxi. 29; 2 Chr. i. 3). It was probably not removed because it was too large for the temporary place the king had appointed for it, and because he contemplated the erection of a magnificent temple. and David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings... 18. he blessed the people—in the name of God, as Moses, Joshua, and Samuel had done before him. As the vicegerent or representative of Jehovah, he was entitled to do this act as much as any other connected with the office of theocratic ruler (see on 1 Ki. viii. 53, 56). There was here no interference with the special duties of the sacerdotal office. Manoah (Judg. xiii. 16-19) and Samuel (1 Sam. vii. 9; cf. 1 Ki. xviii.) had offered burnt offerings; and any one might offer peace offerings, except under conditions which, according to the law, rendered such oblations the exclusive work of the priests. 19. he dealt among all the people... a cake of bread [לֶחֶם לְכֹל]—a cake of the sort that were offered in sacrifices (Lev. viii. 26; xxiv. 5); unleavened, perforated (Exod.

good piece of flesh, and a flagon of wine. So all the people departed every one to his house.

- 20 Then ¹David returned to bless his household. And Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, ^mHow glorious was the king of Israel to-day, who ⁿuncovered himself to-day in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants, as one of the ^ovain fellows ¹²shamelessly
- 21 uncovereth himself! And David said unto Michal, *It was* before the LORD, which chose me before thy father, and before all his house, to appoint me ruler over the people of the LORD, over Israel: therefore will
- 22 I play before the LORD. And I will yet be more vile than thus, and will be base in mine own sight: and ¹³of the maid-servants which thou hast
- 23 spoken of, of them shall I be had in honour. Therefore Michal the daughter of Saul had no child ²unto the day of her death.
- 7 AND it came to pass, ^awhen the king sat in his house, and the LORD 2 had given him rest round about from all his enemies, that the king said

B. C. 1042.
¹ Ps 50, title.
^m Eccl 7. 16
ⁿ Isa 69. 15
^o 1 Sam. 19. 21.
^o Judg 9. 4.
¹² Or, openly.
¹³ Or. of the handmaids of my servants.
^p Isa. 22. 14.
 CHAP. 7.
^a 1 Chr 17. 1.
 Dan. 4. 29.
 30.

xxix. 2, 23; Lev. ii. 4; viii. 26; xxiv. 5; Num. xv. 20; as are used amongst the Arabs and modern Jews, and smeared over with olive oil. and a good piece of flesh [כֶּבֶד וְיַיִן]—(cf. 1 Chr. xvi. 3.)

[This meaning rests on what Gesenius terms an absurd derivation of the word from שֵׁשׁ, fire, and בָּקָר, bullock; so that the term used would signify, as in the English version, a liberal allowance of roasted flesh (meat). But that eminent lexicographer confidently maintains that the word denotes a measure or cup, from מָדָה, to measure; or, according to another suggestion, which accords with our translation, a portion of the sacrifice measured out.] and a flagon of wine [כֶּבֶד וְיַיִן]

—a cake of dried grapes or raisins, compressed into a certain form (Song ii. 5; Hos. iii. 1). These are mentioned last, as dainties intended for the refreshment of the weary and languid (*Gesenius*). [The Septuagint renders the passage, *κολληρίδα ἄρτου καὶ ἐσχαρίτην, καὶ βῆζανον ἀπὸ τηγάνου*, he distributed a cake of bread (punctured, so as to be hard as biscuits)—a cake baked on the hearth, and a cake from the frying-pan. According to this version, the royal donative to the people consisted entirely of three different kinds of bread, or preparations of flour, while no mention is made either of *flesh* or of *wine* (see Septuagint on 1 Chr. xvi. 3, where it is evident that the LXX. translators did not attach very clear or definite significations to the different Hebrew words). The Vulgate attaches the meaning of *flesh* to the second of the three words in the Hebrew original, while it takes the other two, in common with the LXX., to denote different preparations of bread,—*Partitus est universæ multitudini Israel, tàm viro quàm mullieri, singulis colloridam panis unam, et assaturam bubulæ carnis unam, et similem frixam oleo.* *Josephus* also ('Antiquities,' b. vii., ch. iv., sec. 2) takes the same view as that given by our translators,—*The king treated the whole multitude, dealing out both to the women and the men and the children a loaf of bread, with a cake, and another cake baked in a pan, and a portion of the sacrifice.*] The bread used on this festive occasion might be leavened or unleavened, of which there were three varieties, (Lev. vii. 11, &c.) As to the peace offerings, the whole animal, excepting some specified portions, was, after the presentations at the sanctuary, returned to the offerer, to constitute a repast for his family, and any friends he might invite, although, when offered as thanksgivings, the condition was imposed that they must be eaten on the day they were presented (Lev. vii.

15). The immense scale on which, at seasons of national rejoicing, peace offerings were made, may be judged of from what took place at the dedication of the temple; and we may be certain that a pious and munificent monarch like David would, on an occasion in which he felt so lively an interest, not be inferior in respect of royal liberality to Solomon. It may be fairly concluded, then, that, from the immense number of the peace offerings he presented, there would be ample provision from which every individual in the multitude would receive a reasonable share of the sacred flesh, especially when it is borne in mind that the inhabitants of the warm countries of the East have always been very moderate in their use of animal food [see *Harmer's* 'Observations,' iv., pp. 177-187, where he strenuously contends, not for the correctness of the English version in this passage generally, but for the particular circumstance of wine being used, and for the *flagon* being the vessel in which it was served, apparently mistaking *λαγανος*, a cake, for *λαγινος*, a flagon, and taking the flagon to mean a dried gourd]. The Arabic is the only version which gives countenance to the "flagon of wine."

20-23.—RUPTURE WITH MICHAL.
 20. Michal . . . came out to meet David. Proud of her royal extraction, she upbraided her husband with lowering the dignity of the country by the active share he had taken in the public ceremonial, especially by mingling in the dance along with the bands of male and female musicians. uncovered himself . . . as one of the vain fellows shamelessly uncovereth himself [קִבְּרָתִי, the empty, i. e., worthless, people; קִבְּרָתִי, uncovering, is uncovered.] There is nothing in the original corresponding to "shamelessly." The words 'naked' and 'uncovered' are frequently used by the sacred writers in a restricted sense [as by *Tacitus*, 'rejectâ veste superiore'] (see on 1 Sam. xix. 24). But her taunting sarcasm was repelled by her justly-offended husband, in a manner that could not be agreeable to her feelings, while it indicated the warm piety and gratitude of David. 23. Therefore Michal . . . had no child unto the day of her death—(see on ch. xxi. 8.)

CHAP. VII. 1-3.—NATHAN APPROVES THE PURPOSE OF DAVID TO BUILD GOD AN HOUSE.

1. when the king sat in his house—not while he was musing at home, but after he had become established in the splendid mansion he had built. The date of the memorable transactions recorded in this chapter must be fixed at a period soon after the accession of David to the throne of all Israel. The narrative, as given both in this

unto Nathan the prophet, See now, I dwell in ^ban house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth ^cwithin curtains. And Nathan said to the king, Go, do all that is ^din thine heart; for the LORD is with thee.

4 And it came to pass that night, that the word of the LORD came unto Nathan, saying, Go and tell ¹my servant David, Thus saith the LORD, 5 Shalt thou build me an house for me to dwell in? Whereas I have not dwelt in *any* house since ^ethe time that I brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt, even to this day, but have walked in a tent and in a 6 tabernacle. In all *the places* wherein I have ^fwalked with all the children of Israel spake I a word with ^gany of the tribes of Israel, whom I commanded ^hto feed my people Israel, saying, Why build ye not me an house 7 of cedar? Now therefore so shalt thou say unto my servant David, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, I took thee from the sheep-cote, ⁱfrom following 8 the sheep, to be ruler over my people, over Israel: and I was with thee whithersoever thou wentest, and have cut off all thine enemies ^jout of thy sight, and have made thee ^ka great name, like unto the name of the great

B. C. 1044

^b ch. 6. 11.^c Ex. 26. 1.

Ex. 40. 21.

^d 1 Ki. 8. 17.¹ to my

servant,

to David.

^e 1 Ki. 8. 16.^f Lev. 26. 11.^g any of the

judges.

^h 1 Chr. 17. 6.ⁱ Matt. 2. 6.^j from after.^k from thy

face.

Ps. 89. 27.

^h Gen. 12. 2.¹ Chr. 17. 8.

Luke 1. 52.

passage and in the Book of Chronicles, follows apparently, in the natural order of events, the conquest of Jerusalem, the building of his palace, and the removal of the ark to the metropolis of the kingdom. Nay, it is expressly said, 1 Chr. xvii. 1, that immediately consequent on the completion of the palace, the king announced his purpose to erect a new and permanent sanctuary. To these considerations, which seem clearly to determine the early date of the temple-scheme, may be added a circumstance of a different kind, viz., that Solomon, the son and the destined successor of David, was not yet born. It has been objected that David's purpose to erect the temple is here said to have originated when "the Lord had given him rest round about from all his enemies." There is nothing said of this in the parallel passage of Chronicles (xvii. 1); and we find him involved in contests with many of the neighbouring states (ch. viii.), which were followed by foreign wars and intestine troubles during all his life. But the statement, that he had "rest round about from all his enemies," referred to an interval of peace which occurred shortly after his succession, on the discomfiture of the Philistines, with whom, according to Josephus, the Syrians and Phœnicians were combined in two successive campaigns (see on ch. v. 17-25)—a discomfiture so complete that they ceased for a long time to invade the Hebrew territory. This interval of peace was remarkable; and David most probably fancied it to be the period referred to by Moses (Deut. xii. 10, 11) for the erection of a national place of worship. 2. See now, I dwell in an house of cedar. The palace which Hiram had sent men and materials to build in Jerusalem had been finished. It was magnificent for that age, though made wholly of wood: houses in warm countries not being required to possess the solidity and thickness of walls which are requisite for dwellings in regions exposed to rain and cold. Cedar was a rare, valuable, and durable timber. The elegance and splendour of his own royal mansion, contrasted with the mean and temporary tabernacle in which the ark of God was placed, distressed the pious mind of David. To him it appeared that some other provision should now be made for the ordinances of the national religion than had hitherto existed. He felt that although a moveable sanctuary might have comported with the migratory life of the Hebrews in the desert, it was altogether unsuitable in their settled state of society; and he proposed to erect, not only a more permanent edifice, but one characterized by all

the external splendour and sumptuous style of decorations which wealth and art could supply. 3. Nathan said to the king, Go, do all that is in thine heart. The piety of the design commended it to the prophet's mind, and he gave his hasty approval and encouragement to the royal plans. The prophets, when following the impulse of their own feelings, or forming conjectural opinions, fell into frequent mistakes (see on 1 Sam. xvi. 6; 2 Ki. iv. 27).

4-17.—GOD APPOINTS HIS SUCCESSOR TO BUILD IT.

4. it came to pass that night, that the word of the Lord came unto Nathan. The command was given to the prophet on the night immediately following—i. e., before David could either take any measures, or incur any expenses. 5. Shalt thou build me an house for me to dwell in? The interrogation here, according to the Hebrew idiom, expresses a strong negation, and is equivalent to, "Thou shalt not build me an house to dwell in" (1 Chr. xvii. 4; see similar instances, ch. xxii. 6-8; Gen. iv. 9; Amos v. 25). 6. I... have walked in a tent and in a tabernacle. 'Jehovah's walking' refers to His ark accompanying the migrations of the Israelites through the desert, no less than to its frequent removals in Canaan to Gilgal, Shiloh, Nob, and Gibeon (cf. 1 Chr. xvii. 5). [As to the difference between מִשְׁכָּן , tent, and מִדְבָּר , tabernacle, the one describes the outer coverings of goats' hair, the other the framework, or proper dwelling. The Septuagint has, very incorrectly, $\epsilon\nu\ \kappa\alpha\tau\alpha\lambda\iota\mu\alpha\tau\iota\ \kappa\alpha\iota\ \epsilon\nu\ \sigma\kappa\eta\tau\eta$, in a khan and a tent.] 7. spake I a word with any of the tribes of Israel [אֶתְּרֵיבֵיבֵי , tribes; but in 1 Chr. xvii. 6 the word is שֹׁפְטִים , judges], whom I commanded to feed my people Israel. [The difference may have arisen from the error of a copyist, who mistook אֶת for a ב ; but it has been suggested that "tribes" is used here for 'sceptres' (cf. Gen. xlix. 10) = sceptre-bearers, rulers; or the tribes and the judges are viewed as one (*Hengstenberg*, 'Christology,' i., p. 129).] 8. so shalt thou say unto my servant David. Jehovah's designation of David by the honourable title of *his* servant, was to give him a gracious assurance that his pious intentions were appreciated. It was a kind and delicate form of address, with a view not to dishearten him or wound his feelings, by a stern or disdainful rejection of his proposal; and though it is not stated here, it is affirmed elsewhere (1 Ki. viii. 18) that a positive expression of ap-

10 *men that are in the earth.* Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will ¹plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them
 11 any more, as beforetime, and as since the time that I commanded judges *to be over my people Israel,* and have caused thee to rest from all thine enemies. Also the LORD telleth thee that he will make thee an house.
 12 And ²when thy days be fulfilled, and thou ³shalt sleep with thy fathers, ⁴I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels,
 13 and I will establish his kingdom. He ⁵shall build an house for my name; and I will ⁶stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I ⁷will be his father, and he shall be my son. If ⁸he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men:
 15 but my mercy shall not depart away from him, ⁹as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And ¹⁰thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for
 17 ever. According to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David.

B. C. 1012.
 Jer. 24. 6.
 Amos 9. 16.
 1 Ki. 2. 1.
 1 Ki. 8. 20.
 Deut. 31. 16.
 1 Ki. 1. 21.
 Dan. 12. 2.
 Acts 13. 31.
 1 Cor. 15. 51.
 1 The. 3. 14.
 1 Ki. 8. 27.
 Ps. 132. 11.
 Isa. 11. 1-3.
 10.
 1 Ki. 5. 5.
 Ps. 9. 4.
 Heb. 1. 5.
 Ps. 89. 31.
 1 Sam. 15. 23.
 John 12. 34.

proval was given him on this occasion. 10. Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel—i. e., according to my ancient promise, which has already been so far fulfilled by their being put in actual possession of Canaan. I will, through thy agency, establish their national tenure of that land, as well as their national privileges, in spite of all the assaults of their enemies. neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more [בְּעַוְבֵי, wicked people] (cf. Ps. lxxxix. 22-24), as beforetime—viz., Pharaoh in Egypt, and foreign conquerors in the troubled era of the judges. This promise or pledge of national security was of course suspended on the condition of their avoiding national rebellion and apostasy, and maintaining faithful allegiance to the law of God. The general purport of the communication was, that David's intention was approved of. But the time for carrying it into effect had not yet come. The humble tabernacle, with its curtained canopy, had been designed by Jehovah to educate His people—long familiar with the gorgeous temples and the senanous religion of Egypt—in a simpler form of worship, and in more spiritual ideas of the Divine Being, ever present in it by His emblem. It must still be continued a while longer, till those important ends were attained. From the time of the judges till the death of Saul the government was uncertain and temporary; and when the kingdom, through David, should have become consolidated, there would be an abiding temple. There was another, and a personal reason, of a symbolical nature, disclosed in a subsequent communication made to David (see on 1 Chr. xxii. 8, 9; xxviii. 3), for delaying the proposed erection. Meanwhile, he might be assured of the presence as well as favour of Jehovah in the simple tent as in the magnificent temple. 11. Also the Lord telleth thee that he will make thee an house. As a reward for his pious purpose, God would increase and maintain the family of David, and, instead of dooming him to the fate of Saul, secure the succession of the throne to his dynasty. There is here a paranomasia or play upon the word house. David had proposed to build a house for the glory of God; but God announces His purpose to 'make David an house.' By the erection of a magnificent temple, it was intended to establish a centre of religious unity for the nation; but now it was made known that the presence and the oracles of God would be henceforth embodied, not in a national temple, but in

the living line of David's dynasty. In other words, the promise now made, with the previous blessings it involved, would from this time be associated, not with a temple of stone, but with "the son of David." This announcement is celebrated in strains of the liveliest gratitude and joy (Ps. xxi. 1-5; lxi. 5, 6; cxxxviii. 2-8). 12. I will set up thy seed after thee, &c. [בְּבָרְכֶיךָ]—used collectively for the whole descendants. It is customary for the eldest son born after the father's succession to the throne to succeed him in his dignity as king. David had several sons by Bathsheba, born after his removal to Jerusalem (ch. v. 14-16; cf. 1 Chr. iii. 5; xvii. 11). But by a special ordinance and promise of God, his successor was to be a son born after this time; and the departure from the established usage of the East, in fixing the succession, can be accounted for on no other known ground except the fulfilment of the Divine promise (see on 1 Ki. ii. 12). 13. He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever. This declaration referred, in its primary application, to Solomon, and to the temporal kingdom of David's family. The first clause of the verse refers to the building of the temple. 'The general establishment of the royal house of David precedes the building of the temple; the eternal establishment, mentioned in the last clause of v. 13, follows the building of the temple, or is coincident with it' (Hengstenberg). 14. I will be his father, and he shall be my son—i. e., my procedure towards him will be kind, tender, and paternal (cf. Ps. lxxxix. 26). If he commit iniquity [אִשְׁתָּוֶה] bears the sense of he in various passages: Exod. ix. 21; Josh. xv. 16; Judg. i. 12; 1 Sam. xi. 7, 8.] It cannot mean, if the Messiah commit iniquity, but whosoever of David's natural posterity shall do so, as is plainly determined, Ps. lxxxix. 30-32; cxxxii. 12. I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men—i. e., the trials, calamities, and sufferings to which sinful men are subject. 15. But my mercy shall not depart away from him, &c.—(cf. Ps. lxxxix. 33, 34.) 16. thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee, &c. The chain of Messianic promises which for ages had been broken, or transmitted obscurely under the forms of Mosaic ritual, was now renewed by the addition of a new and most important link, in the great promise made to David of perpetual succession in his family. This promise was un-

18 Then went king David in, and sat before the LORD, and he said, 'Who am I, O Lord God? and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto? And this was yet a small thing in thy sight, O Lord God; but thou hast spoken also of thy servant's house for a great while to come. 19 'And is this the manner of man, O Lord God? And what can David say more unto thee? for thou, Lord God, knowest thy servant. For thy

E. C. 1012.

^a Gen. 32. 10.
^b Ex. 3. 11.
^c Isa. 65. 8.
^d 1 W.
^e Gen. 18. 10.
^f 1st 39. 1.

derstood by him (as it was also by Solomon) as being the exercise of universal dominion (cf. Ps. ii. ; lxxii.); and although the theocracy soon reached its culminating point of conquest under David, as well as of peace and splendour under Solomon—although it was destined, with all the accompaniment of Mosaic polity and ceremonial institutions, at a remote era to be overthrown—although, in short, 'the sceptre did depart from Judah'—yet the promise was, in a larger and sublimer sense, fulfilled in David's son, of another nature (Heb. i. 8). This is the oath which God swore by his holiness to David—the covenant which He made with him respecting the perpetuity of his royal seed and kingdom (Ps. lxxxix. 3, 4, 35, 36)—the word upon which He caused him to hope (Ps. exix. 49), and which is afterwards so much dwelt upon through the Psalms, and by the succeeding prophets. This promise, like that made to Abraham, has a twofold aspect,—one points to David's natural posterity and temporal kingdom, the other to the Messiah and the kingdom of heaven. It respected the former only as types and pledges of the latter. Some, indeed, restrict this promise entirely to the Messiah, and deny that it was applicable to David's natural descendants at all. The passages which seem to apply any part of it to these, refer, in their opinion, to another promise made unto David, which was of a temporal nature, and altogether distinct from this. But we have no account of any such promise in all the history. The truth is, this promise, like many others in the Old Testament, has a twofold sense—it takes in the type as well as the antitype; so that those who saw it accomplished in what respected David's temporal house, had a proof that the Lord spoke by the prophet Nathan, and consequently a pledge that He would also in due time fulfil the spiritual part of it also. That it included David's descendants, who by ordinary generation were to succeed him on the throne of Israel, is evident from David's application of it to his son Solomon, in whom the temporal part of it had a partial accomplishment (1 Chr. xxii. 6-11; xxviii. 5-8). The Lord himself also applies it to Solomon, when He appeared in vision (2 Chr. viii. 7-18). It contains a threatening against such of David's children as should commit iniquity, which was verified on his royal posterity who succeeded him on the throne, whom the Lord punished for their transgressions, as the sacred history abundantly shows. It was to fulfil the temporal part of this promise that the Lord continued the house of David so long on the throne of Judah, notwithstanding all their frequent and aggravated rebellions against Him (1 Ki. xi. 36; 2 Ki. viii. 19; 2 Chr. xxi. 7); and it was repeatedly appealed to by the Jewish Church when the judgments inflicted upon David's temporal house and kingdom seemed to make it void. This promise as it represented David's natural seed was conditional, so that the Lord at length deprived them of the kingdom; but He did not by that deprivation violate or nullify the covenant with His servant; for this was only what He threatened at the commencement of it to do in the event of their committing iniquity (1 Chr. xxviii. 9). But how, then, was the promise made

good, that David's seed should sit on his throne for ever? The spiritual and eternal part of the promise pointed to the Messiah, who was to come of the seed of David according to the flesh, and to be raised up from the dead to sit for ever on His heavenly throne. The promise as it respected the Messiah was absolute, and in Him had its full accomplishment (cf. the last words of David, ch. xxiii. 5; Acts ii. 25-32 with Isa. ix. 6, 7; xi. 1-10; lv. 1-5; Jer. xxxiii. 5, 6; xxxiii. 14-20; Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24; xxxvii. 24, 25; Dan. ii. 44; Hos. iii. 5; Luke i. 31-33, 60-70; see *Hengstenberg's* 'Christology,' i., pp. 123-145; *Edinburgh's* Evangelical Magazine, May, 1803; *Hardwick's* 'Christ and other Masters,' i., p. 145).

18-29.—DAVID'S PRAYER AND THANKSGIVING.

18. Then went king David in, and sat before the Lord. Sitting was anciently an attitude for worship (Exod. xvii. 12; 1 Sam. iv. 13; 1 Ki. xix. 4). As to the particular attitude, David sat most probably upon his heels. It was the posture of the ancient Egyptians before the shrines; it is the posture of deepest respect before a superior in the East. Persons of highest dignity sit thus when they do sit in the presence of kings; and it is the only sitting attitude assumed by the modern Mohammedans in their places and rites of devotion. In *Pococke's* 'Travels' is drawn the figure of a person half-sitting, half-kneeling, that is, kneeling so as to rest the muscular part of the body upon the heels. This, he informs us, is the attitude in which inferiors sit at this day before great men in the East; and it is regarded as a posture of proper humility. Who am I, O Lord God? and what is my house? This prayer breathes throughout a spirit of joyful surprise and overflowing gratitude. The exordium shows that David's thoughts had been taking a rapid retrospective survey of his marvellous career, from his humble origin till his elevation to the throne—a career distinguished in every stage by signal tokens of the Divine favour, the crowning expression of which was the promised prosperity of his royal line (Ps. cxi. 3; see *Pye Smith's* 'Scripture Testimony,' p. 117). 19. thou hast spoken also of thy servant's house for a great while to come [לְמִנְחָתְךָ]—to time far distant. and is this the manner of man, O Lord God? [וְהִנֵּה אֲנִי וְהִנֵּה אֲנִי]—and this is the manner of man. This is the rendering of *Gesenius*, who further explains it, 'not of God'—i. e., to deal with me thus so familiarly, as man with man. The Hebrew Adam being sometimes used to denote mean persons, some render these words, 'Is this the manner of men to deal with obscure people? And so thou hast done to me, not as to the son of a humble shepherd, but of some illustrious sovereign, entitled to such notice.' But others, comparing these words with 1 Chr. xvii. 17, and conceiving there is a mystic import lying under them, regard them as pointing to the more than mortal character and dignity of the Messiah (see *Barrett's* 'Synopsis of Criticisms,' ii., p. 545). 20. what can David say more unto thee—i. e., my obligations are infinitely greater than I can express; and then, "thou, Lord, knowest thy servant,"

- ^v word's sake, and according to thine own heart, hast thou done all these
 22 great things, to make thy servant know *them*. Wherefore ^w thou art
 great, O Lord God: for ^x *there is* none like thee, neither *is there any* God
 23 besides thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears. And
^y what one nation in the earth is like thy people, *even* like Israel, whom
 God went to redeem for a people to himself, and to make him a name,
 and to do for you great things and terrible, for thy land, before ^z thy
 people, which thou redeemedst to thee from Egypt, *from* the nations and
 24 their gods? For ^a thou hast confirmed to thyself thy people Israel *to be* a
 25 people unto thee for ever: and thou, LORD, art become their God. And
 now, O Lord God, the word that thou hast spoken concerning thy servant,
 and concerning his house, establish *it* for ever, and do as thou hast said.
 26 And let thy ^b name be magnified for ever, saying, The LORD of hosts *is* the
 God over Israel: and let the house of thy servant David be established
 27 before thee. For thou, O LORD of hosts, God of Israel, hast ^c revealed to
 thy servant, saying, I will build thee an house: therefore hath thy servant
 28 found in his heart to pray this prayer unto thee. And now, O Lord God,
 thou *art* that God, and ^d thy words be true, and thou hast promised this
 29 goodness unto thy servant: therefore now ^e let it please thee to bless the
 house of thy servant, that it may continue for ever before thee: for thou,
 O Lord God, hast spoken *it*: and with thy blessing let the house of thy
 servant be blessed for ever.
- 8 AND ^f after this it came to pass, that David smote the Philistines, and
 subdued them: and David took ^g Metheg-ammah out of the hand of the
 Philistines.
- 2 And ^h he smote Moab, and measured them with a line, casting them
 down to the ground; even with two lines measured he to put to death,
 and with one full line to keep alive: and *so* the Moabites became David's
 servants, and ⁱ brought gifts.

B. C. 1042.

^v Eph. 4. 32.
^w 1 Chr. 16. 25.
^x 2 Chr. 2. 5.
^y Ps. 43. 1.
^z Ps. 86. 10.
^a Ps. 93. 4.
^b Ps. 135. 5.
^c Ps. 145. 3.
^d Jer. 10. 6.
^e Deut. 3. 21.
^f Deut. 4. 25.
^g 1 Sam. 2. 2.
^h Ps. 86. 8.
ⁱ Ps. 89. 6.
^j Isa. 45. 5.
^k Deut. 4. 7.
^l Deut. 33. 29.
^m Neh. 1. 10.
ⁿ Deut. 56. 18.
^o Ps. 72. 19.
^p Matt. 6. 9.
^q opened the ear.
^r John 17. 17.
^s be thou pleased and bless.

CHAP. 8.

^a ch. 7. 9
 ch. 21. 13-22.
 1 Chr. 18. 1.
 1 Or, The
 bridle of
 Ammah.
^b Num. 24. 17.
^c Ps. 72. 10.

must refer to the deep, unspeakable feelings of his ravished heart. But by reference to the parallel passage (1 Chr. xvii. 17), this is spoken rather as a prayer, intimating that David could neither ask nor desire anything greater than what had been now conferred; and therefore he would leave all his wants to be supplied by his gracious 'Lord, who knew his servant.' 21. For thy word's sake, and according to thine own heart, hast thou done all these great things—*i. e.*, it was of thine own gratuitous liberality, not from personal merits of mine, that thou hast entertained these marvellous purposes of favour towards me; and still more, that thou hast disclosed them for my individual gratification, as well as my family aggrandizement (cf. 1 Chr. xvii. 19). 23. what one nation . . . is like thy people, even like Israel, whom God went to redeem. The phraseology is used *more humano*; and the allusion is to the deliverance from Egyptian bondage. The rest of the sentence, which is confused and nearly unintelligible in our version, is translated by *Kennicott* as follows: 'And to make himself a name, and to do for them things great and terrible, to drive out from before thy people (whom thou redeemedst to thee out of Egypt) the nations and their gods. And thou hast confirmed to thyself thy people Israel, to be a people unto thee for ever; for thou, Jehovah, hast been their God.' 27. For thou, O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, hast revealed to thy servant [יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ]—*i. e.*, enlightened his mind, by communicating through thy inspired prophet the knowledge of thy kind and gracious purposes. 29. thou, O Lord

God, hast spoken it—(cf. Isa. xl. 8; xlvi. 10; 1 Pet. i. 25.)

CHAP. VIII. 1, 2.—DAVID SUBDUES THE PHILISTINES, AND MAKES THE MOABITES TRIBUTARY.

1. David took Metheg-ammah out of the hand of the Philistines [מֵתֶגֶג אַמָּה הַפְּלִשְׁתִּים]—and David took the bridle (bit) of the metropolis out of the hand of the Philistines; *i. e.*, he subdued the metropolis of the Philistines (*Gesenius*, 'Lexicon' and 'Geschichte der Hebr. Sprache,' p. 41)—that is, Gath and her suburban towns (1 Chr. xviii. 1). That town had been 'a bride' by which the Philistines kept the people of Judah in check. David used it now as a barrier to repress that restless enemy. To the same effect *Havernick* renders it, 'David took the arm-bridle (the rein of dominion) out of the hand of the Philistines.' The historian in this book records in general terms what the chronicler relates in particular detail.

2. he smote Moab, and measured them with a line. This refers to a well-known practice of Eastern kings, to command their prisoners of war, particularly those who, notorious for the atrocity of their crimes, or distinguished by the indomitable spirit of their resistance, had greatly incensed the victors, to lie down on the ground, and then put to death a certain portion of them, which was determined by lot, but most commonly by a measuring line. Our version makes him put two-thirds to death, and spare one-third. The Septuagint and Vulgate make one-half. This war usage was not, perhaps, usually practised by the people of God; but Jewish writers assert that the cause of this particular severity against this people was their having massacred David's parents

3 David smote also Hadadezer, the son of Rehob, king of ^aZobah, as he
 4 went to recover ^ehis border at the river Euphrates. And David took
²from him a thousand *chariots*, and seven hundred horsemen, and twenty
 5 thousand footmen: and David houghed all the chariot *horses*, but reserved
 6 of them *for* an hundred chariots. And when the Syrians of Damascus
 7 came to succour Hadadezer king of Zobah, David slew of the Syrians
 8 two and twenty thousand men. Then David put garrisons in Syria of
 9 Damascus: and the Syrians became servants to David, and brought gifts.
 10 And the LORD preserved David whithersoever he went. And David took
 11 the shields of gold that were on the servants of Hadadezer, and brought
 12 them to Jerusalem. And from ³Bethai, and from ⁴Berothai, cities of
 Hadadezer, king David took exceeding much brass.
 9 When Toi king of Hamath heard that David had smitten all the host
 10 of Hadadezer, then Toi sent Joram his son unto king David, to ⁵salute
 him, and to bless him, because he had fought against Hadadezer, and
 smitten him: for Hadadezer ⁶had wars with Toi. And *Joram* ⁷brought
 11 with him vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and vessels of brass: which
 also king David ¹did dedicate unto the LORD, with the silver and gold
 12 that he had dedicated of all nations which he subdued; of Syria, and of
 Moab, and of the children of Ammon, and of the Philistines, and of
 Amalek, and of the spoil of Hadadezer, son of Rehob, king of Zobah.

B. C. 1010.

^a 1 Sam. 14.

47.

ch. 10. 6.

Ps. 60.

title.

⁶ Gen. 15. 18.² Or, of his.³ Or,

Tibbath

⁴ Or, Chuan,

1 Chr. 18. 2.

⁵ ask him of
peace.⁶ was a man
of wars

with.

⁷ in his hand
were.¹ 1 Ki. 7. 51.

1 Chr. 18. 11.

1 Chr. 2. 1-16.

1 Chr. 26. 23.

27.

1 Chr. 29. 2.

Mic. 4. 13.

Rev. 21. 21.

and family, whom he had, during his exile, committed to the king of Moab.

3-14.—HESMITES HADADEZER AND THE SYRIANS.

3. *Zobah*—(cf. 1 Chr. xviii. 3.) This kingdom was bounded on the east by the Euphrates, and it extended westward from that river, perhaps as far north as Aleppo. Its *exact* situation cannot be determined; but it is supposed to lie between the Euphrates and the Orontes, towards the north-east of Damascus. It was long the chief among the petty kingdoms of [אֲרָם] Syria, and its king bore the hereditary title of Hadadezer, or Hadazer (Hadad, helped), as he went to recover his border at the river Euphrates—in accordance with the promises God made to Israel, that He would give them all the country as far as the Euphrates (Gen. xv. 18; Num. xxiv. 17). In the first campaign David signally defeated him, and, besides a great number of foot-prisoners, took from him an immense amount of booty in chariots and horses: reserving only a small number of the latter, he hamstrung the rest. The text says seven hundred; but in 1 Chr. xviii. 4 the number is stated at seven thousand. The reason of this mutilation was, that horses being forbidden by the Mosaic constitution to the Hebrews, both in war and agriculture, it was of no use to keep them; and their neighbours, placing much dependence on cavalry, but having, for want of a native breed, to procure them by purchase, the greatest damage that could be done to such enemies was to render their horses unserviceable in war (see also Gen. xlix. 6; Josh. xi. 6, 9). A king of Damascus—Syria [אֲרָם] *i. e.*, the highlands above Damascus, in later times called simply אֲרָם, Syria (1 Ki. xv. 18; Isa. vii. 1-8; Amos i. 5)] came to his succour; but David routed those auxiliary forces also, and having acquired immense booty, took possession of their country, put garrisons into their fortified towns, and made them tributary.

9. *Toi king of Hamath*—Cæle-Syria. Northwards it extended to the city Hamath, on the Orontes, which was the capital of the country. The Syrian prince, being delivered from the dread of a dangerous neighbour, sent his son with

valuable presents to David, to congratulate him on his victories, and solicit his alliance and protection. 10. *Joram*—or *Hadoram* (1 Chr. xviii. 10). 11. Which also king David did dedicate unto the Lord. Eastern princes have always been accustomed to hoard up vast quantities of gold (see *Lazarus*, 'Nineveh and its Remains,' ii., p. 344). This is the first instance of a practice uniformly followed by David, of reserving, after defraying expenses, and bestowing suitable rewards upon his soldiers, the remainder of the spoil taken in war, to accumulate for the grand project of his life—the erection of a national temple at Jerusalem. all nations which he subdued—*i. e.*, on the east and north of Palestine. The former comprised Amalek, Edom, Moab, and Ammon. 'The main object of David's campaign on the east of the Jordan would be to reduce the fortresses on the frequent heights (Ramoth) of Gilead, and in the rocky fortresses of the Lejah' (*Porter's* 'Damascus,' ii., p. 240). Some of these were held by the old occupants of the country, on whose territory the Israelites were established; and they were the sources of constant danger and anxiety to the eastern tribes. These entrenched foes of the Hebrews were dislodged and subjugated. And now, garrisoned by the troops of the mighty conqueror, each fortress became the means of confirming and extending his dominions' (*Drew's* 'Scripture Lands,' pp. 138, 139). Thus, by the conquests of David, the Hebrews had acquired territories equal to the boundaries of the promised land, and affording all the means for accomplishing the great work assigned them. The kingdom of Israel, as now extended, comprised, besides Palestine proper, the various northern states comprehended in the beautiful and wealthy country called by the general name of Aram (Syria), where the Zobahites ruled, as far as the Euphrates; all the region east of the Jordan; the woodlands of Gilead, the fertile plains of the Hauran, and the abundant pasturage of Bashan—all north and west from Hermon, and all east from the loftiest peaks of the Hauran; all the country south-east, especially the Edomite territory, including the command of the eastern harbour of the Red Sea, and the whole line of

13 And David gat *him* a name when he returned from ⁸smiting of the
 14 Syrians in the ⁹valley of Salt, ⁹*being* eighteen thousand *men*. And he
 put garrisons in Edom; throughout all Edom put he garrisons: and ^hall
 they of Edom became David's servants. And the LORD ⁱpreserved David
 15 whithersoever he went. And David reigned over all Israel; and David
 16 executed judgment and justice unto all his people. And ^jJoab the son
 of Zeruiah *was* over the host; and ^kJehoshaphat the son of Ahilud *was*
 17 ¹⁰recorder; and ^lZadok the son of Ahitub, and Ahimelech the son of
 18 Abiathar, *were* the priests; and Seraiah *was* the ¹¹scribe; and ^mBenaiah
 the son of Jehoiada *was* ^{over} both the Cherethites and the Pelethites;
 and David's sons were ¹²chief rulers.

9 AND David said, Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul,
 2 that I may show ^ahim kindness for Jonathan's sake? And *there was* of
 the house of Saul a servant, whose name *was* ^bZiba: and when they had
 called him unto David, the king said unto him, *Art* thou Ziba? And he
 3 said, Thy servant *is* ^{he}. And the king said, *Is* there not yet any of the
 house of Saul, that I may show ^cthe kindness of God unto him? And
 Ziba said unto the king, Jonathan hath yet a son, *which is* ^dlame on his
 4 feet. And the king said unto him, Where *is* he? And Ziba said unto
 the king, Behold, he *is* in the house of ^eMachir, the son of Ammiel, in
 5 Lo-debar. Then king David sent, and fetched him out of the house of
 Machir, the son of Ammiel, from Lo-debar.

B. C. 1040.

⁸ his
⁹ 2 Ki. 11. 7.
⁹ Or,
 s'aying.
^h Gen. 27. 29.
ⁱ Ps. 27. 28.
^j ch. 19. 13.
^k 1 Ki. 4. 3.
^l Or, remem-
 brancer,
 or, writer
 of chron-
 icles.
^l 1 Chr. 24. 3.
¹¹ Cr,
 secretary.
^m 1 Chr. 18. 17.
¹² Or,
 princes.

CHAP. 9.
^a 1 Sam. 18. 3.
^b ch. 16. 1.
^c 1 Sam. 20.
 11.
^d ch. 4. 4.
^e ch. 17. 27

caravan roads into Arabia, and all the Paran
 wilds, by which they held the avenues to Egypt,
 and could control the land commerce between that
 country and Phœnicia; in short, from Carchemish
 and Damascus to Elath, and the frontier of Phi-
 listia; in other words, from the river of Egypt to
 the great river, the river Euphrates.

13. returned from smiting of the Syrians
 פָּרַסְיָאִים. Instead of Syrians, the Septuagint
 version has Edomites, the LXX. having read פָּרְסִיָּאִים
 (1 Chr. xviii. 12), which is the true reading, as is
 evident from r. 14 (see *Davidson's* 'Hebrew Text
 of the Old Testament,' in loco.) This conquest,
 made by the army of David, was due to the skil-
 ful generalship and gallantry of Abishai and Joab
 (1 Chr. xviii. 12: cf. Ps. lx., title). The valley was
 the ravine of Salt, in the neighbourhood of Sela,
 at the foot of Jebel Usdûm (the Ghor, or upper part
 of the Arabah), adjoining the Salt Mountain, at
 the south-western extremity of the Dead Sea,
 separating the ancient territories of Judah and
 Edom (*Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' ii., p. 283;
Porter's 'Handbook,' p. 61; *Stanley*, 'Sinai and
 Palestine,' p. 478). 14. he put garrisons in Edom
 —with a view to secure his acquisition of so im-
 portant a dependency. It was, however, after the
 commencement of the war with the Syrians, and
 probably on a personal visit to Petra (Ps. ix. 9;
 cviii. 11).

15-18.—HIS REIGN.

15. David executed judgment and justice unto
 all his people. Though involved in foreign wars,
 he maintained an excellent system of govern-
 ment at home, the most eminent men of the age
 composing his cabinet of ministers. 16. Joab
 . . . was over the host—by virtue of a special
 promise (ch. v. 8). recorder—historiographer or
 daily annalist, whose duty it was to register cur-
 rent events of interest and importance in the kings'
 reigns—an office of great trust and importance in
 Eastern countries (*Herodotus*, b. vi., ch. c.; b. viii.,
 ch. 9; *Morier's* 'Persia'). 17. Zadok . . . and . . .
 Ahimelech the son of Abiathar were the priests.
 There is a confusion in the text here (cf. 1 Chr.
 xviii. 16; xxiv. 3, 6, 31). Ahimelech is substituted

for Abiathar,—“and Ahimelech the son of Abia-
 thar” for ‘Abiathar the son of Ahimelech.’ But in
 ch. xx. 25, and in all other passages, it is Abiathar
 who is mentioned as contemporary with Zadok. On
 the massacre of the priests at Nob, Saul conferred
 the priesthood on Zadok, of the family of Eleazar (1
 Chr. vi. 50), while David acknowledged Abiathar, of
 Ithamar's family, who fled to him. The two high
 priests exercised their office under the respective
 princes to whom they were attached. But on
 David's obtaining the kingdom over all Israel,
 they both retained their dignity—Abiathar officiat-
 ing at Jerusalem, and Zadok at Gibeon (1 Chr.
 xvi. 39). 18. Cherethites—i. e., Philistines (Zeph.
 ii. 5). Pelethites—from Pelet (1 Chr. xii. 3). They
 were the valiant men who, having accompanied
 David during his exile among the Philistines,
 were made his body-guard, and David's sons
 were chief rulers [בְּרִיָּוִת הָיָו]—*lit.*, priests (which
 they could not be); or, as Hebrew writers render
 it, princes, chiefs (1 Chr. xviii. 17)—counsellors of
 the crown, particularly in ecclesiastical matters
 (see *Gesenius*, sub voce).

CHAP. IX. 1-6.—DAVID SENDS FOR MEPHIBO-
 SHETH.

1. Is there yet any that is left of the house of
 Saul? It is quite clear that David was ignorant
 that his friend had any member of his family
 surviving, for his enquiry related to ‘any of the
 house of Saul.’ 2. a servant, whose name was
 Ziba. On enquiry, Saul's land steward was found,
 who gave information that there still survived a
 son of Jonathan, who was five years old at his
 father's death, and whom David, then wandering
 in exile, had never seen. His lameness (ch. iv. 4)
 had prevented him from taking any part in the
 public contests of the time. Besides, according to
 Oriental notions, the younger son of a crowned
 monarch has a preferable claim to the succession
 over the son of a mere heir-apparent; and hence
 his name was never heard of as the rival of his
 uncle Ish-bosheth. His insignificance had led to
 his being lost sight of; and it was only through
 Ziba that David learned his existence, and the
 retired life he passed with one of the great families

6 Now when ¹Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, was come unto David, he fell on his face, and did reverence. And David

7 said, Mephibosheth. And he answered, Behold thy servant! And David said unto him, ²Fear not: for I will surely show thee kindness for Jonathan thy father's sake, and will restore thee all the land of Saul thy

8 father; and thou shalt ³eat bread at my table continually. And he bowed himself, and said, What is thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such ⁴a dead dog as I am?

9 Then the king called to Ziba, Saul's servant, and said unto him, ⁵I have given unto thy master's son all that pertained to Saul and to all his

10 house. Thou therefore, and thy sons, and thy servants, shall till the land for him, and thou shalt bring in *the fruits*, that thy master's son may have food to eat: but Mephibosheth thy master's son shall eat bread always at my table. Now Ziba ⁶had fifteen sons and twenty

11 servants. Then said Ziba unto the king, ⁷According to all that my lord the king hath commanded his servant, so shall thy servant do. As for Mephibosheth, *said the king*, he shall eat at my table, as one of the

12 king's sons. And Mephibosheth had a young son, whose ⁸name was Micah. And all that dwelt in the house of Ziba *were* servants unto

13 Mephibosheth. So Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem; for he did ⁹eat continually at the king's table; and was lame on both his feet.

10 AND it came to pass after this, that the king ¹⁰of the children of Ammon died, and Hanun his son reigned in his stead. Then said David, I will show kindness unto Hanun the son of Nahash, as his father showed kindness unto me. And David sent to comfort him by the hand of his servants for his father. And David's servants came into

3 the land of the children of Ammon. And the princes of the children of Ammon said unto Hanun their lord, ¹¹Thinkest thou that David doth honour thy father, that he hath sent comforters unto thee? hath not David *rather* sent his servants unto thee, to search the city, and to spy

4 it out, and to overthrow it? Wherefore Hanun took David's servants, and shaved off the one half of their beards, and cut off their garments in

B. C. 10 0.

¹ Called Merib-baal,
1 Chr. 8. 31.
² Gen. 43. 18, 23.
Gen. 50. 21.
1 Sam. 12. 19, 20, 21.
Isa. 56. 3, 4.
Mark 5. 23, 31.
Luke 1. 12, 13 29, 50.
³ Jer. 52. 33.
⁴ 1 Sam. 21. 14.
ch. 16. 9.
⁵ ch. 16. 4.
ch. 19. 29.
Isa. 32. 8.
⁶ ch. 19. 17.
⁷ ch. 16. 1-4.
ch. 19. 21-3).
Pro. 12. 17.
⁸ 1 Chr. 8. 31.
⁹ ch. 19. 33, 36.
2 Ki 25. 29.
Jer. 52. 33, 34.

CHAP. 10.
¹ 1 Sam. 11. 1.
ch. 17. 27.
1 Chr 19. 1.
² In thine eyes doth David?

in the pastoral regions of trans-Jordanic Canaan, who remained attached to the fallen dynasty. Mephibosheth (his proper name was Merib-baal, 1 Chr. viii. 34) was invited to court; but whether from the simplicity and bashfulness of a youth who had lived in a nomad country, and awed by the splendour of a court, or apprehending some danger from the supplanter of his family, he betrayed so much nervous alarm that he required all the tender and soothing words David kindly spake to reassure him (v. 7).

7. I . . . will restore thee all the land of Saul thy father—i. e., grandfather; his private estate at Gibeah. thou shalt eat bread at my table continually. A place at the royal table on public days was assigned him, as is still the custom with Eastern monarchs. Saul's family estate, which had fallen to David in right of his wife (Num. xxvii. 8), or been forfeited to the crown by Ish-bosheth's rebellion (ch. xii. 8), was provided (v. 11; also ch. xix. 28) for enabling him to maintain an establishment suitable to his rank, and Ziba appointed steward to manage it, on the condition of receiving one-half of the produce in remuneration of his labour and expense, while the other moiety was to be paid as rent to the owner of the land (ch. xix. 29). This is a very common arrangement in farming the soil in Eastern countries, especially when the proprietor furnishes the seed.

10. Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants. The mention of his sons, and the slaves in his house, was to show that Mephibosheth would be

honoured with an equipage 'as one of the king's sons.' 12. Mephibosheth had a young son, whose name was Micah. Whether born before or after his residence in Jerusalem cannot be ascertained. But through him the name and memory of the excellent Jonathan was preserved (see on 1 Chr. viii. 34, 35; ix. 40, 41).

CHAP. X. 1-5.—DAVID'S MESSENGERS, SENT TO COMFORT HANUN, ARE DISGRACEFULLY TREATED. 1. king of the children of Ammon died, and Hanun his son reigned in his stead [דָּוִד], graciously regarded, compassionate; Septuagint, Ἀνυπαυγ]. 2. I will show kindness unto Hanun, the son of Nahash, as his father showed kindness unto me. It is probable that this was the Nahash against whom Saul waged war at Jabesh-gilead (1 Sam. xi. 11). David, on leaving Gath, where his life was exposed to danger, found an asylum with the king of Moab; and as Nahash, king of the Ammonites, was his nearest neighbour, it may be that, during the feud between Saul and David, he, through enmity to the former, was kind and hospitable to David. 3. the princes of the children of Ammon said unto Hanun. Their suspicion was not warranted either by any overt act or by any cherished design of David: it must have originated in their knowledge of the denunciations of God's law against them (Deut. xxiii. 3-6), and of David's policy in stedfastly adhering to it. 4. Hanun . . . shaved off the one half of their beards. From the long flowing dress of the Hebrews and other Orientals, the curtailment of

5 the middle, *even* ^bto their buttocks, and sent them away. When they told *it* unto David, he sent to meet them, because the men were greatly ashamed: and the king said, Tarry at ²Jericho until your beards be grown, and *then* return.

6 And when the children of Ammon saw that they ^cstank before David, the children of Ammon sent and hired ^dthe Syrians of Beth-rehob, and the Syrians of Zoba, twenty thousand footmen, and of king Maacah a 7 thousand men, and of ³Ish-tob twelve thousand men. And when David 8 heard of *it*, he sent Joab, and all the host of ^ethe mighty men. And the children of Ammon came out, and put the battle in array at the entering in of the gate: and the Syrians of Zoba, and of Rehob, and Ish-tob, and 9 Maacah, *were* by themselves in the field. When Joab saw that the front of the battle was against him before and behind, he chose of all the choice *men* of Israel, and put *them* in array against the Syrians: and the rest of the people he delivered into the hand of Abishai his brother, 11 that he might put *them* in array against the children of Ammon. And he said, If the Syrians be too strong for me, then thou shalt help me; but if the children of Ammon be too strong for thee, then I will come and help 12 thee. Be ^fof good courage, and let us ^gplay the men for our people, and for the cities of our God: and ^hthe LORD do that which seemeth him good.

13 And Joab drew nigh, and the people that *were* with him, unto the 14 battle against the Syrians: and they fled before him. And when the children of Ammon saw that the Syrians were fled, then fled they also before Abishai, and entered into the city. So Joab returned from the children of Ammon, and came to Jerusalem.

15 And when the Syrians saw that they were smitten before Israel, they 16 gathered themselves together. And Hadarezer sent, and brought out the Syrians that *were* beyond the ⁴river: and they came to Helam; and 17 ⁵Shobach the captain of the host of Hadarezer *went* before them. And when it was told David, he gathered all Israel together, and passed over Jordan, and came to Helam. And the Syrians set themselves in array

B C. 1037.
^b Isa. 20. 4.
 Isa. 47. 2.
 Jer. 13. 22, 23.
 Mic. 1. 11.
 Nah. 3. 5.
² Probably some village near o it.
 Compare Josh. 6. 24 with
 1 Ki. 16. 34.
^c Gen. 34. 10.
 Ex. 5. 21.
 1 Sam. 13. 4.
^d ch. 8. 3, 5.
³ Or, the men of Tob.
 Judg. 11. 3. 5.
^e ch. 23. 8.
^f Deut. 51. 6.
 2 Chr. 19. 11.
^g 1 Sam. 4. 9.
 1 Cor 16. 13.
^h 1 Sam 3. 18. ch. 15. 26. ch. 22. 31, 32.
 Ps. 20. 7.
 Ps. 37. 3, 5, 40.
 Ps. 44. 5, 6.
⁴ That is, Euphrates.
⁵ Or, Shophach,
 1 Chr. 19. 16.

their garments must have given them an aspect of gross indelicacy and ludicrousness. Besides, a knowledge of the extraordinary respect and value which has always been attached, and the gross insult that is implied in any indignity offered, to the beard in the East, will account for the shame which the deputies felt, and the determined spirit of revenge which burst out in all Israel on learning the outrage. Two instances are related in the modern history of Persia of similar insults by kings of haughty and imperious temper, involving the nation in war (see other instances in *Joseph Wolff's* 'Researches and Missionary Labours,' p. 496; and *Graham's* 'Jordan and the Rhine,' p. 189); and we need not therefore be surprised that David vowed revenge for this wanton and public outrage. 5. Tarry at Jericho—or in the neighbourhood, after crossing the fords of the Jordan.

6-14.—THE AMMONITES OVERCOME.
 6. when the children of Ammon saw that they stank before David. To chastise those insolent and inhospitable Ammonites, who had violated the common law of nations, David sent a large army under the command of Joab, while they, informed of the impending attack, made energetic preparations to repel it by engaging the services of an immense number of Syrian mercenaries. Beth-rehob—the capital of the low-lying region between Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon. Zoba.—(see on ch. viii. 3.) of king Maacah. His territories lay on the other side of Jordan, near Gilead (Deut. iii. 14). Ish-tob—i. e., the men of Tob; the place

of Jephthah's marauding adventures (see also 1 Chr. xix. 6; Ps. lx., title). As the Israelite soldiers poured into the Ammonite territory, that people met them at the frontier town of Medeba (1 Chr. xix. 7-9), the native troops covering the city, while the Syrian mercenaries lay at some distance encamped in the fields. In making the attack, Joab divided his forces into two separate detachments—the one of which, under the command of his brother Abishai, was to concentrate the attack upon the city, while he himself marched against the overwhelming host of mercenary auxiliaries. It was a just and necessary war that had been forced on Israel, and they could hope for the blessing of God upon their arms. With great judgment the battle opened against the mercenaries, who could not stand against the furious onset of Joab; and not feeling the cause their own, consulted their safety by flight. The Ammonites, who had placed their chief dependence upon a foreign aid, then retreated to intrench themselves within the walls of the town.

14. So Joab returned . . . and came to Jerusalem. Probably the season was too far advanced for entering on a siege.
 15-19. THE SYRIANS DEFEATED.
 16. Hadarezer sent, and brought out the Syrians that were beyond the river [עַבְרַת]; Septuagint, τὴν Συρίαν ἐκ τοῦ πέραν τοῦ ποταμοῦ χαλαράκ]. This prince had enjoyed a breathing-time after his defeat (ch. viii. 3); and, alarmed at the increasing power and greatness of David, as well

- 18 against David, and fought with him. And the Syrians fled before Israel; and David slew *the men of* seven hundred chariots of the Syrians, and forty thousand ⁶horsemen, and smote Shobach the captain of their host, and all Israel; And when all the kings *that were* ¹servants to Hadazer saw that they were smitten before Israel, they made peace with Israel, and served them. So the Syrians feared to help the children of Ammon any more.
- 11 AND it came to pass, ¹after the year was expired, at the time when kings go forth *to battle*, that "David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the children of Ammon, and besieged Rabbah. But David tarried still at Jerusalem.
- 2 And it came to pass in an evening-tide, that David arose from off his bed, ²and walked upon the roof of the king's house: and from the roof he ³saw a woman washing herself; and the woman *was* very beautiful to
- 3 look upon. And David sent and enquired after the woman. And *one* said, *Is* not this ²Bath-sheba, the daughter of ³Eliam, the wife of ⁴Uriah the Hittite? And David sent messengers, and took her: and she came in unto him, and ⁵he lay with her; ⁴for she was ¹purified from her
- 5 uncleanness: and she returned unto her house. And the woman *con-*
- 6 ceived, and sent and told David, and said, ⁹*I am* with child. And David

B C. 10. 7.

⁶ 1 Chr 19. 18.
footmen.
¹ Gen. 14. 4.

CHAP. II.
¹ at the
re'urn of
the year.

^a 1 Chr. 20. 1.
^b Deut. 22. 8.

^c Job 31. 1.
² Or, Bath-
shuah.

³ Or,
Ammiel.

^d ch 21. 33.
^e Jas. 1. 11.

⁴ Or, and
when she
had puri-
fied her-
self, etc.,
she re-
turned.

^f Lev. 15. 19.
⁹ Lev. 20. 10.

as being an ally of the Ammonites, levied a vast army, not only in Syria, but in Mesopotamia, amongst his tributaries and vassals (*v. 19*), to invade the Hebrew kingdom. Shobach, his general, in pursuance of this design, had marched his troops as far as Helam, a border-town of Eastern Manasseh, when David, crossing the Jordan by forced marches, suddenly surprised, defeated, and dispersed them. 18. seven hundred chariots of the Syrians. In the parallel passage of 1 Chr. xix. 18 the reading is *seven thousand*, which is more probable. The result of this great and decisive victory was, that all the petty kingdoms of Syria submitted, and became his tributaries (see on 1 Chr. xix. : cf. Ps. lx., title).

CHAP. XI. 1.—JOAB BESIEGES RABBAH.

1. at the time when kings go forth to battle. The return of spring was the usual time of commencing military operations. This expedition took place the year following the war against the Syrians; and it was entered upon because the disaster of the former campaign having fallen chiefly upon the Syrian mercenaries, the Ammonites had not been punished for their insult to the ambassadors. David sent Joab, and his servants . . . they destroyed the children of Ammon. The powerful army that Joab commanded ravaged the Ammonite country, and committed great havoc both on the people and their property, until, having reached the capital, they besieged Rabbah. "Rabbah" denotes a great city. This metropolis of the Ammonites was situated in the mountainous tract of Gilead, not far from the source of the Arnon. Extensive ruins are still found on its site. But David tarried still at Jerusalem [צד], sat still; Septuagint, ἕκαθισεν]. At the time when kings go forth to battle, king David remained at home, from indolence or self-indulgence. The latter supposition is generally adopted, as affording the true solution, the key to the crime he perpetrated.

'Queritur Ægisthus, quâ re esset factus adulter; In promptu res est; desidiosus erat.'

2-13.—DAVID COMMITS ADULTERY WITH BATH-SHEBA.

2. in an evening-tide, that David arose from off his bed. The Hebrews, like other Orientals, rose at day-break, and always took a nap during

the heat of the day, and afterwards they lounged in the cool of the evening on their flat-roofed terraces. It is probable that as the climate of Palestine in spring is exceedingly mild and balmy, the custom may have obtained amongst the Hebrews, as is still universal in Persia and other Eastern countries, of sleeping on the house-top. The repose in the open air is much more refreshing than in the confinement of a room (see *Morier's* 'Second Journey to Persia'). Most of the people in modern Palestine sleep there in warm weather still. 3. *one* said—*lit.*, he said to himself. Is not this Bath-sheba, &c. [בַּת-שֶׁבַע], daughter of the oath; or Bathshua (1 Chr. iii. 5); Septuagint, Βυρσαβέη]. She seems to have been a celebrated beauty, whose renown had already reached the ears of David, as happens in the East, from reports carried by the women from harem to harem. Bath-sheba, the daughter of Eliam—or Ammiel (1 Chr. iii. 5), one of David's worthies (ch. xxiii. 34), and son of Abithophel. 4. David sent messengers, and took her. The despotic kings of the East, when they take a fancy for a woman, send an officer to the house where she lives, who announces it to be the royal pleasure she should remove to the palace. An apartment is there assigned to her, and if she is chosen queen, the monarch orders the announcement to be made that he has taken her to be his chief wife. Many instances in modern Oriental history show the ease and despatch with which such secondary marriages are contracted, and a new beauty added to the royal seraglio. But David had to make a promise, or rather an express stipulation, to Bath-sheba, before she complied with the royal will (1 Ki. i. 13, 15, 17, 28); for, in addition to her transcendent beauty, she appears to have been a woman of superior talents and address in obtaining the object of her ambition; and in her securing that her son should succeed on the throne—in her promptitude to give notice of her pregnancy—in her activity in defeating Adonijah's natural expectation of succeeding to the crown—in her dignity as king's mother—we see very strong indications of the ascendancy she gained and maintained over David, who perhaps had ample leisure and opportunity to discover the punishment of this unhappy connection in more ways than one (*Taylor's* 'Calmet'). 5. the woman conceived,

- sent to Joab, saying, Send me Uriah the Hittite. And Joab sent Uriah to David.
- 7 And when Uriah was come unto him, David demanded of him ⁵how
- 8 Joab did, and how the people did, and how the war prospered. And David said to Uriah, ⁶Go down to thy house, and ⁷wash thy feet. And Uriah departed out of the king's house, and there ⁸followed him a mess
- 9 of meat from the king. But ⁹Uriah slept at the door of the king's house with all the servants of his lord, and went not down to his house. And when they had told David, saying, Uriah went not down unto his house, David said unto Uriah, Camest thou not from *thy* journey? why *then* didst
- 11 thou not go down unto thine house? And Uriah said unto David, ¹⁰The ark, and Israel, and Judah, abide in tents; and my ¹¹lord Joab, and the servants of my lord, are ¹²encamped in the open fields; shall I then go into mine house, to eat and to drink, and to lie with my wife? As thou
- 12 livest, and as thy soul liveth, I will not do this thing. And David said to Uriah, ¹³Tarry here to-day also, and to-morrow I will let thee depart.
- 13 So Uriah abode in Jerusalem that day and the morrow. And when David had called him, he did eat and drink before him; and ¹⁴he made him drunk: and at even he went out to lie on his bed with the servants of his lord, but went not down to his house.
- 14 And it came to pass in the morning, that David ¹⁵wrote a letter to
- 15 Joab, and sent *it* by the hand of Uriah. And he wrote in the letter, saying, Set ye Uriah in the fore front of the ¹⁶hottest battle, and retire ye ¹⁷from him, that he may ¹⁸be smitten, and die.
- 16 And it came to pass, when Joab observed the city, that he assigned
- 17 Uriah unto a place where he knew that valiant men *were*. And the men of the city went out and fought with Joab: and there fell *some* of the people of the servants of David; and Uriah the Hittite died also.
- 18 Then Joab sent and told David all the things concerning the war;
- 19 and charged the messenger, saying, When thou hast made an end of
- 20 telling the matters of the war unto the king, and if so be that the king's wrath arise, and he say unto thee, Wherefore approached ye so nigh unto the city when ye did fight? knew ye not that they would shoot from the
- 21 wall? Who smote ¹⁹Abimelech the son of ²⁰Jerubbesheth? did not a

B C. 035.

^o of the peace of, etc.

^A Ps. 41. 21.

¹ Ps. 55 21.

⁴ Gen. 19. 4.

¹ Gen. 19. 2.

⁶ went out after him.

⁷ Job 5. 12-14.

¹ Pro. 21. 30.

² ch. 7 2. 6.

¹ Sam. 4. 4.

¹ ch. 10. 6.

¹ Matt. 10. 25.

² Tim. 2. 3.

¹¹ Job 20. 12-14.

¹ Jer. 2 27.

²³ 27.

^o Gen. 19. 33, 35.

¹ Ex. 32 21.

¹ Ki. 20. 16-21.

¹ Pro. 20 1.

¹ Hab. 2 13.

² 1 Ki. 21. 8.

¹ Ps. 19. 13.

¹ Eccl. 8. 11.

¹ Jer. 17. 9.

⁷ strong.

⁸ from after him.

⁹ ch. 12. 9.

⁷ Jud. 9. 53.

² Sam. . 0. 21.

¹ Job 31. 3.

¹ Jer. 40. 10.

² Judg. 6 32.

¹ Judg. 7 1.

¹ Jerubbah.

and sent and told David. Some immediate measures of concealing their sin were necessary, as well for the king's honour as for her safety, for death was the punishment of an adulteress (Lev. xx. 10), and therefore Uriah was ordered home from the war.

8. Go down to thy house. This sudden recall, the manner of the king, his frivolous questions (c. 7), and his urgency for Uriah to sleep in his own house, probably awakened suspicions of the cause of this procedure. there followed him a mess of meat from the king. A portion of meat from the royal table, sent to one's own house or lodging, is one of the greatest compliments which an Eastern prince can pay. 9. But Uriah slept at the door of the king's house. It is customary for servants, especially the porters or doorkeepers, to sleep in the porch or long gallery outside the doors—sometimes on a stone bench, sometimes on a form made of palm-fronds, and very often, indeed for the most part, on the ground, having nothing but a stone for a pillow; and the guards of the Hebrew king did the same. Whatever his secret suspicions might have been, Uriah's refusal to indulge in the enjoyment of domestic pleasure, and his determination to sleep "at the door of the king's house," arose (v. 11) from a high and honourable sense of military duty and propriety. 11. Israel, and Judah, abide in tents [בְּמִטָּה]—properly in booths. Its use, how-

ever, in this passage to signify tents, overturns one of the favourite objections of *Colenso* (see on Exod. xii. 37). But, doubtless, the resolution of Uriah was overruled by that Providence which brings good out of evil, and which has recorded this sad episode for the warning of the Church.

14 27.—URIAH SLAIN.

14. David wrote a letter to Joab . . . 15. Set ye Uriah in the fore front of the hottest battle. The various arts and stratagems by which the king tried to cajole Uriah, till at last he resorted to the horrid crime of murder, the cold-blooded cruelty of despatching the letter by the hands of the gallant but much-wronged soldier himself, the enlistment of Joab to be a partaker of his sin, the heartless affectation of mourning, and the indecent haste of his marriage with Bath-sheba, have left an indelible stain upon the character of David, and exhibit a painfully humiliating proof of the awful lengths to which the best of men may go when they want the restraining grace of God.

18. Then Joab sent and told David, &c. The report needs no comment. It is sufficient to say that it was worthy of the quarter from which it came; and in possessing so terrible a secret as the premeditated murder of Uriah, the wily Joab perceived his advantage, not only for an understanding on account of any military errors he might have committed, but for all other delinquencies.

woman cast a piece of a millstone upon him from the wall, that he died in Thebez? why went ye nigh the wall? then say thou, Thy servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also.

22 So the messenger went, and came and showed David all that Joab
23 had sent him for. And the messenger said unto David, Surely the men
24 prevailed against us, and came out unto us into the field, and we were
25 upon them even unto the entering of the gate. And the shooters shot
from off the wall upon thy servants; and *some* of the king's servants be
25 dead, and thy servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also. Then David said
unto the messenger, Thus shalt thou say unto Joab. Let not this thing
displease thee; for the sword devoureth ¹⁰one as well as another: make
thy battle more strong against the city, and overthrow it; and encourage
thou him.

26 And when the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband was dead,
27 she mourned for her husband. And when the mourning was past, David
sent and fetched her to his house, and she became his wife, and bare
him a son.

12 But the thing that David had done ¹¹displeased the LORD. AND the
LORD sent Nathan unto David. And ^ahe came unto him, and ^bsaid unto
him, There were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor.

2, The rich *man* had exceeding many flocks and herds; but the poor *man*

3 had nothing, save one little ewe-lamb, which he had bought and nourished
up; and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat
of his own ¹meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and

4 was unto him as a daughter. And there came a traveller unto the rich
man; and he spared to take of his own flock, and of his own herd, to
dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him; but took the poor
man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him.

5 And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said
to Nathan, As the LORD liveth, the man that hath done this *thing* ²shall
6 surely die: and he shall restore the lamb ^cfourfold, because he did this
thing, and because he had no pity.

7 And Nathan said to David, Thou *art* the man. Thus saith the LORD
God of Israel, I ^aanointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee
8 out of the hand of Saul; and I gave thee thy master's house, and thy
master's wives into thy bosom, and gave thee the house of Israel and of
Judah; and if *that had been* too little, I would moreover have given

9 unto thee such and such things. Wherefore ^ehast thou ^fdespised the

B. C. 1011.

⁹ be evil in

thine eyes.

¹⁰ so and

such.

Ecd. 9. 11,

12

¹¹ Judg. 3. 2-

5.

Judg. 5. 13-

16.

ch. 12. 9.

¹¹ was evil in

the eyes of.

Job. 10. 14.

Job 11. 11.

Job 14. 16.

Ps. 6. 4.

Ps. 45. 7.

Pa. 1.30. 1-5.

Pro. 15. 9.

Hab. 1. 13.

CHAP. 12.

^a Ps. 51,

title.

^b Judg. 9. 6-

15.

ch. 14. 5.

1 Ki. 20. 35.

Isa. 5. 3.

Matt. 21.33-

45.

Luke 15.11.

¹ morsel.² is a child

of death,

or, is wor-

thy to die.

^c Ex. 22. 1.

Luke 19. 8.

^d 1 Sam. 16.

13.

ch. 7. 8.

^e 1 Sam. 15.

19.

ch. 11. 4, 14-

17.

Heb. 10. 29.

^f Num. 15.31.

Isa. 5. 24.

CHAP. XII. 1-6.—NATHAN'S PARABLE.

1. the Lord sent Nathan unto David. The use of parables is a favourite style of speaking amongst Oriental people, especially in the conveyance of unwelcome truth. This exquisitely pathetic parable was founded on a common custom of pastoral people who have pet lambs, which they bring up with their children, and which they address in terms of endearment. The atrocity of the real, however, far exceeded that of the fictitious offence.

5. the man that hath done this thing shall surely die. This award was more severe than the case deserved, or than was warranted by the divine statute (Exod. xxii. 1). The sympathies of the king had been deeply enlisted, his indignation aroused, but his conscience was still asleep; and at the time when he was most fatally indulgent to his own sins, he was most ready to condemn the delinquencies and errors of others.

7-23.—HE APPLIES IT TO DAVID, WHO CONFESSES HIS SIN, AND IS PARDONED.

7. Nathan said to David, Thou art the man. These awful words pierced his heart, aroused his

conscience, and brought him to his knees. The sincerity and depth of his penitential sorrow are evinced by the psalms he composed, (Ps. xxxii.; li; ciii.) He was pardoned, so far as related to the restoration of the Divine favour. But as from his high character for piety, and his eminent rank in society, his deplorable fall was calculated to do great injury to the cause of religion, it was necessary that God should testify His abhorrence of sin by leaving even His own servant to reap the bitter temporal fruits. David was not himself doomed, according to his own view of what justice demanded (v. 5); but he had to suffer a quadruple expiation in the successive deaths of four sons, besides a lengthened train of other evils. 8. I gave thee thy master's house, and thy master's wives. The phraseology means nothing more than that God, in His providence, had given David, as king of Israel, everything that was Saul's. The history furnishes conclusive evidence that he never actually married any of the wives of Saul. But the harem of the preceding king belongs, according to Oriental notions, as a part of the regalia, to his successor (see on ch. iii. 7; xvi. 21;

commandment of the LORD, to do evil in his sight? ⁹Thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon. Now therefore ⁴the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy

11 wife. Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and I will ²take thy wives before thine eyes, and give *them* unto thy neighbour, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun. For thou didst *it* secretly; ¹but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun.

13 And ⁴David said unto Nathan, ¹I have sinned against the LORD.

And Nathan said unto David, The LORD also hath ^mput away thy sin;

14 thou shalt not die. Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD ⁿto blaspheme, the child also

15 *that is* born unto thee shall surely die. And Nathan departed unto his house.

And the LORD ^ostruck the child that Uriah's wife bare unto David,

16 and it was very sick. David therefore ²besought God for the child; and

17 David ³fasted, and went in, and lay ^qall night upon the earth. And the elders of his house arose, and *went* to him, to raise him up from the

18 earth: but he would not, neither did he eat bread with them. And it came to pass on the seventh day, that the child died. And the servants of David feared to tell him that the child was dead: for they said, Behold, while the child was yet alive, we spake unto him, and he would not hearken unto our voice: how will he then ⁴vex himself, if we tell him

19 that the child is dead? But when David saw that his servants whispered, David perceived that the child was dead: therefore David said unto his

20 servants, Is the *'child* dead? And they said, He is dead. Then David arose from the earth, and washed, and ^ranointed *himself*, and changed his apparel, and came into the house of the LORD, and ^sworshipped: then he came to his own house; and when he required, they set bread

21 before him, and he did eat. Then said his servants unto him, What thing *is* this that thou hast done? Thou didst fast and weep for the child, *while it was* alive; but when the child was dead, thou didst rise

22 and eat bread. And he said, While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept: ^tfor I said, Who can tell *whether* God will be gracious to me, that

23 the child may live? But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? ^uI shall go to him, but ^vhe shall not return to me.

B. C. 1031.

⁹ ch. 11. 15.

27.

^a ch. 13. 22,

23.

ch. 18. 14.

Amos 7. 9.

^f Deut. 28. 30.^j ch. 16. 22.^k 1 Sam. 15.

21.

^t ch. 24. 10.

Jcb 7. 50.

Is. 32. 5.

Ps. 51. 4.

Pro. 28. 12.

^m Ps. 32. 1.

Mic. 7. 18.

Zech. 3. 4.

ⁿ Isa. 52. 5.

Eze. 33. 20.

^o Gen. 4. 7.

Rom. 2. 24.

^p Amos 3. 2.^q Isa. 26. 16.

Jer. 18. 8.

Jer. 50. 4.

^r 3 fasted a

fast.

Judg. 20. 26.

Joel 1. 14.

^s ch. 13. 31.^t do hurt.^u Ruth 3. 3.^v Job 1. 20.

1's. 15. 6-8.

Ps. 90. 5, 9.

9.

Ps. 103. 1.

8-7.

Pro. 3. 7.

1 ro. 14. 16,

27.

Pro. 16. 6.

Lam. 3. 40,

41.

^t Isa. 33. 1, 5.

Jon. 3. 9.

^u 2 Cor. 5. 1-8.

Heb. 11. 19.

Heb. 13. 14.

^v Job 7. 8, 9.

1 Ki. ii. 22). 11. I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, &c. The prophet speaks of God threatening to do what He only permitted to be done. The fact is, that David's loss of character, by the discovery of his crimes, tended, in the natural course of things, to diminish the respect of his family, to weaken the authority of his government, and to encourage the prevalence of many disorders throughout his kingdom.

15. the Lord struck the child . . . and it was very sick. The first visible chastisement inflicted on David appeared on the person of that child which was the evidence and monument of his guilt. His domestics were surprised at his conduct, and in explanation of the singularity it is necessary to remark that the custom in the East is to leave the nearest relative of a deceased person to the full and undisturbed indulgence of his grief, till, on the third or fourth day at farthest (John xi. 17), the other relatives and friends visit him, invite him to eat, lead him to a bath, and bring him a change of dress, which is necessary, from his having sat or lain on the ground. The sur-

prise of David's servants, then, who had seen his bitter anguish while the child was sick, arose apparently from this, that when he found it was dead, he who had so deeply lamented, arose of himself from the earth, without waiting for their coming about him, immediately bathed and anointed himself with perfumes, as Orientals do when they go into society (Ps. xlv. 8; Prov. vii. 17; Amos vi. 6), instead of appearing as a mourner, and, after worshipping God with solemnity, returned to his wonted repast, without any interposition of others. In this short passage the Divine names are used with greater variation than usual: v. 15 has [יהוה] Jehovah (the Lord); v. 16 has [אלהים] God; and in v. 22 the Hebrew text has [יהוה] Jehovah (the Lord), where in our version is God. Whether the sacred historian was guided in the employment of these names by some unknown principle, or he used them indiscriminately, it is difficult to decide. But certainly their application in this narrative is not explicable on any theory yet propounded, at all events not

- 24 And David comforted Bath-sheba his wife, and went in unto her, and lay with her; and ²she bare a son, and he called his name ⁵Solomon: and the LORD loved him. And he sent by the hand of Nathan the prophet; and he called his name ⁶Jedidiah, because of the LORD.
- 26 And Joab fought against ⁷Rabbah of the children of Ammon, and took 27 the royal city. And Joab sent messengers to David, and said, I have 28 fought against Rabbah, and have taken ⁷the city of waters. Now therefore gather the rest of the people together, and encamp against the city, 29 and take it: lest I take the city, and ⁸it be called after my name. And David gathered all the people together, and went to Rabbah, and fought 30 against it, and took it. And he took their king's crown from off his head, the weight whereof *was* a talent of gold with the precious stones: and it was *set* on David's head. And he brought forth the spoil of the 31 city ⁹in great abundance. And he brought forth the people that *were* therein, and ¹⁰put *them* under saws, and under harrows of iron, and under axes of iron, and made them pass through the brick-kiln: and thus did he unto all the cities of the children of Ammon. So David and all the people returned unto Jerusalem.
- 13 AND it came to pass after this, ^athat Absalom the son of David had a fair sister, whose name *was* ^bTamar; and Amnon the son of David loved 2 her. And Amnon was so vexed, that he fell sick for his sister Tamar; for she *was* a virgin: and Amnon thought it hard for him to do any thing

B. C. 1031.

^w Matt 1. 6.⁵ That is, Peaceable and perfect.⁶ That is, Beloved of the LORD⁷ That part where the cisterns were.⁸ my name be called upon it.⁹ very great.¹⁰ Or, made them saw wood and stones dig iron, and labour about furnaces.

CHAP. 13.

^a c' 3. 2, 3.^b 1 Chr. 3. 9.

by that of *Hengstenberg* ('Pentateuch on the Names of God,' i., pp. 213-231).

24-25.—**SOLOMON IS BORN.**

24. Bath-sheba . . . bare a son, and he called his name Solomon—i.e., peaceable, "a man of rest" (see on 1 Chr. xxii. 9). But Nathan gave him the name of Jedidiah [יְדִידְיָהּ]; i.e., friend of, or beloved by, Jehovah. David also signifies beloved. 'Jedidiah, therefore, was a second David, and the two in type were but one in fact and future fulfilment' (*Barrett's* 'Minutiae of Prophecy'), by command of God, or perhaps only as an expression of God's love. This love, and the noble gifts with which he was endowed, considering the criminality of the marriage from which he sprang, is a remarkable instance of Divine goodness and grace.

26-31.—**RABBAH IS TAKEN.**

26. Joab fought against Rabbah. The time during which this siege lasted, since the intercourse with Bath-sheba—and the birth of at least one child, if not two, occurred during the progress of it—probably extended over two years. 27. the city of waters. Rabbah, like Aroer, was divided into two parts—one, the lower town, insulated by the winding course of the Jabbok, which flowed almost round it, and the upper and stronger town, called the royal city, from its being the seat of the Ammonite government, and containing the palace of the king. Here was kept the iron bedstead of Og, as an antique relic, indicating the stature and strength of the gigantic king of Bashan. The first was taken by Joab, but the honour of capturing so strongly a fortified place as the other was an honour reserved for the king himself. 28. encamp against the city, and take it. It has always been characteristic of Oriental despots to monopolize military honours; and as the ancient world knew nothing of the modern refinement of kings gaining victories by their generals, so Joab sent for David to command the final assault in person. A large force was levied for the purpose. David, without much difficulty, captured the royal city, and obtained possession of its immense wealth. Lest I take the city, and it be called after my name. The circumstance of a city receiving a new name

after some great person, as Alexandria, Constantinople, Hyderabad, is of frequent occurrence in the ancient and modern history of the East. 30. he took their king's crown from off his head. While the treasures of the city were given as plunder to his soldiers, David reserved to himself the crown, which was of rarest value. Its great weight makes it probable that it was, like many ancient crowns, not worn, but suspended over the head, or fixed on a canopy on the top of the throne; and its value a talent of gold = £5,000 sterling. the precious stones—Hebrew, stone; according to *Josephus*, a sardonyx,—was a round ball composed of pearls and other jewels, which was in the crown, and probably taken out of it, to be inserted in David's own crown. 31. he brought forth the people . . . and put them under saws, &c. This excessive severity and employment of tortures which the Hebrews on no other occasion are recorded to have practised, must have been resorted to as an act of retributive justice on a people who were infamous for their cruelties (1 Sam. xi. 2; Amos i. 13). *Josephus* ('Antiquities,' b. vii., ch. vii., sec. 5), who gives the same account as in our version, speaks of the conqueror torturing the Ammonites before putting them to death. But for the sake of humanity, and the honour of David's name, there is reason to believe that no such barbarities were inflicted, and that the language of the sacred historian is susceptible of a meaning consistent with the infliction of much milder punishment. He put them (to labour) in saws, iron mines, and brick-kilns. In other words, he reduced the captive Ammonites to the condition of slaves, employing them in such manual services, as sawyers, miners, hewers of wood, and similar exhausting occupations, as were suited only to the most humble and menial condition (see on 1 Chr. xx. 3).

CHAP. XIII. 1-5.—**AMNON LOVES TAMAR.**

1. Tamar—daughter of David by Maachah (ch. iii. 3). 2. for she was a virgin. Unmarried daughters were kept in close seclusion from the company of men; no strangers, nor even their relatives of the other sex, being permitted to see them without the presence of witnesses. Of

3 to her. But Amnon had a friend, whose name was Jonadab, ^cthe son of
 4 Shimeah, David's brother: and Jonadab was a very subtil man. And he
 said unto him, Why art thou, being the king's son, ¹lean ²from day to
 day? wilt thou not tell me? And Amnon said unto him, ^dI love Tamar,
 5 my brother Absalom's sister. And Jonadab said unto him, Lay thee
 down on thy bed, and make thyself sick: and when thy father cometh to
 see thee, say unto him, I pray thee, let my sister Tamar come and give
 me meat, and dress the meat in my sight, that I may see it, and eat it at
 6 her hand. So Amnon lay down, and made himself sick: and when the
 king was come to see him, Amnon said unto the king, I pray thee, let
 Tamar my sister come and ^emake me a couple of cakes in my sight, that
 I may eat at her hand.
 7 Then David sent home to Tamar, saying, Go now to thy brother
 8 Amnon's house, and dress him meat. So Tamar went to her brother
 Amnon's house; and he was laid down. And she took ³flour, and
 9 kneaded it, and made cakes in his sight, and did bake the cakes. And
 she took a pan, and poured them out before him: but he refused to eat.
 And Amnon said, ^fHave out all men from me. And they went out every
 10 man from him. And Amnon said unto Tamar, Bring the meat into the
 chamber, that I may eat of thine hand. And Tamar took the cakes
 which she had made, and brought them into the chamber to Amnon her
 11 brother. And when she had brought them unto him to eat, he ^gtook hold
 12 of her, and said unto her, Come lie with me, my sister. And she answered
 him, Nay, my brother, do not ⁴force me; for ⁵no such thing ought to be
 13 done in Israel: do not thou this ^hfolly. And I, whither shall I cause my
 shame to go? and as for thee, thou shalt be as one of the fools in Israel.
 Now therefore, I pray thee, speak unto the king; ⁱfor he will not withhold
 14 me from thee. Howbeit he would not hearken unto her voice; but, being
 stronger than she, forced ^jher, and lay with her.
 15 Then Amnon hated her ^kexceedingly; so that the hatred wherewith
 he hated her was greater than the love wherewith he had loved her.
 16 And Amnon said unto her, Arise, be gone. And she said unto him,

B C. 1072.

^c 1 Sam. 16. 9.1 Sam. 17.
13.1 Chr. 2. 13.
1 thin.² morning
by morn-
ing.^d Isa. 3. 9.

Eze. 21. 16.

^e Gen. 18. 6.

Matt. 13. 53.

³ Or. pasta.^f Gen. 45. 1.

Judg. 3. 19.

John 3. 20.

^g Gen. 31. 12.

1 Ro. 7. 13.

Eccl. 7. 26.

Eze. 16. 30-
34.⁴ humble

me.

Gen. 31. 2.

⁵ it ought

not so to

be done.

Lev. 18. 9.

11.

Lev. 20. 17.

^h Gen. 31. 7.

Judg. 19. 23.

Judg. 20. 6.

ⁱ Lev. 18. 9.

11.

Judg. 19. 21.

^j Dent. 22. 25.

k. 12. 11.

^k with great

hatred

greatly.

course, Amnon must have seen Tamar, for he had conceived a violent passion for her, which, though forbidden by the law (Lev. xviii. 11), yet, with the sanction of Abraham's example (Gen. xx. 12), and the common practice in neighbouring countries for princes to marry their half-sisters, he seems not to have considered an improper connection. But he had no means of making it known to her; and the pain of that disappointment preying upon his mind, produced a visible change on his appearance and health. 3. Jonadab, the son of Shimeah—or Shammah (1 Sam. xvi. 9), who was one of David's brothers. Although none of them were promoted to places of honour and emolument under government, probably from the feelings of alienation that subsisted between the king and his brethren, David seems to have acted in a kindly spirit towards their children; and the case of Jonadab is one of several known instances in which he had these young relatives about his court. By the counsel and contrivance of this scheming cousin a plan was devised for obtaining an unrestricted interview with the object of his attachment, my brother Absalom's sister. In Eastern countries, where polygamy prevails, the girls are considered to be under the special care and protection of their uterine brother, who is the guardian of their interests and their honour, even more than their father himself (see on Gen. xxxiv. 6-25).

G-27.—HE DEFILES HER.

6. Amnon lay down, and made himself sick.

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The Orientals are great adepts in feigning sickness, whenever they have any object to accomplish. let Tamar my sister come and make me a couple of cakes [קֶבֶסִּים]—delicate cakes, with stimulating seeds in them; omelets, pancakes [Septuagint, *κολλυρίδας*]. To the king Amnon spoke of Tamar as 'his sister,' a term artfully designed to hoodwink his father; and the request appeared so natural, the delicate appetite of a sick man requiring to be humour'd, that the king promised to send her. The cakes seem to have been a kind of fancy bread, in the preparation of which Oriental ladies take great delight; and Tamar, flattered by the invitation, lost no time in rendering the required service in the house of her sick brother.

12. do not force me. The remonstrances and arguments of Tamar were so affecting and so strong, that had not Amnon been violently goaded on by the lustful passion of which he had become the slave, they must have prevailed with him to desist from his infamous purpose. In bidding him, however, "speak to the king, for he will not withhold me from thee," it is probable that she urged this as her last resource, saying anything she thought would please him, in order to escape for the present out of his hands.

15. Then Amnon hated her exceedingly. It is not unusual for persons instigated by violent and irregular passions to go from one extreme to another. In Amnon's case the sudden revulsion is easily accounted for; the atrocity of his conduct,

- There is no cause: this evil in sending me away is greater than the other*
- 17 that thou didst unto me. But he would not hearken unto her. Then he called his servant that ministered unto him, and said, Put now this
- 18 woman out from me, and bolt the door after her. And she had ^ka garment of divers colours upon her: for with such robes were the king's daughters that were virgins apparelled. Then his servant brought her out, and bolted the door after her.
- 19 And Tamar put ^lashes on her head, and rent her garment of divers colours that was on her, and ^mlaid her hand on her head, and went on crying. And Absalom her brother said unto her, Hath ⁿAmnon thy brother been with thee? But hold now thy peace, my sister: he is thy brother; ^oregard not this thing. So Tamar remained ^pdesolate, in her brother Absalom's house.
- 21 But when king David heard of all these things, he was very wroth.
- 22 And Absalom spake unto his brother Amnon neither good nor bad: for Absalom hated ⁿAmnon, because he had forced his sister Tamar.
- 23 And it came to pass after two full years, that Absalom ^ohad sheep-shearers in Baal-hazor, which is beside ^pEphraim: and Absalom invited
- 24 all the king's sons. And Absalom came to the king, and said, Behold now, thy servant hath sheep-shearers; let the king, I beseech thee, and his
- 25 servants, go with thy servant. And the king said to Absalom, Nay, my son, let us not all now go, lest we be chargeable unto thee. And he pressed
- 26 him: howbeit he would not go, but blessed him. Then said Absalom, If not, I pray thee, let my brother Amnon go with us. And the king said
- 27 unto him, Why should he go with thee? But Absalom pressed him, that he let Amnon and all the king's sons go with him.

B. C. 1033.
^k Gen. 37. 3.
Judg. 5. 30.
1's. 45. 14.
^l Josh. 7. 6.
ch. 1. 2.
Job 2. 12.
Job 12. 6.
^m Jer. 2. 37.
ⁿ Amnon.
^o set not thine heart.
^p and desolate.
Gen. 14. 2.
^q Lev. 19. 17.
18.
Pro. 10. 18.
Pro. 26. 21.
Pro. 27. 4.
Ecc. 7. 9.
Eph. 4. 23.
31.
1 John 2. 9.
11.
1 John 3.
10. 12. 15.
^o Gen. 38. 12.
1 Sam. 25. 4.
2 Ki. 3. 4.
2 Chr. 26. 10.
^p Josh. 17. 18.
Judg. 7. 24.

with all the feelings of shame, remorse, and dread of exposure and punishment, now burst upon his mind, rendering the presence of Tamar intolerably painful to him. 17. bolt the door after her. The street door of houses in the East is always kept barred, the bolts being of wood. In the great mansions, where a porter stands at the outside, this precaution is dispensed with; and the circumstance, therefore, of a prince giving an order so unusual shows the vehement perturbation of Amnon's mind. 18. a garment of divers colours [כְּתוֹן עֲפָרַיִם]—a tunic reaching to the palms of the hands and soles of the feet, worn by the youths of both sexes belonging to the upper classes (*Gesenius*, following *Josephus*, 'Antiquities,' b. vii., ch. viii., sec. 1). Most writers, however, interpret the words as denoting a tunic of various coloured patches sewed together, afterwards woven [Septuagint, χιτών καρποστός], having figures of various colours inwoven or embroidered on them [see on Gen. xxxvii. 3, where the Septuagint has χιτών ποικίλος, a variegated coat]. As embroidery in ancient times was the occupation or pastime of ladies of the highest rank, the possession of these party-coloured garments was a mark of distinction: they were worn exclusively by young women of royal condition. Since the art of manufacturing cloth stuffs has made so great progress, dresses of this variegated description are more common in the East.

19. Tamar put ashes on her head, and rent her garment of divers colours . . . laid her hand on her head, and went on crying—i. e., sobbing. Oriental manners would probably see nothing beyond a strong sense of the injury she had sustained, if Tamar actually rent her dress. But as her veil is not mentioned, it is probable that Amnon had turned her out of doors without it, and she raised her hand with the design to conceal her face. By these signs, especially the

rending of her distinguishing robe, Absalom at once conjectured what had taken place. Recommending her to be silent about it, and not publish her own and her family's dishonour, he took no notice of it to Amnon. But all the while he was in secret 'nursing his wrath, to keep it warm,' and only 'biding his time' to avenge his sister's wrongs, and by the removal of the heir-apparent, perhaps further also his ambitious designs. 20. Tamar remained desolate in her brother Absalom's house. He was her natural protector, as Simeon and Levi were of Dinah (Gen. xxxiv.); and the children of polygamists lived by themselves, as if they constituted different families.

21. when king David heard of all these things, he was very wroth. It cannot be supposed but that David would be grieved and incensed at so gross an outrage, perpetrated by a member of his own family. In our version his indignation merely is declared, without the infliction of any penalty, whether by degradation or banishment from court. [A leniency so singular and misplaced is accounted for by a sentence which is found in the Septuagint version, καὶ οὐκ ἐλόγησε τὸ πνεῦμα Ἀμνὸν τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ ὅτι ἤγάπα αὐτὸν, ὅτι πρωτότοκος αὐτοῦ ἦν, but he did not vex the mind of Amnon his son, for he loved him, because he was his first-born son. (See also *Josephus*, 'Antiquities,' b. vii., ch. viii., sec. 2, where the same clause occurs, whence it may be inferred that both drew it from the same source, the ancient Hebrew text of this book.)] 23. Absalom had sheep-shearers in Baal-hazor, which is beside Ephraim. A sheep-shearing feast is a grand occasion in the East. Absalom, proposing to give such an entertainment at his estate in Baal-hazor, about eight miles north-east of Jerusalem, near a town called Ephraim (Josh. xi. 10), he first invited the king and his court, but the king declining, on account of the heavy expense to which the reception of royalty would subject his son, Absalom then limited the invita-

28 Now Absalom had commanded his servants, saying, Mark ye now when Amnon's ⁹heart is merry with wine, and when I say unto you, Smite Amnon; then kill him, fear not: ¹⁰have not I commanded you? be courageous, and be ¹¹valiant. And the servants of Absalom did unto Amnon as Absalom had commanded: then all the king's sons arose, and every man ¹²gat him up upon his mule, and fled.

30 And it came to pass, while they were in the way, that tidings came to David, saying, Absalom hath slain all the king's sons, and there is not one of them left. Then the king arose, and ¹tore his garments, and ²lay on the earth; and all his servants stood by with their clothes rent. And Jonadab, the son of Shimeah, David's brother, answered and said, Let not my lord suppose *that* they have slain all the young men the king's sons; for Amnon only is dead: for by the ¹³appointment of Absalom this hath been ¹⁴determined from the day that he forced his sister Tamar.

33 Now therefore ¹⁵let not my lord the king take the thing to his heart, to think that all the king's sons are dead: for Amnon only is dead. But Absalom fled.

And the young man that kept the watch lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there came much people by the way of the hill side behind him. And Jonadab said unto the king, Behold, the king's sons come: ¹⁶as thy servant said, so it is. And it came to pass, as soon as he had made an end of speaking, that, behold, the king's sons came, and lifted up their voice and wept: and the king also and all his servants wept ¹⁶very sore.

37 But Absalom fled, and went to ¹⁷Talmai, the son of ¹⁷Ammihud, king of Geshur. And *David* mourned for his son every day.

38 So Absalom fled, and went to ¹⁸Geshur, and was there three years.

39 And *the soul of king David* ¹⁸longed to go forth unto Absalom: for he was comforted concerning Amnon, seeing he was dead.

14 NOW Joab the son of Zeruiah perceived that the king's heart was ²toward Absalom. And Joab sent to ¹⁹Tekoah, and fetched thence a wise woman, and said unto her, I pray thee, feign thyself to be a mourner, and ³put on now mourning apparel, and anoint not thyself with oil, but be as

B. C. 10 0.

⁹ Judg 19. 6.

Ruth 3. 7.

¹ Sam. 25.

36-33.

Ps 101. 15.

¹⁰ Or, will

n't you

since I

have com-

manded

you?

Josh. 1. 9

¹¹ sons of

valour.

¹² rode.¹ ch. 1. 11.² ch 12 16.¹³ mouth.¹⁴ Or,

settled.

¹⁵ ch. 19 19¹⁶ according

to the

word of

thy ser-

vant.

¹⁶ with a

great

weeping

greatly.

¹⁷ ch. 3. 3.¹⁷ Ammihur.¹⁸ ch. 11 23.

ch. 15. 8.

¹⁸ Or, was

consumed

CHAP. 14.

¹ 2 Chr. 11. 6.

Jer. 6. 1.

Amos 1. 1.

⁶ Ruth. 3. 3.

ch. 11. 26.

tion to the king's sons, which David the more readily agreed to, in the hope that it might tend to the promotion of brotherly harmony and union.

28-36.—AMNON IS SLAIN.

28. when Amnon's heart is merry with wine . . . kill him, fear not. On a preconcerted signal from their master, the servants, rushing upon Amnon, slew him at the table, while the rest of the brothers, horror-struck, and apprehending a general massacre, fled in affrighted haste to Jerusalem. 29. every man gat him up upon his mule. This had become the favourite equipage of the great. King David himself had a state mule (1 Ki. i. 33). The Syrian mules are, in activity, strength, and capabilities, still far superior to ours.

30. tidings came to David, saying, Absalom hath slain all the king's sons. It was natural that, in the consternation and tumult caused by so atrocious a deed, an exaggerated report should reach the court, which was plunged into the depths of grief and despair. But the information of Jonadab, who seems to have been privy to the design, and the arrival of the other princes, made known the real extent of the catastrophe.

37-39.—ABSALOM FLEES TO TALMAI.

37. Absalom fled, and went to Talmai. The law as to premeditated murder (Num. xxxv. 21) gave him no hope of remaining with impunity in his own country; the cities of refuge could afford him no sanctuary; and he was compelled to leave the kingdom, taking refuge at the court of Geshur

with his maternal grandfather, who would doubtless approve of his conduct.

39. the soul of king David longed to go forth unto Absalom. The verb, being feminine, does not refer to David, neither is it correct to say that David longed to go forth to Absalom; for there is no ground to suppose that he entertained either an intention or a wish to visit his exiled son. The clause should be rendered: The anger of king David ceased to go (left off going) forth against Absalom. In this sense the verb is used, ch. xi. 1; Gen. xiv. 18, in apparent efforts to pursue the fratricide, and bring him to condign punishment for his crime. [So the Septuagint renders it *καὶ ἐκόσασεν ὁ βασιλεὺς Δαυὶδ τοῦ ἐξελθεῖν πρὸς Ἀβισσαλὸν*, and king David ceased from the labour of going out against Absalom.]

CHAP. XIV. 1-21.—JOAB INSTRUCTS A WOMAN OF TEKOAII.

2. Joab sent to Tekoah, and fetched thence a wise woman. The king was strongly attached to Absalom; and having now got over his sorrow for the violent death of Amnon, was desirous of again enjoying the society of his favourite son, who had now been three long years absent. But a dread of public opinion, and a regard to the public interests, made him hesitate about recalling or pardoning his guilty son; and Joab, whose discerning mind perceived this struggle between parental affection and royal duty, devised a plan for relieving the scruples, and at the same time gratifying the

3 a woman that had a long time mourned for the dead; and come to the king, and speak on this manner unto him. So Joab ^cput the words in her mouth.

4 And when the woman of Tekoah spake to the king, she ^dfell on her face to the ground, and did obeisance, and said, ^eHelp, O king! And the king said unto her, What aileth thee? And she answered, ^f'I am indeed a widow woman, and mine husband is dead. And thy handmaid had two sons, and they two strove together in the field, and *there was* ^g ^hnone to part them, but the one smote the other, and slew him. And, behold, ⁱthe whole family is risen against thine handmaid, and they said, Deliver him that smote his brother, that we may kill him, for the life of his brother whom he slew; and we will destroy the heir also: and so they shall quench my coal which is left, and shall not leave to my husband ^j ^kneither name nor remainder ^lupon the earth. And the king said unto the woman, Go to thine house, and I will give charge concerning thee.

9 And the woman of Tekoah said unto the king, My lord, O king, ^mthe iniquity *be* on me, and on my father's house; ⁿand the king and his throne *be* guiltless. And the king said, Whosoever saith *ought* unto thee, ^obring him to me, and he shall not touch thee any more. Then said she, I pray thee, let the king remember the LORD thy God, ^pthat thou wouldest not suffer ^qthe revengers of blood to destroy any more, lest they destroy my son. And he said, ^rAs the LORD liveth, there shall not one hair of thy son fall to the earth.

12 Then the woman said, Let thine handmaid, I pray thee, speak *one* word ^sunto my lord the king. And he said, Say on. And the woman said, Wherefore then hast thou thought such a thing against the ^tpeople of God? for the king doth speak this thing as one which is faulty, in that ^uthe king doth not fetch home again his ^vbanished. For we ^wmust needs die, and *are* as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up

B C. 1027.

^c Ex. 4. 15.

Num 2. 5.

Deut 18. 18.

Isa. 51. 13.

^d 1 Sam. 23.

41.

ch. 1. 2.

^e 1 save.

Deut. 27. 19.

^f 2 Ki. 6. 26.^g ch. 12. 1.^h 2 no de-

liv-rer

between

them.

ⁱ Num. 37. 19.

Deut. 19. 12.

^j upon the

face of the

earth.

^k Gen. 27. 13.

1 Sam. 25.

21.

Matt 27. 25.

^l 1 Ki. 2. 33.^m that the

revenger

of blood

do not

multiply

to destroy.

ⁿ Num 5. 19.^o 1 Sam. 14.

45.

^p Judg. 20. 2.^q ch. 15. 37.^r Job 31. 15.

wishes, of his master. Having procured a country-woman of superior intelligence and address, he directed her to seek an audience of the king, and by soliciting his royal interposition in the settlement of a domestic grievance, convince him that the life of a murderer might in some cases be saved. Tekoah was about twelve miles south of Jerusalem and six south of Bethlehem; and the design of bringing a woman from such a distance was to prevent either the petitioner being known or the truth of her story easily investigated. But the whole spirit of knowledge and refinement in the kingdom at that time dwelt in the south (cf. 1 Ki. v. 10; 1 Chr. ii. 6; Jer. xlix. 7; Obad. 5). Her speech was in the form of a parable: the circumstances, the language, the manner, well suited to the occasion, represented a case as like David's as it was policy to make it, so as not to be prematurely discovered. Having got the king pledged, she avowed it to be her design to satisfy the royal conscience that, in pardoning Absalom, he was doing nothing more than he would have done in the case of a stranger, where there could be no imputation of partiality. The device succeeded. David traced its origin to Joab; and, secretly pleased at obtaining the judgment of that rough but generally sound-thinking soldier, commissioned him to repair to Geshur, and bring home his exiled son.

7. they shall quench my coal which is left. The life of man is compared in Scripture to a light. To quench the light of Israel (ch. xxi. 17) is to destroy the king's life; to ordain a lamp for any one (Ps. cxxxii. 17) is to grant him posterity; to quench a coal signifies here the extinction of this woman's only remaining hope that the name and family of her husband would be preserved. The

figure is a beautiful one: a coal, live, but lying under a heap of embers—all that she had to rekindle her fire—to light her lamp in Israel.

9. the woman . . . said . . . O king, the iniquity be on me—i. e., the iniquity of arresting the course of justice and pardoning a homicide, whom the Gôel was bound to slay wherever he might find him, unless in a city of refuge. This was exceeding the royal prerogative, and acting in the character of an absolute monarch. The woman's language refers to a common precaution taken by the Hebrew judges and magistrates, solemnly to transfer from themselves the responsibility of the blood they doomed to be shed, either to the accusers or the criminals (ch. i. 16; iii. 25); and sometimes the accusers took it upon themselves (Matt. xxvii. 25).

13. Wherefore then hast thou thought, &c. Her argument may be made clear in the following paraphrase:—You have granted me the pardon of a son who had slain his brother, and yet you will not grant to your subjects the restoration of Absalom, whose criminality is not greater than my son's, since he killed his brother in similar circumstances of provocation. Absalom has reason to complain that he is treated by his own father more sternly and severely than the meanest subject in the realm; and the whole nation will have cause for saying that the king shows more attention to the petition of a humble woman than to the wishes and desires of a whole kingdom. The death of my son is a private loss to my family, while the preservation of Absalom is the common interest of all Israel, who now look to him as your successor on the throne. 14. we . . . are as water spilt on the ground, &c. Metaphors are suggested by natural feelings, or originate from local pecu-

again: ⁵neither doth God respect *any* person: yet doth he ²devise means,
 15 that his banished be not expelled from him. Now therefore that I am
 come to speak of this thing unto my lord the king, *it is* because the people
 have made me afraid: and thy handmaid said, I will now speak unto the
 king; it may be that the king will perform the request of his handmaid.
 16 For the king will hear, to deliver his handmaid out of the hand of the
 man *that would* destroy me and my son together out of the inheritance
 17 of God. Then thine handmaid said, The word of my lord the king shall
 now be ⁶comfortable: for ⁷as an angel of God, so *is* my lord the king, ⁷to
 discern good and bad; therefore the LORD thy God will be with thee.
 18 Then the king answered and said unto the woman, Hide not from me,
 I pray thee, the thing that I shall ask thee. And the woman said, Let
 19 my lord the king now speak. And the king said, *Is not* the hand of Joab
 with thee in all this? And the woman answered and said, *As* thy soul
 liveth, my lord the king, none can turn to the right hand or to the left
 20 from ought that my lord the king hath spoken: for thy servant Joab, he
 bade me, and he put all these words in the mouth of thine handmaid: to
 fetch about this form of speech hath thy servant Joab done this thing:
 and my lord *is* wise, ²according to the wisdom of an angel of God, to
 know all *things* that *are* in the earth.
 21 And the king said unto Joab, Behold now, I have done this thing: go
 22 therefore, bring the young man Absalom again. And Joab fell to the
 ground on his face, and bowed himself, and ⁸thanked the king: and
 Joab said, To-day thy servant knoweth that I have found grace in thy
 sight, my lord, O king, in that the king hath fulfilled the request of ⁹his
 23 servant. So Joab arose, ²and went to Geshur, and brought Absalom to
 24 Jerusalem. And the king said, Let him turn to his own house, and let
 him ⁷not see my face. So Absalom returned to his own house, and saw
 not the king's face.
 25 ¹⁰But in all Israel there was none to be so much praised as Absalom
 for his beauty: ²from the sole of his foot even to the crown of his head
 26 there was no blemish in him. And when he polled his head, (for it was
 at every year's end that he polled it; because ⁴the hair was heavy on

B C. 11 27.
⁵ Or, because
 God hath
 not taken
 away his
 life, he
 hath also
 devised
 means, &c.
⁶ Num 35. 15,
 Deut 4. 41-
 43.
⁷ f. r. rest.
⁸ 1 Sam. 9. 9.
⁹ to hear
⁷ ch. 19. 27,
 Job 3. 21,
 22
 Pro. 23. 28,
 Pro 29. 5.
⁸ blessed.
⁹ Or, thy.
² Deut 3. 11,
 ch. 3. 3,
 ch. 13. 37.
⁷ Gen 43. 3,
 ch. 3. 13.
 Rev 22. 4.
¹⁰ And as
 Absalom
 there was
 not a
 beautiful
 man in all
 Israel to
 praise
 greatly.
⁵ Deut. 28. 35.
 Job 2. 7.
 Isa. 1. 6.
 Eph 5. 27.
⁴ ch. 18. 9.
 1 Cor. 11. 11.

lirities. In Oriental countries nothing is so valuable as water; and hence the expressiveness of the phrase in the mouth or in the ear of a Hebrew or native of the East. 17. as an angel of God, so is my lord the king to discern good and bad. 'Though this expression,' says *Harmer* ('Observations,' iii., p. 496), 'may be imputed to the hyperbolic genius of the East, yet there was perhaps more of real persuasion than we are apt to suppose in the woman of Tekoah's comparison of David to a superior being. Sir John Chardin says that, having found fault with the king of Persia's valuation of a rich trinket, the grand master (of ceremonies) told him, that if a Persian had dared to have done such a thing, it would have been as much as his life was worth. "Know," said he, "that the kings of Persia have a general and full knowledge of matters, as sure as it is extensive; and that equally in the greatest and the smallest things there is nothing more fast and sure than what they pronounce."⁷⁷

22-33.—JOAB SENT TO BRING HIM TO JERUSALEM.

22. To-day thy servant knoweth that I have found grace in thy sight. Joab betrays not a little selfishness amid his professions of joy at this act of grace to Absalom, and flattered himself that he now brought both father and son under lasting obligations. In considering this act of David, many extenuating circumstances may be urged in favour of it: the provocation given to Absalom,

his being now in a country where justice could not overtake him, the risk of his imbibing a love for heathen principles and worship, the safety and interests of the Hebrew kingdom, together with the strong predilection of the Hebrew people for Absalom, as represented by the stratagem of Joab. These considerations form a plausible apology for David's grant of pardon to his blood-stained son. But in granting this pardon he was acting in the character of an Oriental despot rather than a constitutional king of Israel. The feelings of the father triumphed over the duty of the king, who, as the supreme magistrate, was bound to execute impartial justice on every murderer, by the express law of God (Gen. ix. 6; Num. xxxv. 30, 31), which he had no power to dispense with (Deut. xviii. 18; Josh. i. 8; 1 Sam. x. 25).

25. But in all Israel there was none to be so much praised as Absalom for his beauty. This extraordinary popularity arose, not only from his high spirit and courtly manners, but from his uncommonly handsome appearance—one distinguished feature of which, seemingly an object of great admiration, was a profusion of beautiful hair. Its extraordinary luxuriance compelled him to cut it [צָרַף, צָרַף] at the end of days. *Josephus* says he polled every eighth day; 'at times,' 'from time to time' [απ' αρχῆς ἡμερῶν εἰς ἡμέρας], when it was found to weigh 2,000 shekels—equal to 112 oz. troy; but as 'the weight was after the

him, therefore he polled it:) he weighed the hair of his head at ¹¹two hundred shekels after the king's weight. And ^uunto Absalom there were born three sons, and one daughter, whose name was Tamar: she was a woman of a fair countenance.

28 So Absalom dwelt two full years in Jerusalem, and saw not the king's face. Therefore Absalom sent for Joab, to have sent him to the king; but he would not come to him: and when he sent again the second time, he would not come. Therefore he said unto his servants, See, Joab's field is ¹²near mine, and he hath barley there; ^vgo and set it on fire. 31 And Absalom's servants set the field on fire. Then Joab arose, and came to Absalom unto his house, and said unto him, Wherefore have thy servants set my field on fire? And Absalom answered Joab, Behold, I sent unto thee, saying, Come hither, that I may send thee to the king, to say, Wherefore am I come from Geshur? *it had been good for me to have been there still: now therefore let me see the king's face; and if* ^wthere be any iniquity in me, let him kill me. So Joab came to the king, and told him: and when he had called for Absalom, he came to the king, and bowed himself on his face to the ground before the king: and the king ^xkissed Absalom.

15 AND ^ait came to pass after this, that Absalom ^bprepared him chariots and horses, and fifty men to run before him. And Absalom ^crose up early, and stood beside the way of the gate: and it was *so*, that when any man that had a controversy ¹came to the king for judgment, then Absalom called unto him, and said, Of what city *art* thou? And he said, Thy servant *is* of one of the tribes of Israel. And Absalom said unto him, ^aSee, thy matters *are* good and right; but ²there is no man *deputed* of the king to hear thee. Absalom said moreover, ^cOh that I were made

king's shekel,' which was less than the common shekel, the rate has been reduced as low as 3 lbs. 2 oz. (Bochart, 'Hierozoicon'), and even less by others (see Harmer, 'Observations,' iv., p. 320; Dr. A. Clarke).

28. So Absalom dwelt, &c. Whatever error David committed in authorizing the recall of Absalom, he displayed great prudence and command over his feelings afterwards; for his son was not admitted into his father's presence, but was confined to his own house, and the society of his own family. This slight severity was designed to bring him to sincere repentance, on perceiving that his father had not fully pardoned him, as well as to convince the people of David's abhorrence of his crime. Not being allowed to appear at court, or to adopt any state, the courtiers kept aloof; even his cousin did not deem it prudent to go into his society. For two full years his liberty was more restricted, and his life more apart from his countrymen, while living in Jerusalem, than in Geshur; and he might have continued in this disgrace longer, had he not, by a violent expedient, determined (v. 30) to force his case on the attention of Joab, through whose kind and powerful influence a full reconciliation was effected between him and his father.

CHAP. XV. 1-9.—ABSALOM STEALS THE HEARTS OF ISRAEL.

1. prepared him chariots and horses, and fifty men to run before him [פָּרָסִים]—running footmen. Persons of quality, who ride on horseback, and still more those who are conveyed in splendid vehicles, are preceded by one servant, or by several, who run before their masters, carrying a stick or baton, which they constantly wave about them, and strike right and left to clear the way, especially in the streets of Oriental cities, which are always narrow and crowded. These *avant-couriers*

are called *sais* in Egypt. They are accustomed to run, and can keep on at a rapid pace with the equipage which they precede, for many miles without stoppage, their feet covered with dust, and frequently bleeding from wounds. In ancient times fifty of these runners formed the usual attendance upon royalty (see on I Ki. i. 5; xviii. 48). Absalom's engagement of this number of attendants was assuming the state and equipage of a prince. The chariot, as the Hebrew [פָּרָסִים] indicates, was of a magnificent style; it is the word commonly applied to vehicles used by persons of rank and dignity (Gen. xli. 43; xlv. 29; I Sam. viii. 11); and the horses, a novelty among the Hebrew people, only introduced in that age as an appendage of royalty (Ps. xxxii. 9; lxvi. 12), formed a splendid retinue, which would make him 'the observed of all observers.' 2. Absalom rose up early, and stood beside the way of the gate. Public business in the East is always transacted early in the morning—the kings sitting an hour or more to hear causes or receive petitions in a court held anciently, and in many places still, in the open air at the city gateway; so that as those whose circumstances led them to wait on king David required to be in attendance on his morning levees, Absalom had to rise up early and stand beside the way of the gate. Through the growing infirmities of age, or the attack of a malignant sickness (Ps. xxxviii., xxxix., xli.), and the occupation of his government with foreign wars, many private causes had long lain undecided, and a deep feeling of discontent prevailed amongst the people. This dissatisfaction was artfully fomented by Absalom, who addressed himself to the various suitors, and after briefly hearing their tale, gratified every one with a favourable opinion of his case. 3. there is no man deputed of the king to hear thee [אֵין אִישׁ מִן־מְבֹרָאֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ לִשְׁמָעֲךָ]—

B. C. 1027.

¹¹ Six pounds and a quarter avoirdupois.

¹² ch. 18. 18. Job 18. 16-19.

¹³ near my place.

¹⁴ ch. 13. 28. Judg. 15. 5.

¹⁵ Pro. 23. 12.

¹⁶ Job 31. 33.

¹⁷ Pro. 23. 13.

¹⁸ Jer. 7. 12.

¹⁹ Gen. 33. 4.

²⁰ Gen. 45. 15.

²¹ Luke 15. 20.

CHAP. 15.

^a ch. 12. 11.

^b I Ki. 1. 5.

^c 1 r. 11. 2.

^d 1 r. 16. 18.

^e Pro. 1. 16.

^f to come.

^g Pro 12. 2.

^h 2 Cr. none

will hear

thee from

the king

down-

ward.

ⁱ Julg. 6. 22.

- judge in the land, that every man which hath any suit or cause might
 5 come unto me, and I would do him justice! And it was so, that when
 any man came nigh to him to do him obeisance, he put forth his hand,
 6 and took him, and kissed him. And on this manner did Absalom to all
 Israel that came to the king for judgment: so Absalom stole the hearts
 of the men of Israel.
- 7 And it came to pass after forty years, that Absalom said unto the
 king, I pray thee, let me go and pay my vow, which I have vowed unto
 8 the LORD, in Hebron. For thy servant vowed a vow while I abode
 at Geshur in Syria, saying, If the LORD shall bring me again indeed to
 9 Jerusalem, then I will serve the LORD. And the king said unto him, Go
 in peace. So he arose, and went to Hebron.
- 10 But Absalom sent spies throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, As
 soon as ye hear the sound of the trumpet, then ye shall say, Absalom
 11 reigneth in Hebron. And with Absalom went two hundred men out of
 Jerusalem, that were called; and they went in their simplicity, and
 12 they knew not any thing. And Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite,
 David's counsellor, from his city, even from Giloh, while he offered
 sacrifices: and the conspiracy was strong; for the people increased
 continually with Absalom.
- 13 And there came a messenger to David, saying, The hearts of the men
 14 of Israel are after Absalom. And David said unto all his servants that
 were with him at Jerusalem, Arise, and let us flee; for we shall not

B. C. 1021.

f Ps. 12. 2.
 o Rom. 16. 18.
 A 1 Sam. 16. 1.
 Or, four
 years, that
 is, from
 Absalom's
 return
 i 1 Sam 16. 2.
 f Gen 28. 29.
 1 Sam 1. 11.
 Ps. 56. 12.
 e ch 13. 33.
 ch 14. 23.
 e 2.
 i 1 Sam. 9. 13.
 1 Sam. 16. 3.
 5.
 m Gen 27. 5.
 Pro. 14. 15.
 Matt 10. 16.
 n Ps 41. 9.
 Ps. 55. 12.
 o Josh. 15. 61.
 p Ps. 3. 1.
 Ps 43. 1, 2.
 q Judg. 9. 3.
 r ch. 19. 9.
 Ps. 2. title.

there is none made (appointed) to hear thee from (by) the king. Studiously concealing his ambitious designs, he expressed a wish to be invested with official power, only that he might accelerate the course of justice, and advance the public interests. His professions had an air of extraordinary generosity and disinterestedness; and, together with his fawning arts in lavishing civilities on all, made him a popular favourite. Thus, by forcing a contrast between his own display of public spirit and the dilatory proceedings of the court, he created a growing disgust with his father's government, as weak, careless, or corrupt, and seduced the affections of the multitude, who neither penetrated the motives nor foresaw the tendency of his conduct [הָיָה יְהוֹנָדָב, he deceived the men of Israel; Septuagint, ἰδοσάμετρο, appropriated, gained over to himself, the hearts of the men of Israel].

7. after forty years. It is generally admitted that an error has here crept into the text, and that instead of [אַרְבָּעִים] forty, we should read, with the Syriac and Arabic versions, and Josephus [אַרְבָּע], 'four years'—i. e., after Absalom's return to Jerusalem, and his beginning to practise the base arts of gaining popularity. my vow, which I have vowed unto the Lord—during his exile in Geshur; and the purport of it was, that whenever God's providence should pave the way for his re-establishment in Jerusalem, he would offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving. Hebron was the spot selected for the performance of this vow, ostensibly as being his native place (ch. iii. 3), and a famous high place, an ancient sacred place (Gen. xiii. 18; xviii.; xxiii.), and a city of the priests (Josh. xxi. 11), in presence of whom the vow was to be paid (Lev. xxvii.), where sacrifices were frequently offered before the temple was built; but really as being in many respects the most suitable for the commencement of his rebellious enterprise. David, who always encouraged piety, and desired to see religious engagements punctually performed, gave his consent and blessing. What a black heart must Absalom have had when he could not only

plot the ruin of his father, but pursue his treasonable designs under the mask of religion!

10. 12.—HE FORMS A CONSPIRACY.

10. Absalom sent spies throughout all the tribes of Israel. These emissaries were to sound the inclinations of the people, to further the interests of Absalom, and exhort all the adherents of his party to be in readiness to join his standard as soon as they should hear that he had been proclaimed king. As the summons was to be made by the sound of trumpets, it is probable that care had been taken to have trumpeters stationed on the heights, and at convenient stations—a mode of announcement that would soon spread the news over all the country, of his inauguration to the throne. 11. two hundred men... that were called—from their quality, reputation, and high standing, such as would create an impression that the king patronized the movement, and, being aged and infirm, was willing to adopt his eldest and noblest son to divide with him the cares and honours of government. 12. Absalom sent for Ahithophel—who he knew was ready to join the revolt, through disgust and revenge, as Jewish writers assert, at David's conduct towards Bath-sheba, who was his granddaughter. Giloh—near Hebron [גִּלּוֹה]. [The nomina Gentilia, גִּיְתָי, גִּיְתָי (1 Ki. xi. 29; xii. 15), lead us from the supposed form to the substantive termination נ— which liquida may drop, and express the remaining vowel י by ה (Ewald, sec. 163.)] the conspiracy was strong. The rapid accession of one place after another, in all parts of the kingdom, to the party of the insurgents, shows that deep and general dissatisfaction existed at this time against the person and government of David. The remnant of Saul's partizans, the unhappy affair of Bath-sheba, the overbearing insolence and crimes of Joab, negligence and obstruction in the administration of justice, were some of the principal causes that contributed to the success of this wide-spread insurrection (cf. Ps. iii. 1).

13-37.—DAVID FLEES FROM JERUSALEM.

14. David said . . . Arise, and let us flee.

else escape from Absalom: make speed to depart, lest he overtake us suddenly, and ³bring evil upon us, and smite the city with the edge of
 15 the sword. And the king's servants said unto the king, Behold, thy servants *are ready to do* whatsoever my lord the king shall ⁴appoint.
 16 And ⁵the king went forth, and all his household ⁶after him. And the king left ⁷ten women, *which were* concubines, to keep the house.
 17 And the king went forth, and all the people after him, and tarried in a place that was far off. And all his servants passed on beside him; ⁸and all the Cherethites, and all the Pelethites, and all the Gittites, six hundred men which came after him from Gath, passed on before the king. Then said the king to ⁹Ittai the Gittite, Wherefore goest thou also with us? return to thy place, and abide with the king; for thou
 20 *art* a stranger, and also an exile. Whereas thou camest *but* yesterday, should I this day ¹⁰make thee go up and down with us? seeing I go ¹¹whither I may, return thou, and take back thy brethren: mercy and
 21 truth *be* with thee. And Ittai answered the king, and said, *As* ¹²the LORD liveth, and *as* my lord the king liveth, surely in what place my lord the king shall be, whether in death or life, even there also will thy
 22 servant be. And David said to Ittai, Go and pass over. And Ittai the Gittite passed over, and all his men, and all the little ones that *were* with
 23 him. And all the country wept with a loud voice, and all the people passed over: the king also himself passed over the ¹³brook Kidron, and all the people passed over, toward the way of the ¹⁴wilderness.
 24 And lo Zadok also, and all the Levites *were* with him, ¹⁵bearing the ark of the covenant of God: and they set down the ark of God; and Abiathar
 25 went up, until all the people had done passing out of the city. And the king said unto Zadok, Carry back the ark of God into the city: if I shall find favour in the eyes of the LORD, he will ¹⁶bring me again, and show me
 26 *both* it and his ¹⁷habitation: but if he thus say, I have no ¹⁸delight in thee; behold, *here am I*, ¹⁹let him do to me as seemeth good unto him. The king said also unto Zadok the priest, *Art not* thou a ²⁰seer? return into the ²¹city in peace, and your two sons with you, Ahimaaz thy son, and
 28 Jonathan the son of Abiathar. See, I will tarry in the plain of the wilderness, until there come word from you to certify me. Zadok therefore and Abiathar carried the ark of God again to Jerusalem; and they tarried there.

B. C. 1033.
³ thrust.
⁴ choose.
⁵ Ps. 3, title.
⁶ at his feet.
⁷ ch. 12. 11.
 ch. 16. 21, 22.
 ch. 20. 3.
 Rom. 12. 2.
¹¹ 1 Sam. 30. 14.
 ch. 8. 18.
 ch. 20. 7-23.
 1 Ki. 1. 33.
 1 Chr. 18. 17.
¹³ Ruth 1, 11-13.
 ch. 18. 2.
¹⁵ make thee wander in going.
¹⁶ 1 Sam. 23. 13.
¹⁷ Ruth 1. 16.
 1 Sam. 10. 1.
 2 Ki. 2. 2, 4, 6.
 Fro. 17. 17.
¹⁹ 1 Ki. 2. 37.
 2 Chr 30. 14.
 John 18. 1.
²⁰ ch. 16. 2.
 Matt. 3. 1-3.
²¹ Num. 4. 15.
 Num. 7. 9.
²² Ps. 43. 3.
²³ ch. 6. 17.
²⁴ Num. 14. 8.
 2 Sam. 22. 20.
 1 Ki. 10. 9.
 2 Chr. 9. 8.
 Isa. 62. 4.
²⁵ 1 Sam. 3. 18.
²⁶ ch. 21. 11.
 1 Sam. 9. 9.
²⁷ ch. 17. 17.

David, anxious for the preservation of the city which he had beautified, and confiding in a greater support throughout the country, wisely resolved on leaving Jerusalem.

18. all the Cherethites, and all the Pelethites [חֵרֵתִים וְכִלְיָתָיִם]—executioners and couriers; the designation of a part of David's body-guards [σώματα το φάλαξες: Josephus, 'Antiquities,' b. vii. ch. v., sec. 4], whose duty it was both to execute punishment and to convey the king's commands as speedily as possible to his officers, (*Gesenius*) (see on ch. viii. 18, &c.) [The Septuagint and Vatican, πᾶς Χελεθί και πᾶς ὁ Φελεθί; Alexandrine, πᾶς ὁ Χερεθθει και πᾶς ὁ Φελεθθει.] all the Gittites, six hundred men. These were a body of foreign guards, natives of Gath, whom David, when in the country of the Philistines, had enlisted in his service, and kept around his person. Addressing their commander, Ittai (who, according to Jewish tradition, was the son of Achish, king of Gath), he made a searching trial of their fidelity in bidding them (*v.* 19) abide with the new king. 22. Ittai . . . pass over . . . and all the little ones that were with him. It is characteristic of Oriental people that they carry their whole family along with them in all their migrations. These

formed all the army of David. The monthly quota of militia were not in attendance, in consequence of the disorganized state of affairs. Perhaps he dispensed with them from suspicions of their fidelity. 23. the brook Kidron—a winter torrent that flows through the valley between the city and the eastern side of the mount of Olives.

24. Zadok also, and all the Levites . . . bearing the ark. Knowing the strong religious feelings of the aged king, they brought it to accompany him in his distress. But as he could not doubt that both the ark and their sacred office would exempt them from the attacks of the rebels, he sent them back with it, not only that they might not be exposed to the perils of uncertain wandering (cf. Ps. cxxxii. 14)—or he seems to place more confidence in the symbol of the Divine presence than in God himself—but that, by remaining in Jerusalem, they might render him greater service by watching the enemy's movements. 28. I will tarry in the plain of the wilderness [בְּעֵבְרַת הַיַּבְדֵּקָה]—in the plains (Arabahs) of the wilderness. *Stanley* (*Smith's* 'Dictionary,' article 'David') renders it, 'at the ford or bridge' [as if the original word were בְּיַרְדֵּקָה; Chetib]. But the Keri will not admit of his meaning.

30 And David went up by the ascent of *mount* ^hOlivet, ⁷and wept as he went up, and ⁱhad his head covered; and he ^jwent barefoot: and all the people that *was* with him ^kcovered every man his head, and they went up,
 31 ^lweeping as they went up. And *one* told David, saying, ^mAhithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom. And David said, O LORD, I pray thee, ⁿturn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness.
 32 And it came to pass, that *when* David was come to the top of the *mount*, where he worshipped God, behold, Hushai ^othe Archite came to meet him
 33 ^pwith his coat rent, and earth upon his head; unto whom David said, If
 34 thou passest on with me, then thou shalt be ^qa burden unto me: but if thou return to the city, and say unto Absalom, I will be thy servant, O king; *as I have been* thy father's servant hitherto, so *will* I now also be thy servant: then mayest thou for me defeat the counsel of Ahithophel.
 35 And *hast thou* not there with thee Zadok and Abiathar the priests? therefore it shall be, *that* what thing soever thou shalt hear out of the king's
 36 house, thou shalt tell *it* to Zadok and Abiathar the priests. Behold, *they have* there with them their two sons, Ahimaaz, Zadok's son, and Jonathau, Abiathar's son; and by them ye shall send unto me every thing that ye
 37 can hear. So Hushai, ^rDavid's friend, came into the city, and Absalom came into Jerusalem.
 16 AND ^swhen David was a little past the top of the *hill*, behold, ^tZiba the servant of Mephiboseth met him, with a couple of asses saddled, and upon them two hundred *loaves* of bread, and an hundred bunches of raisins, and
 2 an hundred of summer fruits, and a bottle of wine. And the king said unto Ziba, What meanest thou by these? And Ziba said, The asses *be* for the king's household to ride ^uon; and the bread and summer fruit for the ^vyoung men to eat; and the wine, *that* ^wsuch as be faint in the wilderness
 3 may drink. And the king said, And where *is* thy master's son? ^xAnd Ziba said unto the king, Behold, he abideth at Jerusalem: for he said, To-
 4 day shall the house of Israel restore me the kingdom of my father. Then

B C 10 3
^h Zech 14. 4.
ⁱ Ma't. 21. 1.
^j Luke 19. 29.
^k Acts 1. 12.
^l g-ling up, and weep-
 ing
^m Esth 6. 12.
ⁿ Isa 20. 2.
^o Jer. 14. 3.
^p Ps 126. 6.
^q Matt. 5. 4.
^r Rom. 12. 15.
^s 1 Cor. 12. 20.
^t Ps. 3. 1.
^u Ps. 65. 12.
^v ch. 16 23.
^w Josh. 10. 2.
^x ch. 1. 2.
^y ch. 13. 19.
^z ch. 19. 35.
^{aa} ch 16 19.
^{ab} 1 Chr. 27. 32.
^{ac} Pro 17. 17.
 CHAP. 16.
^{ad} ch 15. 30.
^{ae} ch. 9. 2.
^{af} Judg. 10. 4.
^{ag} ch. 15 1.
^{ah} ch 19. 26.
^{ai} 1 Sam. 25. 27.
^{aj} ch. 15. 23.
^{ak} ch 17. 29.
^{al} 1's. 104 15.
^{am} Pro 31. 6.
^{an} 1 Tim 5. 23.
^{ao} ch. 19. 27.

30. the ascent of mount Olivet—so called from its olive groves. Its situation is east of Jerusalem, from which it is separated by the valley of Jehoshaphat and the brook Kidron. *Josephus* reckons the distance at five stadia ('Antiquities,' b. xx., ch. vi.), and Luke (Acts i. 12) says it was a Sabbath day's journey, viz., to the top. The same pathway over that mount has been followed ever since that memorable day. had his head covered—with a mourning wrapper (cf. ch. xix. 4; Esth. vi. 12; Ezek. xii. 6). The humility and resignation of David marked strongly his sanctified spirit, induced by contrition for his transgressions. He had fallen, but it was the fall of the upright; and he rose again, submitting himself meekly in the meantime to the will of God (*Chalmers*). See examples of king Darius having his head covered, *Q. Curtius*, lib. iv., cap. 10., sec. 33; and lib. v., cap. 12, sec. 8. and he went barefoot. Walking barefoot was a token of profound distress—all the more significant that the barefooted pedestrian was of high rank. Anciently persons of station and opulence wore shoes formed of very costly materials, ornamented with gold, silver, or jewels. On the occurrence of some calamity, public or private, the mourners divested themselves of all their ornaments, down to their shoes, and walked barefoot (see *Bynæus de Calceis*, 'Hebraeorum,' lib. ii., cap. 5; *Braunius de Vestitu*, 'Sacred. Hebr.,' pp. 45, 46; *Guier*, 'De Luctu,' cap. xv., sec. 4). 31. O Lord... turn the counsel of Ahithophel. This senator being the mainstay of the conspiracy, his defection stung David most acutely (1's. xl. 1-9).

32. top of the mount, where he worshipped—looking towards Jerusalem, where were the ark

and tabernacle. Hushai the Archite—a native of Archi, on the frontiers of Benjamin and Ephraim (Josh. xvi. 2). with his coat rent [מָצָאָה, his tunic; Septuagint, χιτων]—worn usually with sleeves, and reaching to the knees; the proper dress of priests and Levites (Exod. xxviii. 4; xxix. 5; Neh. vii. 70-72); but in later times generally adopted by persons of rank. Comparing the prayers against Ahithophel with the counsel to Hushai, we see how strongly a spirit of fervent piety was combined, in David's character, with the devices of an active and far-seeing policy.

CHAP. XVI. 1-4.—ZIBA, BY FALSE SUGGESTIONS, CLAIMS HIS MASTER'S INHERITANCE.
 1. when David was a little past the top [מִן־הַרְרֵי]—the head or summit of the mountain. [The Septuagint renders it *επι τοῦ Πας*, as if it were the name of the place.] Ziba the servant of Mephiboseth met him. This crafty man, anticipating the certain failure of Absalom's conspiracy, took steps to prepare for his future advancement on the restoration of the king. an hundred of summer fruits [תְּבִיאִים]—summer-fruit harvest, special harvest of figs. [מִצֵּה תְּבִיאִים is considered by *Gesenius* as elliptical for תְּבִיאִים דְּבִיאִים, a hundred cakes of figs.] a bottle of wine—a large goat-skin vessel. Its size made the supply of wine proportioned to the rest of his present (see on Josh. ix. 4). 2. The asses be for the king's household to ride on. The royal fugitives were moving on foot, not from inability to procure conveyances, but as being suitable to their present state of humiliation and penitence. 3. To-day shall the house of Israel restore me the king-

⁹ said the king to Ziba, Behold, thine *are* all that *pertained* unto Mephibosheth. And Ziba said, ¹ I humbly beseech thee *that* I may find grace in thy sight, my lord, O king.

5 And when king David came to Bahurim, behold, thence came out a man of the family of the house of Saul, whose name *was* ² Shimei, the son of Gera: ² he came forth, and cursed still as he came. And he cast stones at David, and at all the servants of king David: and all the people and all the mighty men *were* on his right hand and on his left.

7 And thus said Shimei when he cursed, Come out, come out, thou ³ bloody man, and thou man of Belial: the LORD hath ⁴ returned upon thee all the ⁵ blood of the house of Saul, in whose stead thou hast reigned; and the LORD hath delivered the kingdom into the hand of Absalom thy son: and, ⁴ behold, thou *art taken* in thy mischief, because thou *art* a bloody man.

9 Then said Abishai the son of Zeruiah unto the king, Why should this dead dog curse ⁶ my lord the king? let me go over, I pray thee, and take off his head. And the king said, 'What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah? so let him curse, because ⁷ the LORD hath said unto him, Curse David. ⁸ Who shall then say, Wherefore hast thou done so?

11 And David said to Abishai, and to all his servants, Behold, my son, which came forth of my bowels, seeketh my life: how much more now *may this Benjamite do it?* Let him alone, and let him curse; for the LORD hath bidden him. It may be that the LORD will look on mine ⁵ affliction, ¹³ and that the LORD will requite ⁶ me good for his cursing this day. And as David and his men went by the way, Shimei went along on the hill's side over against him, and cursed as he went, and threw stones at him, and ⁶ cast

B C. 1623.

⁹ Pro. 18, 13.
¹ I do
 obedience.
² ch. 19, 16.
¹ Ki 2 8.
² Or, he still came forth and cursed.
³ man of blood.
⁴ Judg. 9, 21.
⁵ ch. 1, 16.
⁴ behold thee in thy evil.
⁶ Ex. 22, 28.
⁷ ch. 3, 29.
⁸ ch. 19, 22.
⁹ Luke 9, 51-56.
¹ Pet. 2, 27.
² Ki 18, 25.
³ Lam. 3, 58.
⁴ Rom. 9, 20.
⁵ eye, or, tears.
⁶ Ps. 25, 18.
⁷ Rom. 8, 23.
⁸ 2 Cor. 4, 17.
⁹ dusted him with dust.

dom of my father. Such a hope might not un- naturally arise at this period of civil distraction, that the family of David would destroy themselves by their mutual broils, and the people reinstate the old dynasty. There was an air of plausibility in Ziba's story. Many on whom the king had conferred favours were now deserting him; no wonder, therefore, that in the excitement of momentary feeling, believing, on the report of a slanderer, Mephibosheth to be among the number of the rebels, he pronounced a rash and unrighteous judgment, by which a great injury was inflicted on the character and interests of a devoted friend.

5-19.—SHIMEI CURSES DAVID.

5. when king David came to Bahurim—a city of Benjamin (ch. iii. 16; xix. 16). It is, however, only the confines of the district that is here meant. thence came out a man. The place where this incident is supposed to have occurred is a low ridge of chalk hills, beyond which is a long narrow wady (Ruwwaby) running towards the Nahr el-Kelt—the ancient Bahurim—along which David and his party of fugitive royalists took their journey, while Shimei was on the opposite bank (*Barclay's* 'City of the Great King,' p. 563; 'Teut and Khan,' p. 368). SHIMEI, the son of Gera. The misfortune of Saul's family, and the occupation by David of what they considered their rightful possessions, afforded a natural, if not a justifiable cause for this ebullition of rude insults and violence by Shimei. He upbraided David as an ambitious usurper, and charged him, as one whose misdeeds had recoiled upon his own head, to surrender a throne to which he was not entitled. His language was that of a man incensed by the wrongs that he conceived had been done to his house. A Jewish tradition, preserved by *Jerome* ('Quæst. Hebraicæ,' in loco), is, that Shimei of Gera was another name of Nebat, father of Jeroboam.

David was guiltless of the crime of which Shimei accused him; but his conscience reminded him of other flagrant iniquities, and he therefore regarded the cursing of this man as a chastisement from heaven. His answer to Abishai's proposal evinced the spirit of deep and humble resignation—the spirit of a man who watched the course of Providence, and acknowledged Shimei as the instrument of God's chastening hand. One thing is remarkable, that he acted more independently of the sons of Zeruiah in this season of great distress than he could often muster courage to do in the days of his prosperity and power.

11. let him curse; for the Lord hath bidden him. The Orientals make use of bold figures, much less common amongst us, though not altogether unknown. They speak of the mediate cause without saying that it is the mediate cause, and use the very expression which denotes the immediate cause. We should regard Shimei as an instrument in the hands of Providence. In the East they go a far greater length. There God *has done* and *commanded* all that men do contrary to His commandments. Shimei breaks forth into imprecations against David; and forthwith David regards God as having *ordered* Shimei to curse him. 12. It may be that the Lord . . . will requite me good for his cursing this day [וְיָשִׁיב לִּי טוֹב בְּיָמֵי אֲשֶׁר אֲשַׁרְתִּי אֶת דָּוִד]. the curse denounced on me. The Chetib (marginal reading) is וְיָשִׁיב לִּי טוֹב, the curse denounced by him]. He regarded it as the nemesis of his crimes—the judgment of an avenging God, who let the excited minds of the people rush to the greatest excesses. 13. went along on the hill's side over against him—as he descended the rough road on the eastern side of the mount of Olives; 'went along the side,' *lit.*, the rib, of the hill, threw stones at him—as a mark of contempt and insult. cast dust. As if to add insult to injury, clouds

- 14 dust. And the king, and all the people that *were* with him, came weary, and refreshed themselves there.
- 15 And Absalom, and all the people the men of Israel, came to Jerusalem,
- 16 and Ahithophel with him. And it came to pass, when Hushai the Archite, David's friend, was come unto Absalom, that Hushai said unto
- 17 Absalom, ⁷God save the king, God save the king. And Absalom said to Hushai, *Is this thy kindness to thy friend? ⁷why wentest thou not with thy friend?* And Hushai said unto Absalom, Nay; but whom the LORD, and this people, and all the men of Israel, choose, his will I be, and with him will I abide. And again, ⁹whom should I serve? *should I not serve in the presence of his son? As I have served in thy father's presence, so will I be in thy presence.*
- 20 Then said Absalom to Ahithophel, Give ⁷counsel among you what we
- 21 shall do. And Ahithophel said unto Absalom, Go in unto thy father's ⁸concubines, which he hath left to keep the house; and all Israel shall hear that thou ⁴art abhorred of thy father: then shall ¹⁰the hands of all
- 22 that *are* with thee be strong. So they spread Absalom a tent upon the top of the house; and Absalom went in unto his father's concubines ¹¹in
- 23 the sight of all Israel. And the counsel of Ahithophel, which he counselled in those days, *was* as if a man had enquired at the ¹²oracle of God: so *was* all the counsel of Ahithophel ¹³both with David and with Absalom.
- 17 **MOREOVER** Ahithophel said unto Absalom, Let me now choose out twelve thousand men, and I will arise and pursue after David this night: and I will come upon him while he *is* ¹⁴weary and weak-handed, and will make him afraid: and all the people that *are* with him shall flee; and I
- 3 will ¹⁵smite the king only: and I will bring back all the people unto thee; the man whom thou seekest *is* as if all returned: *so* all the people shall

B. C. 1027.

⁷ Let the king live.
⁸ ch. 15. 32, 37.
 ch. 19. 25.
 Pro. 17. 17.
⁹ 1 Sam 25 2, ch. 15. 31.
¹⁰ Ps. 37. 12-15.
 Fro 21. 37.
 Matt. 27 1.
 Acts 4. 23-24.
¹¹ Gen. 35 22, ch. 12. 11, ch. 15. 10, ch. 20. 3.
¹² Gen 34. 70.
 1 Sam 13. 4.
¹³ ch. 2. 7.
 Zech. 8. 13.
¹⁴ Lev 18. 8, ch. 12. 11.
 Isa. 3. 9.
¹⁵ word.
¹⁶ ch 15. 12.

CIIAP. 17.
¹⁷ Deut 25.13, ch. 16. 11.
 1 Ki 22 31.
 John 11. 70.
¹⁸ Zech. 13. 7.
 Matt 27.33.

of dust were thrown by this disloyal subject in the path of his unfortunate sovereign. But the throwing of dust is a significant mode, used in the East, of demanding public justice on a criminal (cf. Acts xxii. 23). 14. came weary, and refreshed themselves there—in the city of Bahurim, as is generally understood. [But *Reland* ('Palästina'), followed by *Houbigant* and others, take אִיִּים, rendered "weary," to be the name of a place, *Aipim*. The particle of motion, however, is wanting, and therefore we adhere to the received interpretation.]

15. Absalom, and all the people the men of Israel, came to Jerusalem. From Hebron they marched to the capital, of which, in its defenceless and deserted state, they obtained immediate possession, and there the usurper held his first council of war. 16. Hushai said unto Absalom, God save the king. Hushai's devotion to David was so well known, that his presence in the camp of the conspirators excited great surprise. Professing, however, with great address, to consider it his duty to support the cause which the course of Providence and the national will had seemingly decreed should triumph, and urging his friendship for the father as a ground of confidence in his fidelity to the son, he persuaded Absalom of his sincerity, and was admitted amongst the councillors of the new king.

20-23.—AHITHOPHEL'S COUNSEL.

20. Give counsel among you what we shall do. This is the first cabinet council on record, although the deference paid to Ahithophel gave him the entire direction of the proceedings. 21. Ahithophel said unto Absalom. This councillor saw that, now the die was cast, half measures would be inexpedient; and to cut off all possibility of reconciliation between the king and his rebellious son, and thereby ensure the safety of those who

had joined the conspiracy, gave this atrocious advice regarding the treatment of the royal women who had been left in charge of the palace. Women being held sacred, are generally left inviolate in the casualties of war. The history of the East affords only one parallel to this infamous outrage of Absalom. Ahithophel's counsel appeared politic, but in reality it was most pernicious—a flagrant breach of the divine law (Lev. xx. 11), a greater crime than that of Reuben, who forfeited his birthright (1 Chr. v. 1), and sure to draw down upon the perpetrator the execration of all good people. Thus, however, the adultery of David with Bath-sheba was punished by this horrid crime of Absalom, committed apparently in the same palace, according to the denunciation of the prophet (ch. xii. 11).

CHAP. XVII. 1-14.—AHITHOPHEL'S COUNSEL OVERTHROWN BY HUSHAI.

1. Moreover Ahithophel said unto Absalom. The success of the measure was certain, and the many evils of a civil war entirely avoided. Let me now choose out twelve thousand men, &c. His proposal was to take, out of the vast multitude who had joined the standard of the insurgents, twelve thousand picked men; and if the command of this select corps were entrusted to him, he would undertake to pursue the royalist party, to attack that small handful, aiming only at the life of the king, and thus, by his fall, complete a sudden revolution, through which Absalom would succeed to the vacant throne. The recommendation to take prompt and decisive measures before the royalist forces could be collected and arranged evinced the deep political sagacity of this councillor. 3. I will bring back all the people . . . the man whom thou seekest is as if all returned. [The Septuagint, apparently reading אִיִּים?

4 be in peace. And the saying¹ pleased Absalom well, and all the elders
5 of Israel. Then said Absalom, Call now Hushai the Archite also, and let
us hear likewise² what he saith.

6 And when Hushai was come to Absalom, Absalom spake unto him,
saying, Ahithophel hath spoken after this manner: shall we do *after* his
7³ saying? if not, speak thou. And Hushai said unto Absalom, The
8 counsel that Ahithophel hath⁴ given *is* not good at this time. For, said
Hushai, thou knowest thy father and his men, that they *be* mighty men,
and they *be*⁵ chafed in their minds, as^a a bear robbed of her whelps in
the field: and thy father *is* a man of war, and will not lodge with the
9 people. Behold, he is hid now in some pit, or in some *other* place: and
it will come to pass, when some of them be⁶ overthrown at the first, that
whosoever heareth it will say, There is a slaughter among the people that
10 follow Absalom. And he also *that is*⁷ valiant, whose heart *is* as the heart
of a lion, shall utterly melt: for all Israel knoweth that thy father *is* a
11 mighty man, and *they* which *be* with him *are* valiant men. Therefore I
counsel that all Israel be generally gathered unto thee, from Dan even to
Beer-sheba,^c as the sand that *is* by the sea for multitude; and⁸ that
12 thou go to battle in thine own person. So shall we come upon him in
some place where he shall be found, and we will light upon him as the
dew falleth on the ground: and of him and of all the men that *are*
13 with him there shall not be left so much as one. Moreover if he be
gotten into a city, then shall all Israel bring ropes to that city, and we
will draw it into the river, until there be not one small stone found
there.

14 And Absalom and all the men of Israel said, The counsel of Hushai
the Archite *is* better than the counsel of Ahithophel. For^d the LORD
had⁹ appointed to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel, to the intent
that the LORD might bring evil upon Absalom.

15 Then said Hushai unto Zadok and to Abiathar the priests, Thus and
thus did Ahithophel counsel Absalom and the elders of Israel; and thus
16 and thus have I counselled. Now therefore send quickly, and tell David,
saying, Lodge not this night in the plains of the wilderness, but speedily
pass over; lest the king be swallowed up, and all the people that *are*
with him.

B. C. 10 3.

⁶ Isa. 57. 21.

Jer. 6. 11.

¹ was right
in the eyes
of, etc.¹ Sam. 13.

20.

² Chr 30. 4.¹ Thes. 5. 2.² what is in
his mouth.³ word.⁴ coun-
selled.⁵ bitter of
soul.

Judg. 18. 25.

^d Esth. 1. 21.² Ki. 2. 21.

Pro. 17. 12.

Pro. 28. 15.

Dan. 7. 5.

Hos. 13. 8.

⁶ fallen.⁷ a son of
valour.⁶ Gen. 13. 16.

Gen. 22. 17.

Josh. 11. 4.

¹ Ki. 4. 20.¹ Ki. 20. 10.⁸ That thy
face, or,
presence
go, etc.^f Gen. 32. 29.

Ex. 9. 16.

Deut. 2. 30.

ch. 15. 31,

34.

² Chr 25. 16,

20.

Ps. 9. 15.

⁹ com-
manded.

for שָׁבַע, renders the latter words *ὁ τρόπον*
επιστρέφει ἡ νύμφη πρὸς τὸν ἄνδρα αὐτῆς, as the
sponse returns to her husband.] The adoption of
his advice would have extinguished the cause of
David; and it affords a dreadful proof of the
extremities to which the heartless prince was, to
secure his ambitious objects, prepared to go, that
the parricidal counsel "pleased Absalom well,
and all the elders of Israel." It was happily
overruled, however, by the address of Hushai,
who saw the imminent danger to which it would
expose the king and the royal cause. He dwelt
upon the warlike character and military experi-
ence of the old king—represented him and his
adherents as mighty men, who would fight with
desperation, and who, most probably secured in
some stronghold, would be beyond reach, while
the smallest loss of Absalom's men at the outset
might be fatal to the success of the conspiracy.
But his dexterity was chiefly displayed in that part
of his counsel which recommended a general levy
throughout the country, and that Absalom should
take command of it in person—thereby flattering
at once the pride and ambition of the usurper.
The bait was caught by the vain-glorious and
wicked prince.

12. we will light upon him as the dew falleth
on the ground. No image could have symbolized

the sudden onset of an enemy so graphically to an
Oriental mind as the silent, irresistible, and rapid
descent of this natural moisture on every field and
blade of grass. 13. then shall all Israel bring
ropes to that city. In besieging a town, hooks or
cranes were often thrown upon the walls or tur-
rets, by which, with ropes attached to them, the
besiegers, uniting all their force, pulled down the
fortifications in a mass of ruins.

14. The counsel of Hushai. . . is better than
the counsel of Ahithophel. The reasons specified
being extremely plausible, and expressed in the
strong hyperbolical language suited to dazzle an
Oriental imagination, the council declared in favour
of Hushai's advice; and their resolution was the
immediate cause of the discomfiture of the rebel-
lion, although the counsel itself was only a link in
the chain of causation held by the controlling hand
of the Lord.

15-22.—SECRET INTELLIGENCE SENT TO DAVID.

16. send quickly, and tell David. Apparently
doubting that his advice would be followed,
Hushai ordered secret intelligence to be conveyed
to David of all that transpired, with an urgent
recommendation to cross the Jordan without a
moment's delay, lest Ahithophel's address and
influence might produce a change on the prince's
mind, and an immediate pursuit be determined on.

17 Now ^oJonathan and Ahimaaz ^hstayed by ⁱEn-rogel; for they might not be seen to come into the city: and a wench went and told them; and
 18 they went and told king David. Nevertheless a lad saw them, and told Absalom: but they went both of them away quickly, and came to a man's house in ^jBahurim, which had a well in his court; whither they went
 19 down. And ^kthe woman took and spread a covering over the well's mouth, and spread ground corn thereon; and the thing was not known.
 20 And when Absalom's servants came to the woman to the house, they said, Where *is* Ahimaaz and Jonathan? And ^lthe woman said unto them, They be gone over the brook of water. And when they had sought and
 21 could not find *them*, they returned to Jerusalem. And it came to pass, after they were departed, that they came up out of the well, and went and told king David, and said unto David, Arise, and pass quickly over
 22 the water: for thus hath Ahithophel counselled against you. Then David arose, and all the people that *were* with him, and they passed over Jordan: by the morning light there lacked not one of them that was not gone over Jordan.
 23 And when Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not ¹⁰followed, he saddled *his* ass, and arose, and gat him home to his house, to ^mhis city, and ⁿput his household in order, and ^ohanged himself, and died, and was buried in the sepulchre of his father.
 24 Then David came to ^oMahanaim. And Absalom passed over Jordan,
 25 he and all the men of Israel with him. And Absalom made Amasa captain of the host instead of Joab: which Amasa *was* a man's son whose name *was* ¹²Ithra, an Israelite, that went in to ¹³Abigail the daughter

B. C. 1021.
^o ch. 15. 27.
 31.
^A Josh. 2. 4.
ⁱ Josh. 15. 7.
^j Josh. 18. 16.
¹ Ki. 1. 9.
 That is
 The fuller's well
^j ch. 16. 5.
^k ch. 19. 16.
² Josh. 2. 6.
^l Ex. 1. 19.
³ Josh. 2. 4.
 10 done.
^m ch. 15. 12.
¹¹ gave
 charge
 concerning
 his house.
² Ki. 20. 1.
ⁿ Job 31. 3.
¹ Ps. 55. 21.
^o Matt. 27. 5.
^o Gen. 33. 2.
¹ Josh. 13. 21.
 ch. 2. 8.
¹² Or, Jether
 an Ish-
 maelite.
¹³ Abigail,
 1 Chr. 2. 16.

17. by En-rogel [עֵן רֹגֵל]—'The fuller's well,' or 'fountain of the scout' (known in modern times as Nehemiah's or Job's well, Bir-ayub) in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, below the junction of the valley of Hinnom with that of Jehoshaphat. *Williams* ('Holy City') calls it a *stream*. It is about 130 feet deep. It yields a supply of about 3,600 gallons of water in a day' (*Robinson's 'Biblical Researches,'* i., p. 492; *Bonar's 'Land of Promise,'* p. 160; *Levin,* 'Sketch of Jerusalem,' p. 39). a wench went and told them. Women frequently repair to that spot for the purpose of washing clothes. 18. they went . . . away quickly, and came to a man's house . . . which had a well in his court. The court was that of the house, and the well an empty cistern. All the houses of the better class are furnished with such reservoirs. Nothing could more easily happen than that one of these wells, in consequence of a deficiency of water, should become dry; and it would then answer as a place of retreat, such as David's friends found in the man's house at Bahurim. 19. the woman . . . spread a covering over the well's mouth [שָׂרָה]—the covering. It is used specially for the veil or curtain before the entrance of the tabernacle and of the court (Exod. xxvi. 35, &c.; xxxv. 17; xxxix. 40)—generally for a door hanging curtain. The meaning of the clause therefore is, 'the woman took the mesek, the door hanging, which, as the most convenient at the moment, she had taken down, and spread it upon the mouth of the well; and to give a greater air of naturalness to the appearance of the place, she threw upon the covering a heap of bruised corn.' *Josephus* says, 'she laid fleeces of wool over them' ('*Antiquities,* b. vii., ch. ix., sec. 7). Thus the kind providence of God, who watched so wondrously over the interests of David, protected the imperilled lives of the two messengers till they carried Hushai's important message to the fugitive king. Following

the counsel given him, not to stop all night in the wilderness, he went down the steep mountain pass by which the Israelites first penetrated into the interior of Palestine (Josh. vii.) to Jericho and Gilgal, then hastened to cross the river (the mode of transit is not described), and by dawn of the following day the whole party had got safely over. The circumstances of that distressing flight, aggravated by the lone hour of midnight, and the roar of the numerous cataracts of the Jordan, are graphically depicted in Ps. xlii., xliii., which, although bearing the name of the sons of Korah, represent vividly and fully the feelings of the disconsolate but pious monarch. The spreading of a covering over the well's mouth for the drying of corn is a common practice.

23-29.—AHITHOPHEL HANGS HIMSELF.

23. when Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not followed—his vanity was wounded, his pride mortified, on finding that his ascendancy was gone; but that chagrin was aggravated by other feelings—a painful conviction that, through the delay which had been resolved on, the cause of Absalom was lost. Hastening home, therefore, he arranged his private affairs, and knowing that the storm of retributive vengeance would fall chiefly upon him, as the instigator and prop of the rebellion, he hanged himself. It may be remarked that the Israelites did not at that time refuse the rights of sepulture even to those who died by their own hands. He had an imitator in Judas, who resembled him in his treason as well as in his infamous end.

24. Then David came to Mahanaim—in the high Eastern country of Gilead, the seat of Ish-bosheth's government. Absalom passed over Jordan. It is not said how long an interval elapsed; but there must have been sufficient time to make the intended levy throughout the kingdom. 25. Amasa. By the genealogy it appears that this captain stood in the same relation to David as Joab, both

- 26 of Nahash, sister to Zeruah, Joab's mother. So Israel and Absalom pitched in the land of Gilead.
- 27 And it came to pass, when David was come to Mahanaim, that ²Shobi the son of Nahash of Rabbah of the children of Ammon, and ³Maehir the son of Ammiel of Lo-debar, and ⁴Barzillai the Gileadite of Rogelim,
- 28 brought ⁵beds, and ⁶basins, and earthen vessels, and wheat, and barley, and flour, and parched *corn*, and beans, and lentiles, and parched *pulse*,
- 29 and honey, and butter, and sheep, and cheese of kine, for David, and for the people that *were* with him, ⁷to eat: for they said, The people *is* hungry, and weary, and thirsty, in the wilderness.
- 18 AND David numbered the people that *were* with him, and set captains
- 2 of thousands and captains of hundreds over them. And David sent forth a third part of the people under the hand of Joab, and a third part under the hand of Abishai the son of Zeruah, Joab's brother, ⁸and a third part under the hand of Ittai the Gittite. And the king said
- 3 unto the people, I will surely go forth with you myself also. But ⁹the people answered, Thou shalt not go forth: for if we flee away, they will not ¹⁰care for us; neither if half of us die, will they care for us: but now *thou art* ¹¹ten thousand of us: therefore now *it is* better that thou
- 4 ¹²succour us out of the city. And the king said unto them, What seemeth you best I will do. And the king stood by the gate side, and all the people came out by hundreds, and by thousands.
- 5 And the king commanded Joab and Abishai and Ittai, saying, *Deal* gently for my sake with the young man, *even* with Absalom. And all the people heard when the king gave all the captains charge concerning Absalom.

B C. 10:3.

² ch. 10. 1.

ch. 12. 30.

³ ch. 9. 4.⁴ ch. 19. 31,

32.

1 Ki. 2. 7.

Ezra 2. 61.

⁵ 1 Sam. 25.

18.

ch. 15. 1, 2.

Pro. 11. 21.

Matt. 5. 7.

¹⁴ Or, cups.¹⁴ Deut. 15. 7.

1's. 34. 8-10.

1'ro. 21. 26.

Eccl. 11. 1.

Isa. 68. 7-

12.

Rom. 12. 13.

CHAP. 18.

¹⁴ Ruth 1. 11-

13.

ch. 13. 19.

⁶ ch. 21. 17.¹ set their

heart on

us.

² as ten

thousand

of us.

³ be to suc-

cour.

being his nephews. He seems to have been an illegitimate son, his father, Ithra, being an Israelite, and his mother an Ammonitess (see on 1 Chr. ii. 15, 17), and of course Amasa was Absalom's cousin.

27. when David was come to Mahanaim. The necessities of the king and his followers were hospitably ministered to by three chiefs, whose generous loyalty is recorded with honour in the sacred narrative. That three persons should be in circumstances, at their own expense, to furnish adequate supplies of food and other necessities to the royal fugitives can be no matter of surprise, when it is considered that the owners of so immense flocks as are reared on the extensive pasture lands of the East are far wealthier than the cultivators of land. Shobi—must have been brother of Hanun. Disapproving, probably, of that young king's outrage upon the Israelite ambassadors, he had been made governor of Ammon by David, on the conquest of that country. [See *Josephus*, 'Antiquities,' b. vii., ch. ix., sec. 8, where he is called Siphar: Septuagint, Naas: the Vatican has Ἀβυγαῖαν Συγατέρα Naas ἀδελφῶν Σαρουίας, Abigail, daughter of Naas and sister of Zeruah; and the Alexandrine has—daughter of Naas, ἀδελφῶν Σαρουίας, Naas, brother of Zeruah.] Maehir—(see on ch. ix. 4.) This chief is supposed by some to have been brother of Bath-sheba, but without foundation (cf. 1 Chr. iii. 5 with ch. xi. 3 of this book). His *locale* cannot be exactly determined, in our ignorance of the site of Lo-debar, which is known only to have been in the nomad region east of the Jordan. Barzillai—a wealthy old grandee, whose great age and infirmities made his loyal devotion to the distressed monarch peculiarly affecting. The supplies they brought, which, besides beds for the weary, consisted of the staple produce of their rich lands and pastures, may be classified as follows:—Eatables: wheat, barley [קֵצֶה, plural, barley in grains after threshing], flour [לֶחֶם, parched

corn (see on Ruth ii. 14; 1 Sam. xvii. 17; xxv. 18)], beans, lentiles, sheep, and cheese [חֵמֶת וְחֵמֶת, and cheeses of kine], slices of coagulated milk. [The Septuagint, as if not knowing what was meant, has retained the original word, Σαφῶς βωῶν]. Drinkables: 'honey and butter,' or cream [חֵמֶת, curdled milk], which, being mixed together, forms a thin diluted beverage, light, cool, and refreshing. Being considered a luxurious refreshment (Song iv. 11), the supply of it shows the high respect that was paid to David by his loyal and faithful subjects at Mahanaim. 29. in the wilderness—spread out beyond the cultivated table-lands into the steppes of Hauran.

CHAP. XVIII. 1-4.—DAVID REVIEWING THE ARMIES.

1. David numbered the people that were with him. The hardy mountaineers of Gilead came in great numbers at the call of their chieftains; so that, although without money to pay any troops, David soon found himself at the head of a considerable army. The number of his soldiers is not stated in the sacred history. *Josephus* says they amounted to about 4,000 ('Antiquities,' b. vii., ch. x., sec. 1). A pitched battle was now inevitable. But so much depending on the life of the king, he was not allowed to take the field in person, and therefore divided his forces into three detachments under Joab, Abishai, and Ittai, the commander of the foreign guards.

5-13.—GIVES THEM CHARGE OF ABSALOM.

5. Deal gently for my sake with the young man, even with Absalom. This affecting charge, which the king gave to his generals, proceeded not only from his overweening affection for his children, but from his consciousness that this rebellion was the chastisement of his own crimes. Absalom being merely an instrument in the hand of retributive Providence; and also from his

- 6 So the people went out into the field against Israel: and the battle
 7 was in the wood ^cof Ephraim; where the people of Israel were slain
 before the servants of David: and there was there ^da great slaughter that
 8 day of twenty thousand *men*. For the battle was there scattered over
 the face of all the country: and the wood ^edevoured more people that
 day than the sword devoured.
- 9 And Absalom met the servants of David. And Absalom rode upon a
 mule, and the mule went under the thick boughs of a great oak, and ^fhis
 head caught hold of the oak, and he was taken up between the heaven
 10 and the earth; and the mule that *was* under him went away. And a
 certain man saw *it*, and told Joab, and said, Behold, I saw Absalom
 11 hanged in an oak. And Joab said unto the man that told him, And,
 behold, thou sawest *him*, and why didst thou not smite him there to the
 ground? and I would have given thee ten *shekels* of silver, and a girdle.
- 12 And the man said unto Joab, Though I should ^greceive a thousand *shekels*
 of silver in mine hand, *yet* would I not put forth mine hand against the
 king's son: for in our hearing the king charged thee and Abishai and Ittai,
 13 saying, ^hBeware that none *touch* the young man Absalom. Otherwise
 I should have wrought falsehood against mine own life: for there is no
 matter hid from the king, and thou thyself wouldest have set thyself
 14 against *me*. Then said Joab, I may not tarry thus ⁱwith thee. And he
 took three darts in his hand, and thrust them through the heart of
 15 Absalom, while he *was* yet alive in the ^jmidst of the oak. And ten young
 men that bare Joab's armour compassed about and smote Absalom, and
 slew him.

R. C. 1023.

^c Josh. 17. 15,
 18.
 Near to
 which
 Jephthah
 slew the
 Ephraim-
 ites,
 Judg. 12. 5.
^d Pro. 11. 11
^e multiplied
 to devour.
^f ch. 14. 26.
 ch. 17. 23.
 J. c. 18. 5-
 14.
 Job 31. 3.
 Isa. 3. 24.
 Isa. 28. 21.
 Matt. 27. 5.
 1 Cr. 11. 14.
^g weigh
 upon mine
 hand.
^h Beware
 whosoever
 ye be of,
 etc.
ⁱ before
 thee.
^j heart.
 Deut. 4. 11.

piety, lest the unhappy prince should die with his sins unrepented of.

6. the battle was in the wood of Ephraim [עַרְבַּת עֵפְרַיִם], a forest, or dense growth of trees). Its name was derived, according to some, from the slaughter of the Ephraimites by Jephthah (Judg. xii.); according to others, from the connection of blood with the trans-Jordanic Manasseh. 7. the people of Israel were slain. This designation, together with the immense slaughter afterwards mentioned, shows the large extent to which the people were enlisted in this unhappy civil contest. The army of Absalom would be, as in all Eastern wars, an immense heterogeneous mass of people; and the first shock, the spilt blood of a few, generally decides the fate of the day. 8. the wood devoured more people . . . than the sword. The thick forest of oaks and terebinths, by obstructing the flight, greatly aided the victors in the pursuit, and was the occasion of more being slain in the rout than in the battle. This view is supported by *Josephus*: 'David's men were conquerors, as being superior in military strength and skill; so they pursued the rebels, as they fled away through the forests and valleys; some they took prisoners, and many they slew, more in the flight than on the field, for there fell about 20,000 that day' ('Antiquities,' b. vii., ch. x., sec. 2).

9. Absalom met the servants of David—or was overtaken. and his head caught hold of the oak [וַיִּפְּקַד בְּרֹאשׁוֹ בְּעֵץ הָאֵלֶּךְ]—and his head caught fast in the terebinth (probably *Quercus Ægilops*, Valonia oak, for which Gilead and Bashan were famous). 'It is necessary to be continually on one's guard against the branches of trees; and when the hair is worn in large locks floating down the back, as was the case with a young man of the party to which I belonged, any thick boughs interposing in the path might easily dislodge a rider from his seat, and catch hold of his flowing hair' (*Hartley*). It appears, however, that

the sacred historian points not so much to the hair, which would be covered by his helmet, as to the *heel* of Absalom, which, being caught while running between two branches, was enclosed so firmly that he could not disengage himself from the hold, nor make use of his hands. the mule that was under him went away. The Orientals, not having saddles like us, do not sit so firmly on the beasts they ride. Absalom, quitting his hold of the bridle, apparently to release himself when caught in the oak, the mule escaped. And there was no armour-bearer near him, as in the closing scene of Saul. He had stolen the hearts of Israel, and none of them had a heart to sympathize with and defend him. 11. I would have given thee ten shekels of silver and a girdle—i. e., would have raised him from the ranks to the status of a commissioned officer. Besides a sum of money, a girdle, curiously and richly wrought, was among the ancient Hebrews a mark of honour, and sometimes bestowed as a reward of military merit. This soldier, however, who may be taken as a fair sample of David's faithful subjects, had so great a respect for the king's will, that no prospect of reward would have tempted him to lay violent hands on Absalom. But Joab's stern sense of public duty, which satisfied him that there could be neither safety to the king, nor peace to the kingdom, nor security to him and other loyal subjects, so long as that turbulent prince lived, overcame his sensibilities, and looking upon the charge given to the generals as more befitting a parent than a prince, he ventured to disobey it.

14-32.—HE IS SLAIN BY JOAB.

14. he took three darts [שְׁלֹשָׁה דָּרְטִים]—small rods with iron points; lances. and thrust them through the heart of Absalom. The deed, partially done by Joab, was completed by his body-guard. Being a violation of the expressed wish, as well as of all the fond paternal feelings of David, it

- 16 And Joab blew the trumpet, and the people returned from pursuing
 17 after Israel: for Joab held back the people. And they took Absalom,
 and cast him into a great pit in the wood, and ⁷laid a very great heap of
 stones upon him: and all Israel fled every one to his tent.
- 18 Now Absalom in his life-time had taken and reared up for himself a
 pillar, which *is* in ⁹the king's dale: for he said, ⁴I have no son to keep
 my name in remembrance: and he ¹called the pillar after his own name:
 and it is called unto this day, Absalom's place.
- 19 Then said ⁷Ahimaaz the son of Zadok, Let me now run and bear the
 king tidings, how that the LORD hath ⁹avenged him of his enemies.
- 20 And Joab said unto him, Thou shalt not ¹⁰bear tidings this day, but
 thou shalt bear tidings another day; but this day thou shalt bear no
 21 tidings, because the king's son is dead. Then said Joab to ¹¹Cushi, Go tell
 the king what thou hast seen. And Cushi bowed himself unto Joab,
 22 and ran. Then said Ahimaaz the son of Zadok yet again to Joab, But
¹²howsoever, let me, I pray thee, also run after Cushi. And Joab said,
 Wherefore wilt thou run, my son, seeing that thou hast no tidings

B. G. 1023.
 / Josh 7. 26.
 Jer 22, 14,
 19.
 9 Gen. 11. 17.
 A ch. 14. 27.
 Job 18. 17.
 19, 21.
 / Ps. 49. 11.
 / ch. 15. 26.
 ch. 17. 17.
 9 judged him
 from the
 hand, etc.
 Judg. 2. 17.
 10 be a man
 of tidings.
 11 The
 Ethiopiar,
 Num. 12. 1.
 12 be what
 may.

must have been deeply offensive to the king, nor was it ever forgotten (1 Ki. ii. 5); and yet there is the strongest reason for believing that Joab, in doing it, was actuated by a sincere regard to the interests of David, both as a man and a monarch.

16. Joab blew the trumpet, and . . . held back the people. Knowing that, by the death of the usurper, there was no occasion for further bloodshed, he put an end to the pursuit, and thereby evinced the temperate policy of his conduct. However harsh and unfeeling to the king Joab may appear, there can be no doubt that he acted the part of a wise statesman in regarding the peace and welfare of the kingdom more than his master's private inclinations, which were opposed to strict justice as well as his own interests. Absalom deserved to die, by the divine law (Deut. xxi. 18, 21), as well as being an enemy to his king and country; and no time was more fitting than when he met that death in open battle. 17. they took Absalom, and cast him into a great pit . . . and laid a very great heap of stones. The people of the East indicate their detestation of the memory of an infamous person by throwing stones at the place where he is buried. The heap is increased by the gradual accumulation of stones which passers-by add to it. Absalom would, of course, be stripped of his armour, although nothing is said of it in the sacred narrative. The following appeared a few years ago in all the continental journals, from which it was transferred to the pages of the English newspapers; and it is here submitted to the reader to be received for what it is worth:—A strange discovery has just been made by Major Pappazoli, of Bucharest,—the sword which belonged to Absalom: the blade has on one side the following words traced in Hebrew characters: "Present from Gessur to Absalom, son of David; Jeho, Jeho." On the same side is engraved the image of the hexagonal seal of David, and on the other some characters, the meaning of which has not been explained. On the corresponding place to those of the Hebrew characters, and on the opposite side of the blade, are those words engraved in gold—"Titus excepti ex Hierosolymâ." This sword had a handle in gold, representing at the upper part a warrior's head, covered with a helmet, and joined by a chain to a dragon's head, which formed the hilt. The old monk, possessor of this weapon, procured it from a Janissary, into whose hands it fell during the disturbances

at Constantinople in 1807. In a moment of distress he sold the handle and the scabbard, which was, he says, made of serpent's skin, and mounted in gold. The ancient origin of the blade is proved by a manufacturer's mark in Semitic characters.

18. Absalom in his life-time had . . . reared up for himself a pillar [מַצֵּבָה, in the first clause, and מַ, hand, in the latter]—(see on 1 Sam. xv. 12) in the king's dale (cf. Gen. xiv. 17)—*i. e.*, the valley of Jehoshaphat. This pillar was made of marble, according to *Josephus* ('Antiquities,' b. vii., ch. x., sec. 3). for he said, I have no son to keep my name in remembrance. It is elsewhere said that Absalom had three sons, and a daughter of great beauty, called Tamar (ch. xiv. 27); but this pillar was in all likelihood raised previously to the appearance of this family; for *Josephus* expressly asserts that it was erected with the view of keeping alive his memory, *even* if he should have no children ('Antiquities,' b. vii., ch. x., sec. 3). In the valley of Jehoshaphat, on the east of Jerusalem, is a tomb or cenotaph, said to be this "pillar" or monument: it is twenty-four feet square, dome-topped, and reaches forty feet in height. This may occupy the spot, but cannot itself be the work of Absalom, as it evidently bears the style of a later architecture. It is substantially Doric, with an Ionic volute, and has been supposed to have been built about the time of the Maccabees (see *Hardy's* 'Notices of the Holy Land,' p. 137; *Olin's* 'Travels,' ii., p. 145.) Some, however, maintain (*Bonar's* 'Land of Promise,' p. 132) that this is the very monument which Absalom constructed for himself, and that the architectural orders exhibited on it, and the other adjoining tombs, some Ionic, others Doric, were in a rude form found in Syria and Phœnicia, as well as in Egypt, long before they were imported into Greece, where they were carried to a high pitch of perfection.

19. Then said Ahimaaz . . . Let me now run and bear the king tidings. The reasons of Joab's declining to accept Ahimaaz's offer to bear intelligence of the victory to David, and afterwards letting him go along with another, are variously stated by commentators; but they are of no importance; and yet the alacrity of the messengers, as well as the eager excitement of the expectants, is graphically described. 21. Then said Joab to Cushi [כּוּשִׁי]—to the Ethiopian. Perhaps the ground of this soldier's selection for a mission so painful for any courtier to discharge, was that of

- 23 ¹³ ready? But howsoever, *said he*, let me run. And he said unto him, Run. Then Ahimaaz ran by the way of the plain, and overran Cushi.
- 24 And David sat between ²the two gates: and ¹the watchman went up to the roof over the gate unto the wall, and lifted up his eyes, and looked,
- 25 and behold a man running alone. And the watchman cried, and told the king. And the king said, If he *be* alone, *there is* tidings in his
- 26 mouth. And he came apace, and drew near. And the watchman saw another man running: and the watchman called unto the porter, and said, Behold *another* man running alone. And the king said, He also
- 27 bringeth tidings. And the watchman said, ¹⁴Me thinketh the running of the foremost is like the running of Ahimaaz the son of Zadok. And the king said, ¹⁵He is a good man, and cometh with good tidings.
- 28 And Ahimaaz called, and said unto the king, ¹⁵All is well. And he fell down to the earth upon his face before the king, and said, Blessed *be* the LORD thy God, which hath ¹⁶delivered up the men that lifted up their hand against my lord the king. And the king said, ¹⁷Is the young man Absalom safe? And Ahimaaz answered, When Joab sent the king's servant, and *me* thy servant, I saw a great tumult, but I knew not what *it was*. And the king said *unto him*, Turn aside, *and* stand here. And he
- 31 turned aside, and stood still. And, behold, Cushi came; and Cushi said, ¹⁸Tidings, my lord the king: for the LORD ¹⁹hath avenged thee this day
- 32 of all them that rose up against thee. And the king said unto Cushi, *Is* the young man Absalom safe? And Cushi answered, The enemies of my lord the king, and all that rise against thee to do *thee* hurt, be as *that*
- 33 young man *is*. And the king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept; and as he went, thus he said, ²⁰O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!
- 19 AND it was told Joab, Behold, the king weepeth and mourneth for
- 2 Absalom. And the ¹victory that day was *turned* into mourning unto all the people: for the people heard say that day how the king was grieved
- 3 for his son. And the people gat them by stealth that day into the city,
- 4 as people being ashamed steal away when they flee in battle. But the

B C. 1023.

¹³Cr. convenient.
^k 1 Sam. 1. 9.
 1 Sam. 4. 13.
¹ 2 Ki 9. 17.
 Isa. 21. 6-9
 11, 12.
 Isa. 56. 10,
 11.
 Eze. 31. 2-5.
 Acts 20. 2-31.
¹⁴I see the running.
^m 1 Ki. 1. 42.
 Pro. 13. 17.
 Pro. 15. 10.
 Isa. 42. 7.
¹⁵Peace cr.
 Peace be to thee.
¹⁶shut up.
 1 Sam. 17. 46.
 1 Sam. 21. 18.
 1 Sam 26. 8.
 Isa 19. 4.
 Obad. 14.
¹⁷Is there peace?
¹⁸Tidings is brought.
¹⁹Ps. 27. 2.
 Ps. 53. 10.
²⁰Chap. 19. 4.

CHAP. 19.
¹salvation, or deliverance.
 Ps. 7. 8.
 Ps. 18. 32-50.

his being a foreigner, and personally unknown to the king. 23. by the way of the plain—or 'ciccar,' circle. This word is only used elsewhere in connection with the valley of the Jordan. It is possible that there may have been a place or region so called on the table-lands of Gilead, as the Septuagint seems to indicate. Or Mahanaim may have been so situated, with regard to the battle-field, as to be more easily accessible by a descent to the plain of the Jordan than over the hills themselves. Or the word may signify (as Ewald explains) a manner of quick running (*Stanley*, 'Sinai and Palestine,' p. 323).

24. David sat between the two gates—i. e., in the tower-house on the wall that overhung the gate of Mahanaim; near it was a watch-tower, on which a sentinel was posted, as in times of war, to notify every occurrence. 27. the running of the foremost is like the running of Ahimaaz—known probably by a waddling rolling of his person in running.

28. All is well [שָׁלוֹם, peace]—the usual salutation among the Hebrews (Ps. cxxii. 8). The delicacy of Ahimaaz's communication was made up by the unmistakable plainness of Cushi's. 33. the king . . . went up to the chamber over the gate [עַל-הַשַּׁעַר]. 'To most houses of respectable size or public importance there is a smaller

one annexed, which sometimes rises one storey higher than the house; at other times it consists of one room or two rooms only and a terrace; while others that are built, as they frequently are, over the porch or gateway, have, if we except the ground floor, which they have not, all the conveniences that belong to the house properly so called. It is a sequestered part of the building, to which a person can retire for meditation and undisturbed solitude' (*Dr. Shaw's 'Travels:'* see further on 2 Ki. iv. 10). The death of Absalom was a heavy trial, and it is impossible not to sympathize with the outburst of feeling by which David showed that all thoughts of the victory he had won as a king were completely sunk in the painful loss he had sustained as a father. The extraordinary ardour and strength of his affection for this worthless son breaks out in the redundancy and vehemence of his mournful ejaculations.

CHAP. XIX. 1-8.—JOAB CAUSES THE KING TO CEASE MOURNING.

3. the people gat them by stealth . . . into the city. The rumour of the king's disconsolate condition spread a universal and unseasonable gloom. His troops, instead of being welcomed back, as a victorious army always was, with music and other demonstrations of public joy, slunk secretly and silently into the city, as if ashamed, after the

- king ^a covered his face, and the king cried with a loud voice, ^b O my son Absalom, O Absalom, my son, my son!
- 5 And Joab came into the house to the king, and said, Thou hast shamed this day the faces of all thy servants, which this day have saved thy life, and the lives of thy sons and of thy daughters, and the lives of thy wives, 6 and the lives of thy concubines; ² in that thou lovest thine enemies, and hatest thy friends: for thou hast declared this day, ³ that thou regardest neither princes nor servants: for this day I perceive, that if Absalom had 7 lived, and all we had died this day, then it had pleased thee well. Now therefore arise, go forth, and speak ⁴ comfortably unto thy servants: for I swear by the LORD, if thou go not forth, there ^c will not tarry one with thee this night: and that will be worse unto thee than all the evil that 8 befell thee from thy youth until now. Then the king arose, and sat in ^d the gate. And they told unto all the people, saying, Behold, the king doth sit in the gate. And all the people came before the king; for ^e Israel had fled every man to his tent.
- 9 And all the people were at strife throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, The king ^f saved us out of the hand of our enemies, and he delivered us out of the hand of the Philistines; and now he ^g is fled out 10 of the land for Absalom. And Absalom, whom we anointed over us, is dead in battle: now therefore why ^h speak ye not a word of bringing the king back?
- 11 And king David sent to Zadok and to Abiathar the priests, saying, Speak unto the elders of Judah, saying, Why are ye the last to bring the king back to his house? seeing the speech of all Israel is come to the king, 12 *even* to his house. Ye *are* my brethren, ye *are* ⁱ my bones and my flesh: 13 wherefore then are ye the last to bring back the king? And ^j say ye to Amasa, *Art* thou not of my bone, and of my flesh? ^k God do so to me, and more also, if thou be not captain of the host before me continually ^l in the

B. C. 1023.

^a ch. 15. 30.
^b 1 Sam. 4. 12.
 ch. 18. 33.
² By loving,
 etc
³ that
 princes or
 servants
 are not to
 thee.
⁴ to the
 heart of
 thy ser-
 vants.
^c 1 Ro 11. 28.
^d Ruth 4. 1.
 ch. 18. 4, 24.
^e 1 Ki. 12. 10.
 2 Ki. 14. 12.
 / ch. 5. 18.
 1 Sam. 17. 1.
 1 Sam. 18. 1.
^g ch. 15. 14.
^h are ye
 silent?
ⁱ Gen. 2. 23.
 Judg. 9. 2.
 ch. 5. 1.
^j ch. 17. 25.
^k 1 Chr. 2. 16,
 17.
 1 Chr. 12. 18.
^l Ruth 1. 17.
 1 Ki. 10. 2.
^m ch. 3. 20, 30.
 ch. 8. 16.
 ch. 15. 14.

commission of some crime. 4. the king covered his face—one of the usual signs of mourning (see on ch. xv. 30).

5. Thou hast shamed . . . the faces of all thy servants—by withdrawing thyself to indulge in grief, as if their services were disagreeable, and their devotion irksome to thee. Instead of hailing their return with joy and gratitude, thou hast refused them the small gratification of seeing thee. Joab's remonstrance was right and necessary, but it was made with harshness. He was one of those persons who spoil their important services by the insolence of their manners, and who always awaken a feeling of obligation in those to whom they render any services. He spoke to David in a tone of hauteur that ill became a subject to show towards his king. 7. Now therefore arise, go forth, and speak comfortably unto thy servants. The king felt the truth of Joab's reprimand; but the threat by which it was enforced, grounded as it was on the general's unbounded popularity with the army, showed him to be a dangerous person; and that circumstance, together with the violation of an express order to deal gently for his sake with Absalom, produced in David's mind a settled hatred, which was strongly manifested in his last directions to Solomon. 8. the king arose, and sat in the gate—appeared daily in the usual place for the hearing of causes. all the people came before the king—i. e., the loyal natives who had been faithful to his government, and fought in his cause. Israel had fled—i. e., the adherents of Absalom, who, on his defeat, had dispersed, and saved themselves by flight.

9-13.—THE ISRAELITES BRING THE KING BACK, &c.

9. all the people were at strife. The kingdom was completely disorganized. The sentiments of three different parties are represented in *vv.* 9, 10—the royalists, the adherents of Absalom, who had been very numerous, and those who were indifferent to the Davidic dynasty. In these circumstances the king was right in not hastening back, as a conqueror, to re-ascend his throne. A re-election was in some measure necessary. He remained for some time on the other side of Jordan, in expectation of being invited back. That invitation was given, without, however, the concurrence of Judah; and David, disappointed and vexed by his own tribe's apparent lukewarmness, despatched the two high priests to rouse the Judahites to take a prominent interest in his cause. It was the act of a skilful politician, as, Hebron having been the seat of the rebellion, it was graceful on his part to encourage their return to allegiance and duty; and it was an appeal to their honour not to be the last of the tribes. But this separate message, and the preference given to them, occasioned an outburst of jealousy among the other tribes that was nearly followed by fatal consequences.

13. And say ye to Amasa, &c. This also was a dexterous stroke of policy. David was fully alive to the importance of extinguishing the rebellion—of withdrawing from that cause the only leader who could keep it alive; and he therefore secretly intimated his intention to raise Amasa to the command of the army in room of Joab, whose overbearing haughtiness had become intolerable. The king justly reckoned that, from natural temper, as well as gratitude for the royal pardon, he would prove a more tractable servant; and

- 14 room of Joab. And he bowed the heart of all the men of Judah, ¹even as *the heart of one man*; so that they sent *this word* unto the king,
- 15 Return thou, and all thy servants. So the king returned, and came to Jordan. And Judah came to ^mGilgal, to go to meet the king, to conduct the king over Jordan.
- 16 And ⁿShimei the son of Gera, a Benjamite, which *was* of Bahurim,
- 17 hasted and came down with the men of Judah to meet king David. And *there were* a thousand men of Benjamin with him, and ^oZiba, the servant of the house of Saul, and his fifteen sons and his twenty servants with
- 18 him; and they went over Jordan before the king. And there went over a ferry boat to carry over the king's household, and to do ⁶what he thought good. And Shimei the son of Gera fell down before the king,
- 19 as he was come over Jordan; and said unto the king, ^pLet not my lord impute iniquity unto me, neither do thou remember ^qthat which thy servant did perversely the day that my lord the king went out of
- 20 Jerusalem, that the king should ^rtake it to his heart. For thy servant doth know that I have sinned; therefore, behold, I am come the first this day of all ^sthe house of Joseph to go down to meet my lord the king.
- 21 But Abishai the son of Zeruiah answered and said, Shall not Shimei be
- 22 put to death for this, because he ^tcursed the LORD's anointed? And David said, "What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah, that ye should this day be adversaries unto me? ^vshall there any man be put to death this day in Israel? for do not I know that I *am* this day king over
- 23 Israel? Therefore ^wthe king said unto Shimei, Thou shalt not die. And the king sware unto him.
- 24 And ^xMephibosheth the son of Saul came down to meet the king, and had neither dressed his feet, nor trimmed his beard, nor washed his clothes, from the day the king departed until the day he came *again* in peace.

R. C. 10 3.
 1 Judg. 20. 1.
 Ps. 110. 2, 3.
 Acts 4. 32.
 2 Josh. 5. 9.
 1 Sam. 11.
 14, 15.
 3 ch. 16. 5.
 1 Ki. 2. 8,
 7: 46.
 4 ch. 9. 2, 10.
 ch. 16. 1, 2.
 5 the good in
 his eyes.
 6 1 Sam. 22.
 15.
 Ps. 32. 2.
 Rom. 4. 6.
 8.
 7 ch. 16. 5, 6.
 Ps. 79. 8.
 1 Pro. 28. 13.
 Isa. 43. 25.
 Matt. 5. 25.
 8 ch. 13. 33.
 9 ch. 16. 5.
 1 Ex. 22. 24.
 1 Sam. 24. 6.
 1 Sam. 23. 9.
 ch. 16. 5, 7,
 13.
 2 ch. 16. 10.
 3 1 Sam. 11.
 13.
 4 1 Ki. 2. 8, 9,
 57, 46.
 5 ch. 9. 6.

David doubtless intended in all sincerity to fulfil this promise. But Joab managed to retain his high position, (see on ch. xx.) 14. he bowed the heart of all the men of Judah—*i. e.*, Amasa, who had been won over, used his great influence in re-attaching the whole tribe of Judah to the interest of David. They who had stood aloof became ardent in their zeal for the king's restoration; and the partial severance of the kingdom which David apprehended from the coldness and inaction of Judah was nearly produced by the sudden impetuosity of their zeal in the cause of royalty. 15. Judah came to Gilgal—as the most convenient place where preparations could be made for bringing the king and court over the Jordan.

16. Shimei . . . 17. a thousand men of Benjamin with him. This display of his followers was to show what force he could raise against or in support of the king. Expressing the deepest regret for his former outrageous conduct, he was pardoned on the spot; and although the son of Zeruiah urged the expediency of making this chief a public example, his officiousness was repulsed by David with magnanimity, and with the greater confidence that he felt himself now re-established in the kingdom (see on 1 Ki. ii. 8, 9). David confirmed his pledge to this man by a solemn oath. Ziba, the servant of the house of Saul. He had deceived his master, and when ordered to make ready the ass for the lame prince to go and meet the king, slipped away by himself to pay court first; so that Mephibosheth, being lame, had to remain in Jerusalem till the king's arrival. 18. ferry boat—probably rafts, which are still used on that part of the river. If there was a ferry boat, it was a luxury apparently provided for the convenience of the king's household. But *Josephus* calls it a bridge of boats ('Antiquities,' b.

vii., ch. xi., sec. 2). The Septuagint refers this to the *men*, the servants of Ziba, and the attendants of Shimei, who helped to carry the members of the royal household across the river [καὶ εὐειτόν-γησαν τὴν λειτουργίαν τοῦ διαβιβᾶσαι τὸν βασιλέα, and they performed the service of carrying over the king. Καὶ διεβη ἡ διάβασις τοῦ ἐξεγγεῖραι τὸν οἶκον τοῦ βασιλέως καὶ τοῦ ποίησαι τὸ εὐθὲς ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς αὐτοῦ—And the passage was effected by gathering together (on the western bank of the Jordan) the household of the king, and doing what was pleasing in his sight]. 20. the first . . . of all the house of Joseph—*i. e.*, before all the rest of Israel (Ps. lxxvii. 15; lxxx. 1; lxxx. 1; Zech. x. 6).

24. Mephibosheth . . . came down to meet the king. The reception given to Mephibosheth was less creditable to David. The sincerity of that prince's grief for the misfortunes of the king cannot be doubted. He "had neither dressed his feet" (not taken the bath), "nor trimmed his beard" [מְשַׁחַם לְפָאֵר, trimmed the lip, beard, or moustache (cf. Lev. xiii. 45; Mic. iii. 7); Septuagint, ἐποίησε τὸν μύστακα αὐτοῦ]. The Hebrews cut off the hair on the upper lip (see on Lev. xiii. 45) and cheeks, but in mourning let it grow carelessly, as on the chin. Besides dyeing the beard some colour, which, however, is the exception, and not the rule in the East, there are various modes of trimming it: they train it into a massy, bushy form, swelling and round; or they terminate it like a pyramid, in a sharp point. Whatever the mode, it is always trimmed with the greatest care; and they usually carry a small comb for the purpose. The neglect of this attention to his beard was an undoubted proof of the depth of Mephibosheth's grief. The king seems to have received him upbraidingly, and not to have been altogether

- 25 And it came to pass, when he was come to Jerusalem to meet the king, that the king said unto him, ²Wherefore wentest not thou with me,
- 26 Mephibosheth? And he answered, My lord, O king, my servant deceived me: for thy servant said, I will saddle me an ass, that I may ride thereon,
- 27 and go to the king; because thy servant *is* lame. And ²he hath slandered thy servant unto my lord the king; ^abut my lord the king *is* as an angel of
- 28 God: do therefore *what is* good in thine eyes. For all of my father's house were but ⁷dead men before my lord the king; ^byet didst thou set thy servant among them that did eat at thine own table: what right therefore
- 29 have I yet to cry any more unto the king? And the king said unto him, Why speakest thou any more of thy matters? I have said, ^cThou and
- 30 Ziba divide the land. And Mephibosheth said unto the king, Yea, let him take all, forasmuch as my lord the king is come again in peace unto his own house.
- 31 And ^dBarzillai the Gileadite came down from Rogelim, and went over
- 32 Jordan with the king, to conduct him over Jordan. Now Barzillai was a very aged man, *even* fourscore years old: and ^ehe had provided the king of
- 33 sustenance while he lay at Mahanaim; for he *was* a very great man. And the king said unto Barzillai, Come thou over with me, and I will feed thee
- 34 with me in Jerusalem. And Barzillai said unto the king, ⁸How long have
- 35 I to live, that I should go up with the king unto Jerusalem? *I am* this day ⁷fourscore years old: *and* can I discern between good and evil? can thy servant taste what I eat or what I drink? can I ⁹hear any more the
- 36 voice of singing men and singing women? wherefore then should thy servant be yet a burden unto my lord the king? Thy servant will go a little way over Jordan with the king; and why should the king recom-
- 37 pense it me with such a reward? Let thy servant, I pray thee, turn back again, that I may die in mine own city, *and be buried* by the grave of my father and of my mother: but behold thy ^hservant Chimham; let him go over with my lord the king; and do to him what shall seem good unto
- 38 thee. And the king answered, Chimham shall go over with me, and I will do to him that which shall seem good unto thee: and whatsoever thou
- 39 shalt ⁱrequire of me, *that* will I do for thee. And all the people went over Jordan. And when the king was come over, the king ^kkissed Barzillai,
- 40 and ^jblessed him; and he returned unto his own place. Then the king went on to Gilgal, and ^lChimham went on with him: and all the people of Judah conducted the king, and also half the people of Israel.

B. C. 1021.
^y ch. 16. 17.
^z ch. 16. 3.
 Ps. 15. 3.
 Ps. 63. 11.
 Ps. 111. 7.
 Fro. 6. 16.
 17.
 Fro. 21. 6.
 Pro. 23. 28.
 Jer 9. 4.
^u 1 Sam. 20. 9.
 ch. 14. 17.
 20.
^v men of death.
 1 Sam. 26. 10.
^w ch. 9. 7, 10, 13.
^x Deut. 19. 10-21.
 Ps. 52. 2.
 Ps 101. 1-3.
 Pro 23. 4.
^d 1 Ki. 2. 7.
 Ezra 2. 61.
 Neh. 7. 61.
^e ch. 17. 27.
⁸ How many days are the years of my life?
 Gen. 47. 9.
 Ps. 39. 4, 5.
 Jas. 4. 14.
^f Ps. 90. 10.
^g Ezra 2. 15.
 Neh 7. 67.
 Eccl 12. 3-6.
^h 1 Ki. 2. 7.
 Jer 41. 17.
ⁱ choose.
^k Gen 31. 55.
^j Gen. 14. 19.
 Ex. 39. 43.
 Josh. 22. 6.
 1 Sam. 2. 20.
^l Chimham.

sure either of his guilt or innocence. It is impossible to commend the cavalier treatment, any more than to approve the partial award, of David in this case. If he were too hurried and distracted by the pressure of circumstances to enquire fully into the matter, he should have postponed his decision; for if by 'dividing the land' (v. 29) he meant that the former arrangement should be continued, by which Mephibosheth was acknowledged the proprietor, and Ziba the farmer, it was a hardship inflicted on the owner to fix him with a tenant who had so grossly slandered him. But if by 'dividing the land,' they were now to share alike, the injustice of the decision was greatly increased by his being made partner with his selfish and slanderous steward. *Jerome* ('Quæst. Hebraicæ,' *in loco*) says that the later Jews believed the division of David's kingdom was an act done by the retributive justice of Providence for the unequal measure awarded to Mephibosheth. Whatever may be thought of the hasty and imprudent conduct of David, in any view the generous, disinterested spirit displayed by Mephibosheth was worthy a son of the noble-hearted Jonathan.

31. Barzillai the Gileadite. The rank, great

age, and chivalrous devotion of this Gileadite chief win our respect. 35. can I discern between good and evil?—does not refer to moral good and evil, but solely to the varying means and enjoyments of life. His declining to go to court, his recommendation of his son, his convey across the Jordan, and his parting scene with the king, are interesting incidents. What mark of royal favour was bestowed on Chimham has not been recorded; but it is probable that David gave a great part of his personal patrimony in Beth-lehem to Chimham and his heirs in perpetuity (Jer. xli. 17). the voice of singing men and singing women? Bands of professional musicians form a prominent appendage to the courts of Oriental princes. 37. buried by the grave of my father and of my mother. This is an instance of the strong affection of people in the East towards the places of sepulture appropriated to their families. behold thy servant Chimham; let him go over with my lord the king. It is an interesting corroboration of Chimham's introduction to the court of David, that a trace of his residence and property is found so late as the days of Jeremiah (Jer. xli. 17). 40. Gilgal . . . all the people of Judah conducted the king, and also half the people of Israel. Whether

- 41 And, behold, all the men of Israel came to the king, and said unto the king, Why have our brethren the men of Judah stolen thee away, and have ^abrought the king and his household, and all David's men with him, over
- 42 Jordan? And all the men of Judah answered the men of Israel, Because the king *is* ^bnear of kin to us: wherefore then be ye angry for this matter? have we eaten at all of the king's *cost*? or hath he given us any gift?
- 43 And the men of Israel answered the men of Judah, and said, We have ten ^cparts in the king, and we have also more *right* in David than ye: why then did ye ^ddespise us, that our advice should not be first had in bringing back our king? And the words of the men of Judah were fiercer than the words of the men of Israel.
- 20 AND there ^ehappened to be there a man of ^fBelial, whose name was Sheba, the son of Bichri, a Benjamite; and he blew a trumpet, and said, ^gWe have no part in David, neither have we inheritance in the son of
- 2 Jesse: ^hevery man to his tents, O Israel. So ⁱevery man of Israel went up from after David, and followed Sheba the son of Bichri: but the men of Judah clave unto their king, from Jordan even to Jerusalem.
- 3 And David came to his house at Jerusalem; and the king took the ten women ^jhis concubines, whom he had left to keep the house, and put them in ^kward, and fed them, but went not in unto them. So they were ^lshut up unto the day of their death, ^mliving in widowhood.
- 4 Then said the king to Amasa, ⁿAssemble me the men of Judah within
- 5 three days. and be thou here present. So Amasa went to assemble *the men of Judah*: but he tarried longer than the set time which he had

B. C 1023.

^k ver. 15.^l Ruth 4. 12.

1 -2.

ver 1^o.

1 Chr. 2. 3-

15.

Eg 78. 6.

70.

Matt 1. 1-

6.

^m 1 Ki. 11. 10.

11.

ⁿ set us at

light.

CHAP. 20.

^a ch. 12. 10.^b Deut. 13. 13.

Judg 19. 22.

^c 1 Sam 2. 12.

ch. 19. 41.

^d 1 Ki 12. 16.^e Pro. 17. 4.^f ch. 15. 16.^g 1 an house

of ward.

^h bound.ⁱ in widow-

hood of

life.

^j Call.

from impatience to move on, or from some other cause, David did not wait till the representatives of all the tribes had arrived to conduct him on his return to the capital. The procession began as soon as Amasa had brought the Judahite escort, and the preference given to this tribe produced a bitter jealousy, which was nearly kindling a civil war, fiercer than that which had just ended. A war of words ensued between the chiefs of the various tribes, Israel resting their argument on their superior numbers: 'they had ten parts in the king,' whereas Judah had no more than one. Judah rested their right to take the lead, on the ground of their nearer relationship to the king. This was a claim dangerous to the house of David; and it shows the seeds were already sown of that tribal dissension which ere long led to the dismemberment of the kingdom.

CHAP. XX. 1-9.—SHEBA MAKES A PARTY IN ISRAEL.

1. Sheba . . . a Benjamite. Though nothing is known of this man, he must have been a person of considerable power and influence ere he could have raised so sudden and extensive a sedition. He belonged to the tribe of Benjamin, where the adherents of Saul's dynasty were still numerous, and perceiving the strong disgust of the other tribes with the part assumed by Judah in the Restoration, his ill-designing heart resolved to turn it to the overthrow of David's authority in Israel. every man to his tents. This proverbial expression may have had its foundation in the fact that many of the Israelite peasantry adhered to the custom of the patriarchs who tilled land, and yet lived in tents, as Syrian peasants often do still. This was the usual watchword of national insurrection, and from the actual temper of the people, it was followed by effects beyond what he probably anticipated. 2. from Jordan even to Jerusalem. The quarrel had broken out shortly after the crossing of the Jordan, between Judah and the other tribes who withdrew, so that Judah was left nearly alone, to conduct the king to the

metropolis. Thus it happened that at a moment when there was the greatest need of harmony and union, there was the most imminent danger of a worse dismemberment than before, and of the rejection by the greater portion of Israel of a king in whose favour Jehovah had but recently given decisive testimony.

3. the king took the ten women his concubines. Jewish writers say that the widowed queens of Hebrew monarchs were not allowed to marry again, but were obliged to pass the rest of their lives in strict seclusion. So are the wives of the emperor of China. On the death of the reigning sovereign all his women are transferred from the palace to a separate mansion, where they live in seclusion during the rest of their lives (*Macartney*, p. 375). David treated his concubines in the same manner, after the outrage committed on them by Absalom. They were not divorced, for they were guiltless; but they were no longer publicly recognized as his wives; nor was their confinement to a sequestered life a very heavy doom, in a region where women have never been accustomed to go much abroad.

4. Then said the king to Amasa, Assemble me the men of Judah within three days. Amasa is now installed in the command which David had promised him. The revolt of the ten tribes probably hastened the public declaration of this appointment, which he hoped would be popular with them, and Amasa was ordered within three days to levy a force from Judah sufficient to put down the insurrection. The appointment was a blunder, and the king soon perceived his error. The specified time passed, but Amasa could not muster the men. Dreading the loss of time, the king gave a commission to assemble the royal body-guard to Abishai, and not to Joab—a new affront, which no doubt wounded the pride of the stern and haughty old general. But he hastened, with his attached soldiers, to go as second to his brother, determined to take the first opportunity of wreaking his vengeance on his

- 6 appointed him. And David said to ^gAbishai, Now shall Sheba the son of Bichri do us more harm than *did* Absalom: take thou ^hthy lord's servants, and pursue after him, lest he get him fenced cities, and ^eescape us. And there went out after him Joab's men, and the ⁱCherethites, and the Pelethites, and all the mighty men: and they went out of Jerusalem, to pursue after Sheba the son of Bichri.
- 8 When they *were* at the great stone which *is* in Gibeon, Amasa went before them. And Joab's garment that he had put on was girded unto him, and upon it a girdle *with* a sword fastened upon his loins in the sheath thereof; and as he went forth it fell out. And Joab said to Amasa, *Art* thou in health, my brother? ^jAnd Joab took Amasa by the beard with the right hand to kiss him. But Amasa took no heed to the sword that *was* in Joab's hand: so ^khe smote him therewith ^lin the fifth rib, and shed out his bowels to the ground, and ^mstruck him not again; and he died. So Joab and Abishai his brother pursued after Sheba the son of Bichri. And one of Joab's men stood by him, and said, He that ⁿfavoureth Joab, and he that *is* for David, *let him go* after Joab. And Amasa wallowed in blood in the midst of the highway: and when the man saw that all the people stood still, he removed Amasa out of the highway into the field, and cast a cloth upon him, when he saw that every one that ^ocame by him stood still. When he was removed out of the highway, all the people went on after Joab, to pursue after Sheba the son of Bichri.
- 14 And he went through all the tribes of Israel unto ^pAbel, and to Bethmaachah, and all the Berites: and they were gathered together, and went ^qalso after him. And they came and besieged him in Abel of Bethmaachah, and they ^rcast up a bank against the city, and ^sit stood in the trench: and all the people that *were* with Joab ^tbattered the wall, to

B. C. 1022.
^g ch. 18. 2.
 ch. 21. 17.
 ch. 21. 18.
^h 1 Chr 11:20.
ⁱ ch. 11. 11.
^j 1 Ki. 1. 31.
^k deliver himself from our eyes.
^l ch. 8. 13.
^m Luke 22 47.
ⁿ Gen. 4. 2.
 ch. 2. 8.
 ch. 3. 27.
^o 1 Ki. 2. 5.
^p ch. 2. 2.
^q doubl d not his stroke.
^r 2 Ki. 15. 29.
 2 Chr 16 4.
^s 2 Ki. 19:2.
 Jer. 32. 24.
 Jer 31. 4.
 Luke 19.13.
^t Or, it stood against the outmost wall.
^u marr'd to t'r w down.

successful rival. 6. David said to Abishai . . . take thou thy lord's servants, and pursue after him, lest he . . . escape us [נָקַדְתָּ אַחֲרָיו, turn away our eyes—i. e., elude our sight; Septuagint, σκιάσει τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς ἡμῶν].

8. Amasa went before them. Having collected some forces, he by a rapid march overtook the expedition at Gibeon, and assumed the place of commander, in which capacity he was saluted, among others, by Joab. Joab's garment . . . was girded—in the fashion of travellers and soldiers. a girdle with a sword fastened upon his loins [צַדְדוֹ = his side (cf. Ezek. ix. 2, 3)]. This statement receives ample illustration from the Assyrian sculptures, on which warriors are depicted, their swords not on their thigh, but on the loin or side. a sword . . . and as he went forth it fell out—i. e., out of the scabbard. The sword or dagger was fixed into the girdle in a horizontal direction, not suspended from it. In this position, Joab's sword *falling* out of the large sheath might appear an accident very likely to happen; whereas it could not possibly have fallen out had it hung loosely and perpendicularly, like the swords of the moderns. According to *Josephus*, he let it drop on purpose, as he was accosting Amasa, that stooping, as it were accidentally, to pick it up, he might salute the new general with the naked sword in his hand, without exciting any suspicion of his design. He "went forth" in a ceremonious manner to meet Amasa, now commander-in-chief, in order to seem to render to that officer, whom he considered as usurping his post, a conspicuous honour and homage. 9. took Amasa by the beard with the right hand to kiss him. This act, common with two friends on meeting, when one of them was come from a journey ('kissing of the beard' is always a token

of warm greeting), indicates respect as well as kindness; and the performance of it evinced the deep hypocrisy of Joab, who thereby put Amasa off his guard. No wonder, then, that while this act of friendly gratulation, after long absence, occupied Amasa's attention, he did not perceive the sword that was in Joab's left hand. The action of Joab was indeed a high compliment, but neither suspicious nor unusual; and to this compliment, Amasa paying attention, and no doubt returning it with suitable politeness, he could little expect the fatal event that Joab's perfidy produced.

10-13.—AMASA IS SLAIN.

10. smote him . . . in the fifth rib. The seat of the liver and bowels, where wounds are mortal. struck him not again—i. e., despatched him at the first blow. 11. He that favoureth Joab, and he that is for David, let him go after Joab. On the fall of Amasa, Joab, of his own accord, assumed the command; and it is a striking proof of his unrivalled influence over the army, that with this villainous murder perpetrated before their eyes, they unanimously followed him as their leader in pursuit of Sheba. A soldier conjoined his name with David's, and such a magic spell was in the word "Joab," that all the people "went on"—Amasa's men as well as the rest. The conjunction of these two names is very significant. It shows that the one could not afford to do without the other—neither Joab to rebel against David, nor David to get rid of Joab, though hating him.

14, 15.—JOAB PURSUES SHEBA UNTO ABEL.

14. he went through all the tribes of Israel unto Abel—beating up for recruits. But there the prompt marches of Joab overtook and hemmed him in by a close siege of the place. 15. Abel of Bethmaachah—or Abel-main (the meadow of

- 16 throw it down. Then cried a wise woman out of the city, Hear, hear! say, I pray you, unto Joab, Come near hither, that I may speak with thee.
- 17 And when he was come near unto her, the woman said, *Art thou Joab?* And he answered, *I am he.* Then she said unto him, Hear the words of
- 18 thine handmaid. And he answered, I do hear. Then she spake, saying,
- 19 ⁹They were wont to speak in old time, saying, They shall surely ask *counsel* at Abel: and so they ended *the matter.* *I am one of them that are peaceable and faithful in Israel: thou seekest to destroy a city and a*
- 20 ¹⁰mother in Israel: why wilt thou swallow up ^othe inheritance of the
- 21 LORD? And Joab answered and said, Far be it, far be it from me, that I should swallow up or destroy. The matter *is* not so: but a man of mount Ephraim, Sheba the son of Bichri ¹¹by name, hath lifted up his hand against the king, *even* against David: deliver him only, and I will depart from the city. And the woman said unto Joab, Behold, his head shall be
- 22 thrown to thee over the wall. Then the woman went unto all the people ²in her wisdom: and they cut off the head of Sheba the son of Bichri, and cast *it* out to Joab. And he blew a trumpet, and they ¹²retired from the city, every man to his tent. And Joab returned to Jerusalem unto the king.
- 23 Now ²Joab *was* over all the host of Israel: and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada *was* over the Cherethites and over the Pelethites; and Adoram *was* ⁷over the tribute; and ⁸Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud *was* ¹³recorder; 25, and Sheva *was* scribe; and Zadok and Abiathar *were* the priests; and 26 Ira also the Jairite *was* ¹⁴a chief ruler about David.
- 27 THEN there was a famine in the days of David three years, year after year; and David ¹enquired of the LORD. And the LORD answered, ^o*It is* 2 for Saul, and for *his* bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites. And

B. C. 10.

⁹ Or, They plainly spake in the beginning, saying, Surely they will ask of

Abel, and so make an end Deut. 10. 10.

¹⁰ That is, A chief city.

¹¹ 1 Sam. 26. 19.

¹² 1 by his name.

¹³ Eccl. 9. 14.

¹⁴ were scattered.

¹⁵ ch. 8. 16.

¹⁶ 1 Ki. 12. 13.

¹⁷ 1 Ki. 4. 3.

¹⁸ Or,

remembrancer.

¹⁹ Or, a

prince.

CHAP. 21.

¹ sought the

face, etc.

² Num. 36. 31.

waters) (cf. 1 Ki. xv. 20; 2 Ki. xv. 29; 2 Chr. xvi. 4). A verdant place—the addition of “maachah” betokening that it belonged to the district Maachah, which lay far up the Jordan, at the foot of Lebanon. The first preparation for a siege was the construction of a causeway or embankment for wheeling the battering rams and other military machines close to the walls. These consisted sometimes simply of immense mounds of earth, at other times the heap of earth was largely mixed with branches of trees, or a rude pathway was formed of stones or brickwork. Such a construction was necessary, especially where there was a moat or trench round the city, as there appears to have been at Abel. Numerous illustrations of these military processes for carrying on a siege are found depicted on the monuments of Assyria and Egypt.

16-22. A WISE WOMAN SAVES THE CITY BY SHEBA'S HEAD.

16. Then cried a wise woman. The appeal of this woman, who, like Deborah, was probably a judge or governess of the place, was a strong one. 18. They were wont to speak in old time. The translation on the margin gives a better meaning, which is to this effect: When the people saw thee lay siege to Abel, they said, Surely he will ask if we will have peace; for the law (Deut. xx. 10) prescribes that he should offer peace to strangers, much more then to Israelitish cities; and if he do this, we shall soon bring things to an amicable agreement, for we are a peaceable people. The answer of Joab brings out the character of that ruthless veteran as a patriot at heart, who, on securing the author of this insurrection, was ready to put a stop to further bloodshed, and release the peaceable inhabitants from all molestation. 19. Thou seekest to destroy . . . and a mother in Israel. The woman

might mean herself by the use of this last expression, which is applied to another female governor, Deborah (Judg. v. 7); but it is more probable that she intended it to refer to the city Abel, which, with the circumjacent villages, was “a mother in Israel.” (See this use of the phrase, Num. xxi. 25, 32; xxxii. 42; Josh. xvii. 11; Judg. xi. 26.)

23-26.—DAVID'S GREAT OFFICERS.

23. Now Joab was over all the host. David, whatever his private wishes, found that he possessed not the power of removing Joab; so, winking at the murder of Amasa, he re-established that officer in his former post of commander-in-chief. The enumeration of David's cabinet is here given to show that the government was re-established in its wonted course.

CHAP. XXI. 1-9.—THE THREE YEARS' FAMINE FOR THE GIBEONITES CEASES BY HANGING SEVEN OF SAUL'S SONS.

1. Then there was a famine in the days of David three years, year after year. For the first two seasons the scarcity did not cause much anxiety, since David and the officers of his government probably regarded it as the natural consequence of neglecting the cultivation of the land during the troubles occasioned by Absalom and Sheba, and hoped that the internal resources of the country would be sufficient to supply the wants of the population. But a famine which continued over three years in succession, and the severity of which was unceasingly felt, at length produced alarm, and drove those in authority to supplicate the counsel and aid of God. It is for Saul, and for his bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites. It was declared not to have originated in any natural causes, but to have been inflicted by the immediate hand of God, and the moral cause of the judgment was made known to

the king called the Gibeonites, and said unto them: (now the Gibeonites were not of the children of Israel, but of the remnant of the Amorites; and the children of Israel had sworn unto them: and Saul sought to slay them in his zeal to the children of Israel and Judah;) wherefore David said unto the Gibeonites, What shall I do for you? and wherewith shall I make the atonement, that ye may bless the inheritance of the LORD? And the Gibeonites said unto him, ²We will have no silver nor gold of Saul, nor of his house; neither for us shalt thou kill any man in Israel. And he said, What ye shall say, *that* will I do for you. And they answered the king, The man that consumed us, and that ³devised against us *that* we should be destroyed from remaining in any of the coasts of Israel, let seven men of his sons be delivered unto us, and we will hang them up unto the LORD in Gibeah of Saul, ⁴whom the LORD did choose. And the king said, I will give them.

B C. 102.

² Or. It is not silver nor gold that we have to do with Saul or his house, neither pertains it to us to kill, etc.
³ Or. cut us off.
⁴ Or. chosen of the LORD.

him. The sacred history has not recorded either the time or the reason of this massacre. Some think that they were sufferers in the atrocity perpetrated by Saul at Nob (1 Sam. xxii. 19), where many of them may have resided as attendants of the priests; while others suppose it more probable that the attempt was made afterwards, with a view to regain the popularity he had lost throughout the nation by that execrable outrage. 2. **the king called the Gibeonites**—i. e., David called the small remnant of them that survived, chiefly of the Beerothites (1 Sam. xxii. 7), and his addressing them was in consequence of the answer he had received from the oracle of Jehovah. Whether his consultation with the Gibeonites, as to the satisfaction they required was David's own spontaneous act, or commanded by God, is not said; but the latter is most probable, as a statute was involved which none but God Himself could dispense with (Deut. xxiv. 16). **in his zeal to the children of Israel and Judah.** Under pretence of a rigorous and faithful execution of the divine law regarding the extermination of the Canaanites, Saul had set himself to expel or destroy those whom Joshua had been deceived into sparing. His real object seems to have been, that the possessions of the Gibeonites, being forfeited to the crown, might be divided amongst his own people (cf. 1 Sam. xxii. 7). At all events, his proceeding against this people being in violation of a solemn oath, and involving national guilt, the famine was, in the wise and just retribution of Providence, made a national punishment, since the Hebrews either assisted in the massacre or did not interpose to prevent it; since they neither endeavoured to repair the wrong nor express any horror of it; and since a general protracted chastisement might have been indispensable to inspire a proper respect and protection to the Gibeonite remnant that survived. 3. **Wherefore David said unto the Gibeonites, What shall I do for you?** The king, having been apprised by the oracle of God that the moral cause of the grievous judgment which had so long scourged the land was the iniquity perpetrated by Saul upon the Gibeonites, forthwith communicated with that people, offering to make any atonement in his power, on condition of their forgiving the crime of the homicidal king. The case was a very peculiar one; and the entire narrative shows that, though reduced like the Spartan zealots to a state of perpetual servitude, they were not an oppressed people. Having been brought by the direct interposition of God into the place of the Gôel, or blood-avenger, they were bound to demand satisfaction for the death of their slaughtered brethren from the murderer or his representatives; and that satisfaction of course

must be on a large scale, proportioned to the wholesale murders that had been committed. Pecuniary compensation, accepted by some of the Arab tribes and other Orientals, was prohibited to the Hebrew nation by the law of God. The manslayer must expiate his crime by his blood; and the high position of him who had ordered the slaughter of the Gibeonites, together with the aggravated circumstances that marked the commission of the outrage, called aloud that justice should be allowed to take its course. 6. **Let seven men of his sons be delivered unto us, and we will hang them up unto the Lord.** The practice of the Hebrews, as of most Oriental nations, was to slay first, and afterwards to suspend on a gibbet [גִּבְעָתָא], we shall suspend on a stake or low cross, we shall impale them, the body being not left hanging after sunset (Deut. xxi. 22, 23)]. The king could not refuse this demand of the Gibeonites, who, in making it, were only exercising their right as blood-avengers; and although, through fear and a sense of weakness, they had not claimed satisfaction, yet, now that David had been apprised by the oracle of the cause of the long-prevailing calamity, he felt it his duty to give the Gibeonites full satisfaction; hence their specifying the number seven, which was reckoned full and complete. And if it should seem unjust to make the descendants suffer for a crime which in all probability originated with Saul himself, yet his sons and grandsons might have been the instruments of his cruelty, the willing and zealous executioners of this bloody *raid*. **in Gibeah of Saul, whom the Lord did choose.** Gibeah was Saul's place of residence, and consequently the capital of the kingdom during his reign (1 Sam. x. 26; xi. 4). It was situated on or near a round hill, as the term imports (cf. v. 9) (now Tuleil el-Fâl). The selection of this place, which had been the seat of his majesty, to be the scene of execution of his descendants, would be a public and indelible stigma on his memory and house. [גִּבְעָתָא בְּיָמֵי שָׁאֵל, Saul chosen of Jehovah.] This seems to have been added by the Gibeonites as an aggravation of the offence committed against them, that he, 'the Lord's anointed,' to whose kind providence and special arrangement he owed his royal elevation, had broken the divine law, and stained the honour of the Israelite nation by perjury. [The Septuagint considers 'the Lord's choosing' to refer to the victims surrendered to the Gibeonites:—Ἐξηλιόσωμεν αὐτούς τῷ κυρίῳ ἐν τῷ Γαβαὼν Σαούλ ἐλεγκτοῦς κυρίου, we shall hang them up in Gibeah of Saul, who are selected by the Lord. "Unto the Lord"—in vindication of His honour and law. But this is contrary to the grammatical construction [בְּיָמֵי], chosen being in

7 But the king spared Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, because of the ^bLORD's oath that *was* between them, between David
8 and Jonathan the son of Saul. But the king took the two sons of
^cRizpah the daughter of Aiah, whom she bare unto Saul, Armoni and
Mephibosheth; and the five sons of ^dMichal the daughter of Saul, whom
9 she ^ebrought up for Adriel the son of Barzillai the Meholahite: and he
delivered them into the hands of the Gibeonites, and they hanged them
in the hill ^fbefore the LORD: and they fell *all* seven together, and were
put to death in the days of harvest, in the first *days*, in the beginning of
10 barley harvest. And ^gRizpah the daughter of Aiah took sackcloth, and
spread it for her upon the rock, ^hfrom the beginning of harvest ⁱuntil
water dropped upon them out of heaven, and suffered neither the birds
of the air to rest on them by day, nor the beasts of the field by night.
11 And it was told David what Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, the concu-
12 bine of Saul, had done. And David went and took the bones of Saul,
and the bones of Jonathan his son, from the men of ^jJabesh-gilead, which
had stolen them from the street of Beth-shan, where the Philistines had
13 hanged them, when the Philistines had slain Saul in Gilboa: and he

E. C. 1021.

^b 1 Sam. 18. 3.
1 Sam. 20. 8.
15, 42.
1 Sam. 23.
19.
^c ch. 3. 7.
^d Or,
Michal's
sister.
1 Sam. 18.
19.
^e bare to
Adriel.
1 Sam. 18.
19.
^f ch. 6. 17.
^g ch. 3. 7.
^h Deut. 21. 23.
ⁱ Deut. 11. 14.
Jer. 5. 24.
^j 1 Sam. 31.
11-13.

the singular. *Grove* (*Smith's* 'Dictionary') and others apply the epithet to Gibeah, the hill on which it stood being supposed consecrated to God, from the fact of Aiah the priest there depositing the ark (1 Sam. xiv. 18: cf. 2 Sam. vi. 3, 4). But it is an objection to this view that Gibeah is nowhere said to be a place which the Lord *chose*. **the king said, I will give them.** David cannot be charged with doing this as an indirect way of ridding himself of rival competitors for the throne, for those delivered up were only collateral branches of Saul's family, and never set up any claim to the sovereignty. Moreover, David was only granting the request of the Gibeonites as God had bidden him do.

8. the five sons of Michal . . . whom she brought up for Adriel. Michal has by an error been substituted in the text for Merab, Saul's eldest daughter, who, as appears, 1 Sam. xviii. 19, was married to Adriel [Septuagint, Ἐδρηίλ]. Our translators, not daring to impugn the accuracy of the text, and yet finding it difficult to reconcile the passage before us with the one quoted from the First Book of Samuel, have suggested a conjectural solution by the use of the phrase "brought up," as if Adriel having become a widower by the death of his wife, his five young sons had been reared under the care of their aunt Michal. It is fatal, however, to such a hypothesis that there is nothing in the original corresponding to "brought up." [The Hebrew text has בָּרָא , bore; which the Septuagint version renders by the equivalent Greek word *ἐτεκε*, produced, brought forth as a mother.] There is, therefore, *prima facie* evidence of an error having early crept into the text of this passage (for all the ancient versions have it); and *Kennicott* ('Dissertation') has proved this by showing that two Hebrew MSS. read Merab instead of Michal. *Josephus*, who admits that Michal was mother of the five lads, says that she bore them, after a second divorce from David, to Adriel. 9. they hanged them in the hill before the Lord. Deeming themselves not bound by the criminal law of Israel (Deut. xxi. 22, 23), their intention was to let the bodies hang until God, propitiated by this offering, should send rain upon the land, for the want of it had occasioned the famine. It was a heathen practice to gibbet men with a view of appeasing the anger of the gods in seasons of famine; and the Gibeonites, who were a remnant of the Amorites (v. 2), though brought to

the knowledge of the true God, were not, it seems, free from this superstition. God in His providence suffered the Gibeonites to ask and inflict so barbarous a retaliation, in order that they, having been injured, might obtain justice and some reparation of their wrongs, especially that the scandal brought on the name of the true religion, by the violation of a solemn national compact, might be wiped away from Israel, and that a memorable lesson should be given to respect treaties and oaths.

10, 11.—RIZPAH'S KINDNESS UNTO THE DEAD.

10. Rizpah . . . took sackcloth, and spread it for her upon the rock [רֹבֵד]^h—the sackcloth garment of widowhood, and, reclining upon it, kept watch, as the relatives of executed persons were wont to do, day and night, to scare the birds and beasts of prey away from the remains exposed on the low-standing gibbets (Ps. lxxix. 2: cf. *Homer's* 'Iliad,' and the story of the Ephesian matron). On that shadeless rock she would be exposed to the fierce heat of the sun during the whole of a Syrian summer; for the execution took place in spring, about the time of the passover. **the beginning of harvest.** 'In Palestine the barley harvest precedes the wheat harvest about two weeks. At Jericho, in the depressed valley of the Jordan, the former takes place in the last half of April, and the latter in the first half of May (cf. Josh. iii. 15). On the plain along the coast the harvest is usually a fortnight later; and on the mountains, at Jerusalem and Hebron, still later by another fortnight' (*Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' ii., pp. 99, 100). **until water dropped upon them out of heaven—i. e., till the fall of the autumnal rains in October.** Thus did Rizpah, with devoted assiduity, and regardless of personal discomfort, privation, and exhausting fatigue, keep her solitary watch by day and night before the painful spectacle of the wasting relics of what were once the beloved persons of her sons. This brief and simple narrative presents a picture of maternal tenderness far more affecting than any episode that has been interwoven in tales of poetry or romance.

12-22.—DAVID BURIES THE BONES OF SAUL AND JONATHAN IN THEIR FATHERS' SEPULCHRE.

12. David went and took the bones of Saul, &c. Erelong the descent of copious showers, or perhaps an order of the king, gave Rizpah the satisfaction of releasing the corpses from their

- 14 brought up from thence the bones of Saul and the bones of Jonathan his son; and they gathered the bones of them that were hanged. And the bones of Saul and Jonathan his son buried they in the country of Benjamin in ⁴Zelah, in the sepulchre of Kish his father: and they performed all that the king commanded: and after that ^jGod was entreated for the land.
- 15 Moreover the Philistines had yet war again with Israel; and David went down, and his servants with him, and fought against the Philistines: and David waxed faint. And Ishbi-benob, which *was* of the sons of ⁷the giant, the weight of whose ⁸spear *weighed* ⁹three hundred *shekels* of brass in weight, he, being girded with a new *sword*, thought to have slain David. But Abishai the son of Zeruiah succoured him, and smote the Philistine, and killed him. Then the men of David swore unto him, saying, Thou shalt go no more out with us to battle, that thou quench not the ¹⁰light of Israel.
- 18 And it came to pass after this, that there was again a battle with the Philistines at Gob: then ^kSibbechai the Hushathite slew ¹¹Saph, which

B. C. 1019.
ⁱ Josh 18. 28.
¹ Sam. 10. 2.
^j Ex. 31. 27.
 Num 25. 13.
 Josh 7. 16.
 ch. 24. 25.
¹ Ki. 18. 40.
 Jer. 14. 1.
⁷ Or. Rapha.
⁸ the staff.
 or, the
 head.
⁹ Nine
 pounds
 and a half
 avoirdupois.
¹⁰ candle, or,
 lamp.
^k 1 Chr 11. 30.
¹¹ Or. Sippai.

ignominious exposure; and, incited by her pious example, David ordered the remains of Saul and his sons to be transferred from their obscure grave in Jabesh-gilead to an honourable interment in the family vault at Zelah, or Zelzah (1 Sam. x. 2), now Beit-jala. 14. after that God was entreated for the land. It has been conjectured, from various circumstances recorded in the course of this book, that the surrender of seven of Saul's descendants, as compensation for the blood of the Gibeonites, took place at an earlier period in David's reign over Israel than appears from the position which the incident holds in the inspired record. The allusion to Saul's violent rapacity towards the Gibeonites as recent (v. 1), the execration which the execution of Saul's family excited against David amongst the Benjamites, and which was embodied in the insults which Shimei poured upon him in the time of his flight (ch. xvi. 7, 8), together with the significant language of Mephibosheth (ch. xix. 28) concerning the violent extinction of all his family, all seem to indicate the date of the transaction to have been not long after the establishment of David at Jerusalem. Some have hinted the suspicion that his ready consent to deliver up the seven victims for execution arose from his secret wish and policy to rid himself, by the extirpation of the Sauline dynasty, of all rivals who might disturb his peaceful occupation of the throne. But such a suspicion is injurious to the memory of David, and totally inconsistent with his spontaneous act of generous kindness in removing the bones of Saul and Jonathan to the ancestral sepulchre at Zelah. The fact is, that the consignment of Saul's grandchildren to execution was a painful but inevitable necessity. According to the state of society and the customs of the age and country, David could not have withheld the persons of the youths, seeing that the Gibeonites had refused 'the price of blood.' The record of the severe punishment on the posterity of Saul, on account of the slaughter of the Gibeonites, affords a minute but interesting evidence of the truth of the narrative respecting the national league which was formed by Israel with that people. It must have led the ancient Israelites to enquire, if they had any doubt upon the subject, whether, and in what circumstances, such a league was formed; and the undesigned coincidence between this passage and the relation given in the ninth chapter of Joshua should be sufficient to remove scepticism from the mind of the modern reader.

15. Moreover the Philistines had yet war again with Israel. Although the Philistines had completely succumbed to the army of David, yet the appearance of any gigantic champions among them revived their courage, and stirred them up to renewed inroads on the Hebrew territory. Four successive contests they provoked during the latter period of David's reign, in the first of which the king ran so imminent a risk of his life, that he was no longer allowed to encounter the perils of the battle-field. 16. Ishbi-benob (Ishbo-benob *Kevi*)—his (any) dwelling is at Nob. which was of the sons of the giant [גִּיָּתִים, with the article (cf. 1 Chr. xx. 4, 6, 8); Septuagint, ἐν τοῖς ἐγκύβοις τοῦ Παφά (with the article also)]—the founder of a class or family remarkable for their strength and stature. In earlier times the Rephaim were a numerous race, inhabiting the regions east of Jordan and various parts in the south of Palestine; but in David's time only a few individuals of that description remained, and these were found amongst the Philistines. thought to have slain David. Although David in the early part of his reign had, by his military energy and signal victories, effectually humbled the power of the Philistines, the appearance of any powerful champion amongst them revived their hopes and stimulated the hostile spirit of those restless neighbours. It was on one of these occasions, when they had provoked a war, that David went at the head of his army to oppose their further turbulence, when, exhausted with fatigue and the infirmities of age, he was attacked during the contest, and nearly disabled by Ishbi-benob, when Abishai rushed to his aid and slew the monster. But such an occurrence created more than a momentary alarm; and his officers, determined not to expose so precious a life to a similar risk, exacted a solemn promise from the aged king that he would henceforth leave the command of the army to his generals. 17. Thou shalt go no more out with us to battle, that thou quench not the light of Israel. They show the importance attached to the preservation of the king's life by this beautiful and expressive image (cf. 1 Ki. xi. 36; Ps. cxxxii. 17).

18. there was again a battle with the Philistines at Gob [גֹּב, a pit or cistern]. The word is used here apparently as the name of a place which is called (1 Chr. xx. 4) Gezer, or (cf. Josephus, 'Antiquities,' b. vii., ch. xii., sec. 2) Gazara. [The Septuagint has καὶ ἐγένετο ἐπὶ πόλεμος ἐν

19 was of the sons of ¹²the giant. And there was again a battle in Gob with the Philistines, where Elhanan the son of ¹³Jaare-oregim, a Bethlehemite, slew the brother of Goliath the Gittite, the staff of whose spear
20 was like a weaver's beam. And ¹there was yet a battle in Gath, where was a man of great stature, that had on every hand six fingers, and on every foot six toes, four and twenty in number; and he also was born
21 to ¹⁴the giant. And when he ¹⁵defied Israel, Jonathan the son of
22 Shimeah, the brother of David, slew him. These four were born to the giant in Gath, and fell by the hand of David, and by the hand of his servants.

22 AND David ^aspake unto the LORD the words of this song, in the day

B. C. 10 8.

12 Or. Rapha.

13 Or. Jair.

14 1 Chr 20 6.

14 Or. Rapha.

15 Or. re-

proached.

CHAP. 22.

Ex 15. 1.

Ps. 18.

title.

Ps. 50. 14.

Ps. 103 1-6.

Ps. 134. 5.

Γέθ, in Gath.] Sibbechai the Hushathite [שִׁבְחַי הַחֻשָּׁתִּיתִי = חֻשָּׁתִּיתִי, thicket of Jehovah—i. e., crowd of God's people (*Gesenius*) (see on ch. xxiii. 27)]—called "the Hushathite," from Hushah (1 Chr. iv. 4), indicating, not the name of his ancestor ("father") in that passage meaning 'founder'), but his birthplace or residence. [The Septuagint, the Vatican has Σεβοχά ὁ Ἀστατωσί; the Codex Alexandrinus, σεβοχάσι ὁ αουάστρωσι.] Josephus calls him 'the Hittite' ('Antiquities,' b. vii., ch. xii., sec. 2). slew Saph, which was of the sons of the giant—or of Rapha (see on v. 16); Saph, or Sippai (1 Chr. xx. 4) [Septuagint, Σέφ]. 'I saw' (says *Miss Rogers*, 'Domestic Life in Palestine,' p. 316) 'a number of Arabs belonging to the valley of Urtás, with their chief, a tall, powerful man, called Sheikh Saph, whose family, according to local tradition, has for ages been distinguished for the height and strength of its men.' 19. there was again a battle in Gath. The scene of this contest is not mentioned (1 Chr. xx. 4). [The Septuagint has ἐν Ῥόμ; Alexandrine, ἐν Γόβ.] where Elhanan the son of Jaare-oregim, a Bethlehemite, slew the brother of Goliath the Gittite [גִּתִּיתִי, God-bestowed]—one of David's warriors. [שֵׁרֵי אֶרֶב, forst of weavers. It is evident that אֶרֶב is spurious, and has been introduced by mistake, from the eye of a transcriber catching the end of the following line, where oregim (weavers) stands.] This word being rejected, the clause is identical with that in the parallel passage, 1 Chr. xx. 5. Elhanan, the son of Jaar (Chetib); Jair (Keri), "slew . . . Goliath the Gittite." Jerome ('Quæst. Hebraicæ,' in loco) considers Elhanan another name of David; *Ewald* has thrown out the conjecture that the name of David's opponent, who is commonly called "the Philistine" (1 Sam. xv. 2), was borrowed from this. But modern criticism rejects these hypotheses, on various critical grounds, particularly for this reason, that the incidents associated with the feat of Elhanan show it to have occurred in an advanced period of David's reign; and therefore, regarding the statement of the chronicler as the correct one, we consider the word "brother" as properly borrowed from that passage, and *Beth-hal-lachma*, a Bethlehemite, as corrupt; so that the clause should be, 'Elhanan the son of Jair slew Lahmi the brother of Goliath the Gittite.' 20. And there was yet a battle in Gath. It is evident that the battle-field of these successive encounters was Gath and its neighbourhood, to which David marched his army (v. 15), and to recover which from the possession of the Hebrew king (see on 2 Sam. viii. 1; 2 Chr. xviii. 1) was the object of their frequent insurrections, where was a man of great stature [אִישׁ קָרוֹן (Chetib); אִישׁ קָרוֹן, a man of measures, a tall man (cf. 1 Chr. xx. 6); Septuagint, ἀνὴρ Μαδών] (whether

this rendering was intended to be a mere repetition of the original, as is frequently done in that version, where the meaning was not understood, or to mark that he was a native of Madon (Josh. xi. 1; xii. 19), it is impossible to say). He was presumably a Rephaite, like those mentioned in the preceding verses; but, in addition to his extraordinary height, he was a *lusus nature*, for he had twenty-four fingers and toes, six on each hand and foot. 21. And when he defied Israel, Jonathan the son of Shimeah, the brother of David, slew him [יְהוֹנָתָן (given by Jehovah); שָׁמְעָה or שָׁמַי, Shammah (1 Sam. xvi. 9; xvii. 13; see other variations of the name, 1 Chr. ii. 13; xi. 27; xxvii. 8)]. This achievement of Jonathan almost rivalled the gallant exploit of his uncle in his encounter with Goliath.

CHAP. XXII. 1-51.—DAVID'S PSALM OF THANKSGIVING FOR GOD'S POWERFUL DELIVERANCE AND MANIFOLD BLESSINGS.

The song contained in this chapter is the same as the eighteenth Psalm. Jewish writers, as well as modern critics, have noticed a great number of very minute variations, amounting to no less than seventy-four, in the language of the song as recorded in this passage from that embodied in the Book of Psalms. And this difference is to be accounted for, not, as Lengerke, Hitzig, and others have asserted, by the carelessness of transcribers, who have introduced great corruptions into the text, but by the fact that this, the first copy of the poem, was carefully revised, corrected, and improved by its author afterwards, when it was set to music for public worship in the sanctuary. This inspired ode was manifestly the effusion of a mind glowing with the highest fervour and gratitude; and it is full of the noblest imagery that is to be found within the range of sacred poetry. The universal verdict of criticism is, that it is a genuine production of David; with the exception of *J. Olshausen*, who, denying the Davidic origin of any of the Psalms, refuses, in the instance before us, the double testimony of history and the Book of Psalms. (See this subject discussed by *Henstenberg*, 'Psalms,' vol. i., Ps. xviii.) It was composed by David near the close of his life; and it is a grand hallelujah, or thanksgiving tribute, not for any particular benefit, but for general and long-continued marks of the Divine favour, especially for deliverance from his numerous and malignant enemies, and establishing him in the power and glory of his kingdom. It is divisible into five parts, including the introduction, in which the royal worshipper declares his purpose to celebrate the praises of God as the large and inexhaustible theme of his song.

1-1-3.—INTRODUCTION.

1. David spake unto the Lord the words of this song (cf. Exod. xvi. 1; Deut. xxxi. 30), in the day that the Lord had delivered him [יָמִים]—

that the LORD had delivered him out of the hand of all his enemies, and
2 out of the hand of Saul: and he said,

^bThe LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer;

3 The God of my rock;—^cin him will I trust:

^dHe is my shield, and the ^ehorn of my salvation,

My high ^ftower, and ^gmy refuge,

My saviour; thou savest me from violence.

4 I will call on the LORD, who is worthy to be praised:

So shall I be saved from mine enemies.

B. C. 101 ^e .
^b Deut. 32. 4.
1 Sam. 2. 2.
Pa. 18. 2.
^c Heb. 2. 13.
^d Gen. 15. 1.
Ps. 3. 3.
^e Luke 1. 10.
^f Fro. 18. 10.
^g Ps. 69. 16.
Isa. 32. 2.
Jer. 16. 19.

not any specified day, but generally, *when, after* that the Lord had delivered him. out of the hand of all his enemies [רָצַח, from the palm or hollow of the hand; used here poetically for רַ, the hand]—*i. e.*, power or possession. and out of the hand of Saul. He is mentioned, not as the last of David's persecutors, but rather as, in the spirit of bitter and implacable hostility, the greatest and most formidable of them all. The phrase means, *especially* out of the hand—*i. e.*, the oppressive and sanguinary grasp of Saul. The form of expression was probably borrowed from Exod. xviii. 10, "Blessed be the Lord God, who hath delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of Pharaoh."

2. he said, The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer. This redundancy of images was intended to symbolize David's very strong sense of security in God. [רֹכֵן, my rock.] This word, from which was derived Sela, the ancient name of Petra (hewn out of, and imbedded amongst, rocks), denotes not only a rock, but also excavations or fissures in the rock, so numerous in the mountain districts of Palestine that the Israelites at various periods of their early history (Judg. vi. 2; 1 Sam. xxiv. 3, 22) sought shelter there from foreign aggression. David's own personal experience had furnished remarkable proofs of the safety afforded by these rocky caverns. [צִרְיֹן, my fortress.] *Matsudah* is used generally for a fort or citadel, with which most of the rocky eminences of Palestine were surmounted, and specially for the stronghold of Zion (ch. iv. 7, 9; 1 Sam. xxii. 4, 5), and another fortress near Beth-lehem (ch. v. 17; xxiii. 14; 1 Chr. xi. 16). The tropical application of these images, although sufficiently obvious, is shown by the addition of a third term, "my deliverer."

3. The God of my rock [רֹכֵן]. In this word, Tsûr, the leading idea is strength and permanence. There are two words, then, in this introduction rendered in our language "rock;" but they are used in different senses—the former in the sense of concealment, while the latter bears that of immovable firmness. This clause would be better rendered 'my rock-God.' It is metaphorically applied to God in many passages of Scripture,—Deut. xxxii. 4, 18; Ps. xviii. 2; lxxi. 3, "my strong habitation"—Hebrew, *a rock of habitation to me*; Ps. xcii. 15; cxliv. 1, "my strength"—Hebrew, *my rock*; Isa. xxvi. 4, "everlasting strength"—Hebrew, *the rock of ages*; Dan. xi. 39, "most strong holds"—Hebrew, *fortresses of munitions* (margin), or fortresses of rocks (cf. Gen. xlix. 24, "the stone of Israel"). my shield [רָצַח]—my buckler. The magen was less, both in size and weight, than the [רָצַח] shield covering the whole body (Deut. xxxiii. 29; Ps. v. 12; lxxxiv. 9-11; Eph. vi. 14). and the horn of my salvation—my saving horn, *i. e.*, by which I am saved. The figure, denoting *might, power*, is borrowed from the bull

and other cattle which repel attacks by means of their horns, and it occurs frequently (Deut. xxxiii. 17; 1 Sam. ii. 10; Luke i. 69). my high tower [צִיָּוָן]—my height. The ordinary word for tower is Migdol. But Misgab is used in poetry, as here, and denotes refuge on a high rock [from צִיָּוָן, to be high]. Towers were built in the walls of cities, and placed at regular intervals, those at the angles being always the largest and strongest; sometimes a large tower stood by itself within the town (Judg. ix. 45, 51), as a place of resort to the inhabitants in time of danger, answering to the *keep* in our own castles (cf. 2 Ki. ix. 17). Towers were distinguished by their elevation. They were placed on an eminence, to which the ascent was by a flight of steps (cf. 2 Ki. ix.; Neh. iii. 15). The Psalmist placed the 'higher tower' last in this series of epithets with great propriety, because it was always the last resort of the despairing inhabitants of a besieged city; and yet, although the metaphorical use of it in this passage is very clear, he has subjoined a plainer term, "my refuge." As Eastern warriors have always been unskilful in conducting sieges, the towers afforded for the most part a complete security and defence to the inhabitants, except when fire was applied. And hence the wise man, describing the safety of the righteous, notwithstanding he may be assaulted by adversity and foes which beset him in his pilgrimage on earth, uses a figure similar to this. "The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it, and is safe:" Hebrew, *is set aloft* (margin), alike beyond the reach of the power of calamities to daunt or adversaries to overcome him (Prov. xviii. 10: cf. Ps. ix. 9, "a refuge"—Hebrew, *a high place*; xviii. 2; xxviii. 1; lxx. 9, "my defence"—Hebrew, *my high place*; cxliv. 2; Isa. xxv. 12, "the high fort"; xxxiii. 16, "he shall dwell on high"—Hebrew, *in heights, or high places*. my saviour; thou savest me from violence. These are omitted in Ps. xviii. In this introduction God is invoked by seven figurative names—a favourite number with David; and as every one of them, whether suggested by the physical features of the land or by the approved methods of defence in war, were chosen from the author's personal experience of the security these afforded, they must be accepted as expressing his permanent feelings—gratitude in the retrospect of the past, comfort and joy in the enjoyment of the present, and confidence in the prospect of the future. They were images most naturally suggested to the mind of a man like David, who was frequently compelled, for self-preservation, to take refuge in mountain strongholds, and whose piety, looking habitually beyond the material and the external to the spiritual, used the rocks and caves, forts and other scenes of his chequered life, as the vehicle by which his thoughts ascended to his Divine protector. 4. I will call on the Lord, who is worthy to be praised.—*i. e.*, who is a Being of transcendent excellence. so shall I be saved from mine

- 5 When the ¹waves of death compassed me,
The floods of ²ungodly men made me afraid;
6 The ³sorrows of hell compassed me about;
The snares of death prevented me;
7 In my distress ⁴I called upon the LORD,—and cried to my God;
And he did ⁵hear my voice out of his temple,
And my cry *did enter* into his ears.
8 Then ⁶the earth shook and trembled;
The foundations of heaven moved and shook, because he was wroth.
9 There went up a smoke ⁷out of his nostrils,
And ⁸fire out of his mouth devoured:—coals were kindled by it.

B. C. 1014.

1 Or, pangs.
2 Belial.
3 Or, cords.
4 Ps. 116. 4.
Jon. 2. 2.
Acts 12. 5.
5 Ex. 3. 7.
6 Judg 5. 4.
Ps. 77. 18.
7 by
8 Ps. 97. 3.
Hab. 3. 5.
Heb. 12. 29.

enemies. Some, taking the future for the past, translate the verse, 'I did call upon the Lord, so I was saved.' This translation is certainly more in accordance than that in our version with the whole drift of the song, which is a tribute of thanksgiving for mercies received. The connection between this and the preceding clauses is formed by the bond of faith. Any one who calls on the Lord must come, "believing that He is, and that He is the bountiful Rewarder of all them that diligently seek Him;" and thus, through his faith in the power and willingness of the Lord to deliver him, he will obtain that blessing.

II. 4-19.—DAVID DESCRIBES HIS MARVELLOUS DELIVERANCES, NOT IN ORDER, AS THEY WERE RECEIVED, BUT BY A SERIES OF STRONG POETICAL FIGURES, WHICH REPRESENT THE EXTREMITY OF HIS DANGER, GROUPING TOGETHER BY AN ACCUMULATION OF TERRIBLE IMAGES THE AGGREGATE MISERIES HE ENDURED UNDER THE SAULINE PERSECUTION.

5. When (for) the waves of death compassed me [כַּיָּם מְצַרִים]—breakers, furious billows (Ps. xlii. 8; lxxxviii. 8; John ii. 4) [Septuagint, *συρριπμοί*, dashing waves.] Death is here compared to the sea, whose agitated billows, rushing in amongst the rocks on the shore, hem in on all sides the helpless individual whom it overtakes. In like manner *Shakespeare* speaks of being involved in 'a sea of troubles.' the floods of ungodly men made me afraid [מַיִם קְדוֹשִׁים]—torrents of destruction terrified me (*Gesenius*). [Septuagint, *χεταρροί ανιμας* εσαφισαν με, floods of iniquity, i. e., of wicked men (Deut. xiii. 13; xv. 19: cf. ch. xxiii. 6)—viz., Saul and his emissaries—overwhelmed me with astonishment.] 6. The sorrows of hell compassed me [מַיִם מְצַרִים]—cords, noose of Sheol (Hades) enclosed me. the snares of death prevented me [מִקְדָּוֶיךָ מָוֶת]—snares of death. i. e., deadly dangers, came upon me unawares (by surprise). Death is represented in this verse as a hunter, from whose artful, well-laid toils the prey cannot escape. It is quite common for other poets, by allusions to the ancient manner of hunting, to represent death as entrapping persons in her nets, and encompassing them on every side (*Stat.*, lib. v., Sylv. i., line 156; *Horace*, lib. iii., ode xxiv., line 8). 7. In my distress I called upon the Lord—*lit.* in the distress to me. and cried to my God—"my," as standing to me in a covenant relation, and whom, having often addressed my prayer to him, I could approach in an enlightened knowledge of his character and confident reliance on his grace. and he did hear my voice out of his temple [מִמִּקְדָּשָׁי]—from his palace. Joined with Jehovah, *cheikal* denotes sometimes the tabernacle (1 Sam. i. 9; iii. 3; Ps. v. 8); at other times the temple (2 Ki. xxiv. 13; 2 Chr. iii. 17; Jer. l. 28; Hag. ii. 15; Zech. vi. 14,

15); but here it is used poetically for heaven (cf. Ps. xi. 4; xviii. 7; xxix. 9; Mic. i. 2). and my cry did enter into his ears [וַיִּשְׁמַע]—cry for help. The latter clause of the parallelism merely repeats, though in a stronger manner, the sense of the former, intimating that the supplications of the Psalmist not only ascended to heaven, but actually reached the Hearer of prayer. As David exhibits in one awful scene of elemental convulsion all the sufferings of his chequered life, so also he groups together in one all the prayers he offered, as well as the many remarkable deliverances with which he was favoured. 8. Then the earth shook and trembled. The imagery of this highly poetical passage is supposed by *Dr. Chandler* ('Life of David,' ii., p. 211) to have been borrowed from ch. v. 20-24, and by *Dean Stanley*, from ch. vi. 8. the foundations of heaven moved and shook. No certain conclusion can be drawn as to the popular notions prevalent amongst the Hebrews from the bold imagery of the poets; but it is generally believed that, while as a nomadic people they conceived of the earth as a round tent, and the expanse of the firmament as its covering, they, on their permanent settlement in Canaan, viewed it as a splendid palace resting upon many pillars (cf. Ps. lxxv. 3; civ. 5; Prov. viii. 25-29: *Rosenmüller's* 'Geography,' i., Appendix 1, A). But *Gesenius* supposes that by 'the foundations of the heavens' are rather meant lofty mountains, on which they seem to rest. Psalm xviii. 7 has, instead of "the foundations of heaven," "the foundations of the hills"—i. e., subterranean rocks. because he was wroth [כִּי לִי אַף] for it was kindled to him; scil. אַף, anger (cf. ch. xix. 43; Gen. xxxi. 30; xxxiv. 7; 1 Sam. xv. 11. The Septuagint has *δτι εβουλεθη κύριος αυτοις*, because the Lord was wroth with them—viz., David's enemies]. As to thunder being an expression of Divine wrath, it was considered among the Hebrews (1 Sam. ii. 10; vii. 10), and it is still popularly believed by multitudes in our own day, to be God's voice speaking in anger to the wicked. 9. There went up a smoke out of his nostrils. Here is a further expansion of the idea expressed in the preceding verse. [שָׁן, poetically used for vapour, produced by the snorting of an enraged beast, and tropically for the divine wrath (cf. Isa. lxx. 5); and so the Septuagint renders it *ἀνεβη καπνός εν τη όρη αυτου*, a smoke ascended in his wrath.] and fire out of his mouth devoured. No object is mentioned as devoured by the fire; and the omission conveys more strongly the idea of fierce, raging, all-consuming fire. [In the same manner *Virgil* ('*Aeneid*,' ii., line 758) speaks of *ignis edax*, and *Homer* ('*Iliad*,' b. xxiii., line 182) of *παντα πυρ εσθίου*,] coals were kindled by it [וַיִּשְׂרָפּוּ] burning coals (opposed to *עָפֶר*, a black coal, Prov. xxvi. 21)]—were inflamed from it, viz., His mouth,

- 10 He 'bowed the heavens also, and came down;
And darkness *was* under his feet.
11 And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly;
And he was seen ^mupon the wings of the wind.
12 And he made darkness pavilions round about him,
⁵Dark waters, and thick clouds of the skies.
13 Through the brightness before him—were coals of fire kindled.
14 The LORD ⁿthundered from heaven,—and the Most High uttered his voice.
15 And he sent out ^oarrows, and scattered them;
Lightning, and discomfited them.
16 And the channels of the sea appeared,

B. C. 10 8.

1 Ps. 144. 5.
Isa. 61. 1.
^m Ps. 101. 3.
Ps. 131. 9.
⁵ binding of waters.
ⁿ Ex. 19. 16.
Isa. 30. 33.
^o Deut. 32. 23.
Ps. 7. 13.
Ps. 77. 17.
Ps. 144. 6.
Hab. 3. 11.

which is the proper antecedent. *Hengstenberg*, on Psalm xviii., denies that the figur., 'a smoke going up out of his nostrils' has any reference to the snorting of a furious beast; and, considering that smoke is a natural sequence of fire, views the imagery as drawn exclusively from the representation of Sinai as being all on fire at the publication of the law (Exod. xix. 18). His critical judgment is founded on a partial view of the case. The description in Exodus refers to what took place on earth; whereas this is a poetical picture of what occurred in heaven. Besides, his interpretation does certainly account for the fire and the smoke, but entirely excludes the figures of the *nose* and the *mouth*. Several of the expressions, however, used in this passage are clearly borrowed from the nineteenth chapter of Exodus. 10. He bowed the heavens also, and came down. The scene is now removed from heaven to earth. Isaiah wished that God would "rend the heavens, and come down" (ch. lxiv. 1). The figure used in this passage is less bold, but very graphic and pertinent to the occasion, for the verb, 'bowed down' is equivalent to 'made tend downwards,' and accordingly, while in clear, severe, settled weather the clouds appear high, they approach on the eve of a storm nearer to the earth. 'He came down,' not by change of place, but by the manifestation of His presence and power on David's behalf. This 'bowing the heavens' was a prelude to 'His coming down.' This is entirely a scenic representation, which owed its existence to the imagination of the sacred bard. But it is the privilege of faith to realize the presence and the operation of the Divine Being in the greatest disorders, both of the material and the moral world, touching the secret springs, and guiding all events to their destined issue, whether for the destruction of His enemies or for the deliverance and benefit of His people, and darkness was under his feet. The word here used is not the common one for "darkness." It is used chiefly in poetry, and signifies a dark cloud, dense gloom (Job xxii. 13; Isa. lx. 2). [The Septuagint renders it by *γυφοσ*, black, tempestuous darkness (see Heb. xii. 18).] The representation of 'darkness being under his feet' is borrowed partly from Exod. xix. 18, and "there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount," and partly from Deut. v. 22, "These words spake the Lord . . . in the mount, out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and the thick darkness." 11. And he rode upon a cherub. A cherub in the Mosaic system is an ideal creature, which combined all the highest powers and properties of animal existences. It was, in fact, a personification of creation; and hence God is said poetically to have rode upon a cherub. The singular is used here in preference to the plural, cherubim, because as earthly kings in authority are represented as riding on some inferior animal, such as

a horse, mule, &c., so Jehovah is described as borne, in his descent as a mighty sovereign, through the air by an imaginary being superior to man, and he was seen upon the wings of the wind. The ancients, when they spoke allegorically of the wind, uniformly represented it as having "wings." It is an image exceedingly natural, and therefore common with all poets. But as used here, it is exegetical of the preceding clause of the verse, although the parallelism is not so complete or well-sustained as in Ps. xviii. 10, "And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly: yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind" (cf. Ps. lxxviii. 17; civ. 3). [It may be added that in the psalm the sublimity of the idea is heightened by the use of two separate verbs expressive of flight. [In the first hemistich, *וַיִּפְּץ*, and he did fly as an ordinary bird; but in the second, *וַיִּפְּץ*, yea, he did fly, is applied only to describe the rapid impetuousness of birds of prey (Deut. xxviii. 49; Jer. xlviii. 40; xlix. 22).] This figurative representation denotes how quickly, in answer to the prayers of his servant, God came to the deliverance of David. 12. he made darkness pavilions round about him [*סִבְתָּי*—booths; used here for a tabernacle of God (cf. Job xxxvi. 29; Ps. xvii. 2). dark waters [*מַיִם*—gathering of waters; i. e., clouds. [In the parallel passage of Ps. xviii. 12, the phrase is *מַיִם*, darkness of waters, i. e., rain-clouds.] and thick clouds of the skies [*עָבֹת*—thickness of clouds; i. e., a collective mass of dense portentous clouds (formed his pavilion or tent) (cf. Exod. xix. 9, where similar phraseology is employed). In the manner of Oriental sovereigns, who withdrew into total, distant seclusion from the view of their subjects, God is described as surrounded by impenetrable darkness; for He is a Being who "dwells in light which is inaccessible, and full of glory." 13. Through the brightness before him were coals of fire kindled—i. e., at the appearance of His glorious majesty. 14. The Lord thundered from heaven, and the Most High uttered his voice—viz., against my enemies (see on last clause of v. 8). The second clause is a mere echo of the first, for "the voice" of God frequently denotes thunder, (Exod. ix. 28; Job xxxvii. 5; Ps. xxix.) 15. he sent out arrows, and scattered them [*וַיִּפְּץ*]. Arrows, when applied metaphorically to God, signify sometimes calamities inflicted upon men, such as famine, pestilence, &c.; at other times, lightnings (cf. Ps. cxliv. 6; Hab. iii. 11); and that this is the sense which the word bears here is obvious from the latter half of the parallelism, in which [*וַיִּפְּץ*, lightning, is taken collectively—lightnings] the statement is repeated in plain language. 16. And the channels of the sea appeared. [*וַיִּפְּץ* denotes the channels of a brook or river; here the bottom of the sea.] This verse

- The foundations of the world were discovered,
 At the rebuking of the LORD,—at the blast of the breath of his ⁶nostrils.
 17 He sent from above, he took me;—he drew me out of ⁷many waters;
 18 He delivered me from my strong enemy,
 And from them that hated me:—for they were too strong for me.
 19 They prevented me in the day of my calamity:
 But the LORD was my stay.
 20 He ²brought me forth also into a large place;
 He delivered me, because he ²delighted in me.
 21 The LORD rewarded me according to my righteousness;
 According to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed me.
 22 For I have kept the ways of the LORD,
 And have not wickedly departed from my God.
 23 For all his ⁷judgments were before me;

- B. C. 1018.
⁶ Or, anger.
 Ps 74. 1.
⁷ Or, great.
² 1 Chr. 4. 10.
 Ps. 31. 8.
 Ps. 118. 5.
 Hos. 4. 16.
⁹ ch. 15. 26.
 Ps. 22. 8.
 Ps. 147. 11.
 Ps. 149. 4.
 Isa. 42. 1.
 Matt. 3. 17.
 Matt. 17. 5.
 Matt. 27. 43.
 Acts 2. 32.
^r Deut. 7. 12.

gives a general description of earthly disorder, without reference to any particular evil. at the rebuking of the Lord [בְּיַעַרְתִּי]. This word is used specially of the rebuke of God upon his enemies, which occasioned their destruction at the Red Sea (Ps. lxxvi. 6; civ. 7; Isa. l. 2), or in any circumstances (Ps. lxxx. 17). at the blast of the breath of his nostrils—*i. e.*, a violent, tempestuous wind, the evidence and effect of His anger (Job iv. 9; Ps. xviii. 16; Isa. xxx. 33). 17. He sent from above. The verb "sent" being followed by the exegetical clause, "He took me," is stated absolutely here and in Ps. lvii. 3. But where such an explanatory clause is wanting, the object of the verb is mentioned, as in Ps. cxliv. 7. he drew me out of many waters—referring to *v.* 5, where there is a figurative description of David's enemies under the name of "waves" and "floods," and the verb [שָׁפַק, from שָׁפַק], to draw, naturally suggests the early history of Moses, from which this imagery is borrowed. 'Luther,' says Hengstenberg on the eighteenth Psalm, 'already called attention to this reference. It is the more important as Moses was a type of the Israelitish people; the waters, an image of the hostile oppression in consequence of which Moses was exposed; and the event, a prophecy constantly fulfilling itself anew under similar circumstances.' 18. He delivered me from my strong enemy. David's own weakness, contrasted with the superior power of his enemies, was the reason of the Divine interposition; and this contrast forms the leading idea in the two parallelistic portions of the verse. Perhaps the meaning would be better evolved by the following arrangement of the words:—'He delivered me from my enemy, for he was strong; and from them that hated me, for they were stronger than I.' The class from whom David had, through the help of Jehovah, been delivered comprised 'all them that hated him;' and chief amongst them was Saul, who, although not mentioned by name, was undoubtedly, as being formidable from his royal influence and from the number of his military emissaries, 'the strong enemy' in David's view. 19. They prevented me in the day of my calamity [מִיָּמֵי צָרָתִי]—they surprised me (see on last clause of *v.* 6). "In the day of my calamity" means during his persecution, when he more than once ran imminent risk of being captured or killed by surprise,—when the missile was aimed at him by Saul (1 Sam. xviii. 11), when he was rescued by the artifice of his wife (1 Sam. xix. 11-17), when the Ziphites betrayed him (1 Sam. xxiii. 19-26), and when Saul entered the cave where David was hid (1 Sam. xxiv. 3). 20. He brought me

forth also into a large place [לְרַחֵב]—into the wide place, into the breadth; *i. e.*, He delivered me out of straits. This word is often used (cf. Ps. iv. 2) to denote freedom and deliverance, in opposition to a state of confinement and difficulty (*Gesenius*). And thus the words, as applied to David, may be taken either in a literal or a metaphorical sense;—either as pointing to his deliverance from the caves and wild solitudes in which he had been compelled to seek refuge, or to the happy state of enlargement, of comfort, luxury, and royal dignity, to which he had been raised. He delivered me, because he delighted in me [כִּי יִשְׂמַח בִּי]—for he loved or favoured me. David ascribes all his many and wonderful deliverances to the good pleasure and grace of Jehovah as the grand source of them; and he shows wisdom, as well as piety, in premising this remark; otherwise he might have laid himself open, by what follows, to the charge of claiming them as the reward of his personal merits.

III. 21-28.—IN THIS PART OF THE SONG DAVID DECLARES THAT HE RECEIVED THE BENEFITS OF DIVINE AID AND PROTECTION IN CONSEQUENCE OF THE INTEGRITY OF HIS CHARACTER AND THE DEVOTEDNESS OF HIS LIFE.

21. The Lord rewarded me according to my righteousness, &c. As I was engaged in a good cause, and, in my devoted adherence to it, acted sincerely and inflexibly on the principles of righteousness both towards God and towards Saul, my relentless enemy—so God, who bound Himself by solemn promise to succour and reward persons of this stamp, was pleased to protect and uphold me against the power and the machinations of my unjust oppressors. according to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed me. And because I resolutely refused to free myself from all my troubles, by taking the life of Saul, when I was urged to do it, or by any unrighteous acts whatever, God was to pave the way for my deliverance in a far more honourable and effectual manner. 22. For I have kept the ways of the Lord.—*i. e.*, I have endeavoured to subordinate my judgment, my passions, and my interest, to the declared will of God. and have not wickedly departed from my God—and, however infirm of purpose, or inconsistent in action at times, I have never openly trampled upon any of His statutes, much less have thrown off all regard to the authority and the honour of that God who is the chosen portion of my soul. 23. For all his judgments were before me—*i. e.*, the divine law (Ps. xix. 9) was predominantly present to my mind. I studied and pondered them, that it might become the

- And as for his statutes, I did not depart from them.
- 24 I was also ⁶upright ⁸before him,—and have kept myself from mine iniquity.
- 25 Therefore the LORD hath recompensed me according to my righteousness; According to my cleanness ⁹in his eye-sight.
- 26 With ^tthe merciful thou wilt show thyself merciful,
And with ^uthe upright man thou wilt show thyself upright.
- 27 With the pure thou wilt show thyself pure;
And ^wwith the froward thou wilt ¹⁰show thyself unsavoury.
- 28 And the ^vafflicted people thou wilt save:
But thine eyes *are* upon the haughty, *that* thou mayest bring *them* down.
- 29 For thou *art* my ¹¹lamp, O LORD:
And the LORD will lighten my darkness.
- 30 For by thee I have ¹²run through a troop:

E. C. 1018.
⁶ Gen 6. 9.
 Job 1. 1.
 John 1. 47.
 2 Cor. 5. 11.
⁸ to him.
⁹ before his eyes.
^t Matt. 5. 7.
^u Lev. 21. 23.
¹⁰ Or, wrestle.
^v Ex. 3. 7.
 Ps 12. 5.
^w Or, candle.
¹² Or, broken a troop.

guide and directory of my whole life. and as for his statutes, I did not depart from them—even when expelled from the enjoyment of religious ordinances, and expatriated from the society of God's people. 24. I was also upright before him. In private, as well as in public, in the wildest and most sequestered solitude, as well as in the populous city, it was my reigning desire, my aim and endeavour, to walk so as to please God, and have kept myself from mine iniquity—*i. e.*, either from the influence of inherent corruption, that it might not acquire ascendancy over my heart, or drive me into acts of open and deliberate wickedness in my conduct; or, from perpetrating the iniquity to which natural feeling and the force of circumstances tended so powerfully to stimulate me as a man, a soldier, and a destined monarch—namely, of killing Saul, and so taking just revenge on this malignant and implacable enemy, as well as freeing myself from a life of constant perils and painful necessities (see on ch. i. 16). 25. Therefore the Lord hath recompensed me according to my righteousness—a repetition of what he stated at the beginning of Section III. (see on v. 21). In the intermediate verses he had described the manner in which he had performed his own part, and now he bears his testimony to the faithfulness with which Jehovah had fulfilled His. From this record of God's method of dealing with himself, he adverts to it as a general law in the Divine administration, that God is in a certain sense to men precisely what they are to Him—meting out to every one the measure he metes to others, and leaving him to reap the fruit of his own doings. 26. With the merciful thou wilt show thyself merciful—thou wilt perform mercy and truth to those who are merciful and true to others, as, through the help of thy grace, I have been. 28. the afflicted people thou wilt save—Thou hast shown me, by the course of my personal experience, that thou wilt plead the cause of those who are subjected to unmerited wrongs, and deliver all who cry for deliverance in circumstances of suffering and persecution, like me and my followers. but thine eyes are upon the haughty, that thou mayest bring them down—Thou wilt humble the pride and check the presumptuous career of those who, like my enemies, flattered themselves that 'their mountain was standing strong, and that they never would be greatly moved.' 'The particular qualities specified are only given as examples, and might have been exchanged for others without altering the general sense. The form of expression is extremely strong and bold, but scarcely liable to misapprehension even in the last clause of v. 27. No one is in danger of imagining that God can act perversely even to the most perverse. But the same course

of proceeding which would be perverse in itself, or towards a righteous person, when pursued towards a sinner, becomes a mere act of vindicating justice. The resemblance of the last clause of v. 27 to Lev. xxvi. 23, 24, makes 'it highly probable that the whole form of this singular dictum was suggested by that passage, the rather as this song abounds in allusions to the Pentateuch, and in imitations of it,' (*Professor Alexander* on 'Psalm xviii.')

IV. 29-46.—DAVID ENTERS INTO PARTICULARS ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE DIVINE GOODNESS, FOUNDED ON THE RESULTS OF HIS PAST EXPERIENCE, AS WELL AS ON HIS FUTURE EXPECTATIONS FROM THE PROMISE.

In the preceding section of the song he describes himself as the humble object, the passive recipient, of the Divine goodness and mercy; in this one he appears not as the *object* only, but also as the *instrument* of God's benefits. The former portion of the song was occupied exclusively with the dangers and deliverances connected with the Sauline persecution. That on which we are about to enter embraces other instances of deliverance by which his life was marked. The one recorded only tokens of the Divine favour personal to himself, the other points to prospective blessings awaiting both him and his posterity.

29. For thou art my lamp, O Lord. The light of a lamp was an image in common use among the Hebrews for prosperity; while its extinction betokened calamity (Esth. viii. 16; Job xviii. 5, 6; xxi. 17; xxix. 3; Ps. xvii. 11; cxxxii. 17; Prov. xxiv. 20). But [?] the word here denoting a lamp is always applied metaphorically, as expressive of offspring (1 Ki. xi. 36; xv. 4; 2 Ki. viii. 19; 2 Chr. xxi. 7). The meaning, then, is, the Lord had not only raised David from a state of obscurity to honour, of trouble to safety, of persecution to freedom and comfort, of inferiority to rank and glory, but conferred upon him, in addition to these personal benefits, the blessing and the dignity of a long-continued royal line. and the Lord will lighten my darkness—*i. e.*, whatever adversity may for a time befall my house, the Lord will appoint eventual prosperity. My family has been sadly diminished by the excision of several promising branches; but though my prospects have been greatly beclouded, 'the Lord will yet illumine my darkness;' others will, through the blessing of His kind providence, be raised to preserve my roof-tree flourishing in the land; and especially in the appearance of my last and greatest descendant, He will brighten every season of darkness and distress by the light of His salvation. 30. For by thee I have run through a troop—*i. e.*, broken through the thickest phalanx

- By my God have I leaped over a wall.
 31 As for God, ¹⁰his way is perfect;—^xthe word of the LORD is ¹³tried:
 He is a buckler to all them that trust in him.
 32 For ⁹who is God, save the LORD?—and who is a rock, save our God?
 33 God is my ²strength and power:—and he ¹⁴maketh my way perfect.
 34 He ¹⁵maketh my feet like hinds' feet;
 And setteth me upon my high places.
 35 He teacheth my hands ¹⁶to war;
 So that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms.

B. C. 10 s.

¹⁰ Deut. 12. 4.
^x Ps. 12. 6.
¹³ Or,
 refined.
⁹ 1 Sam. 2. 2.
² Ps. 27. 1.
¹⁴ riddeth,
 or, looseth
¹⁵ equalleth.
¹⁶ for the
 w. r.

of my enemies [Septuagint, δραμονμαι μονδζωνος, will I run triumphant in war]. by my God have I leaped over a wall—i. e., scaled the battlements of the most strongly fortified cities and castles (cf. 2 Cor. ii. 14; Phil. iv. 13). 31. As for God, his way is perfect [יָשָׁרִים, complete, faultless; Septuagint, αμωμος, blameless]. Amid all the darkness that sometimes shrouds, and the severity that often marks, the course of His providence, His counsel is merrily wise, just, and good. the word of the Lord is tried [נִסָּה], subjected as metals to the fire, and proved to be genuine]—i. e., the truth of His promises, especially that grand promise, ch. vii., is infallibly certain, as my own experience and that of thousands besides can attest. he is a buckler to all them that trust in him [מָגָן, shield, or buckler (see on v. 3)]—"that trust," i. e., believe in Him, or confide in Him (Gen. xv. 1; Deut. xxxiii. 29). David has a particular predilection for this figurative designation of God (Ps. iii. 3; vii. 10; xviii. 2; xxviii. 7). 32. For who is God, save the Lord? and who is a rock, save our God?—"rock" (see on v. 2). The introductory [עַד] For, intimates that this verse furnishes the ground of the strong assurances which the preceding one contains; as if he had said, As God is all that I have described Him to be, so He alone is such, and there is no other God, no other rock, in whom trust can be put. On this ground—namely, that of Jehovah being exclusively God—David rests his firm confidence in the fulfilment of the great promise, ch. vii. 33. God is my strength and power; and he maketh my way perfect—in the midst of all my weaknesses and errors, He enables me, by His grace, to perform all the duties and to bear all the trials of my royal station, so as to act in conformity with the principles and requirements of a theocratic ruler. 34. He maketh my feet like hinds' feet; and setteth me upon my high places. The hind is the female of the roe (gazelle: see on ch. ii. 18; 1 Chr. xii. 8), and from the frequency of its representation on the ancient sculptures, was considered swifter than the male, both possessing the power of running equally along the level plain or up rugged sandstone hills, at a marvellous pace, so that successful pursuit of them up steep eminences is next to impossible. This is what is referred to here (cf. Hab. iii. 19); the figure employed by the royal author implying that God, who had called him to engage in many military expeditions for the defence or enlargement of the kingdom of Israel, endowed him liberally with the possession of the qualities that were requisite in ancient warfare, especially swiftness in running from place to place, whether in pursuit or in adverse circumstances—agility to escape from enemies, so as to put himself on the "high places"—lofty heights and inaccessible fastnesses, where they could not reach him. *Virgil* ('*Aeneid*,' vii.) speaks of a warrior who was able 'cursu pedum prævertere ventos.' 'Many,' as *De Wette*, 'conceive that

David is referring in this passage exclusively to speed in flight. But this is against the connection,—the words, "He maketh my feet like hinds' feet," occupy a middle position between equipment with strength and instruction in war,—against the parallelism, and against the parallel passages, ch. ii. 18; 1 Chr. xii. 8, where it is said of those who came out of the tribe of Gad to David, that their look was like that of lions, and their swiftness of foot like the gazelles on the mountains. A figurative element lies in what is said here of fleetness, which becomes quite obvious when we take it along with the last clause. David points to the quick and unrestrained course of his conquests, just as in v. 29. And that by his being "set on high places," we are not to understand merely places of refuge in flight, may be gathered from other passages where that phrase occurs, "He made him ride on the high places" (Deut. xxxii. 13); "thou shalt tread upon their high places" (Deut. xxxiii. 29), in which not secure flight, but resistless victory, is spoken of (*Hengstenberg*). 35. He teacheth my hands to war; so that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms [יָשָׁרִים מְרִירִים]—a bow of brass (rather, bronze, a compound of copper and tin (cf. Job xx. 24; Ps. xviii. 35). The bow held a prominent place amongst the military weapons of antiquity; and if a judgment may be formed of the shape or structure of those used in Western Asia, from the Assyrian, Babylonian, and Egyptian monuments, they were made of bronze, which is inferred from their being on the sculptures coloured red, and when undrawn, but *strung*, exhibited the figure of an obtuse angle rather than a curve, as if composed of two metallic shafts united. Of course, it required strength no less than skill to bend them. Thus, in the account of the bow of Ulysses, which none of the numerous suitors was able to draw, *Homer* says ('*Odyssey*,' lib. xxi., 409)—

'So the great master drew the mighty bow,
 And drew with ease; one hand aloft display'd,
 The bending horns, and on the string essay'd.'

Ulysses having bent his bow, shot the arrows through the rings, and then turning to his son, Telemachus, addresses him in a glow of self-satisfied pride—

'Nor have I wrought thee shame;
 Nor erred this hand, unfaithful to its aim;
 Nor proved the toil too hard; nor have I lost
 That ancient vigour, once my pride and boast.'—*Lope*.

Herodotus also relates ('*Thalia*,' xxi.) that when Cambyzes sent his spies into the country of Ethiopia, the king of that country, well aware of their object in coming, addressed them thus:—When the Persians can easily draw bows of such dimensions as this, then let them hope to invade Ethiopia. Having said this, he unstrung the bow, and handed it to them to carry to their king. These instances may suffice to show how much the bending of a metallic bow was considered to display the athletic power and military

- 36 Thou hast also given me the shield of thy salvation :
And thy gentleness hath ¹⁷ made me great.
- 37 Thou hast enlarged my steps under me;—so that my ¹⁸ feet did not slip.
- 38 I have pursued mine enemies, and destroyed them ;
And turned not again until I had consumed them.
- 39 And I have consumed them, and wounded them, that they could not arise ;
Yea, they are fallen under my feet.
- 40 For thou hast girded me with strength to battle :
Them that rose up against me hast thou ¹⁹ subdued under me.
- 41 Thou hast also given me the necks of mine enemies,
That I might destroy them that hate me.
- 42 They ^a looked, but *there was* none to save ;
Even ^b unto the LORD; but he answered them not.
- 43 Then did I beat them as small as the dust of the earth,
I did stamp them as the mire of the street,—*and* did spread them abroad.
- 44 Thou also hast delivered me from the strivings of my people,
Thou hast kept me *to be* ^c head of the heathen :
^a A people *which* I knew not shall serve me.

E. C. 1018.

¹⁷ multi-
plied me.
Gen. 12. 2.
Gen. 22. 17.
Ps. 115. 14.

¹⁸ ankles.

¹⁹ caused to
bow.
Isa. 60. 14.
Rev. 3. 9.

^a 1 Sam. 28. 6.

^b Job 27. 9.
Pro. 1. 18.
Isa. 1. 15.
Eze. 20. 3.
Mic. 3. 4.
Matt. 7. 22.
Luke 13 25.
^c Deut 28. 13.

^d Isa. 55. 5.
Isa. 65. 1.
Hos. 2. 23.
Rom. 9. 25.

skill of a great warrior. The sentiment intended to be expressed by David is equivalent to that of Paul, Phil. iv. 13, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." 36. Thou hast also given me the shield of thy salvation—*i. e.*, thy saving shield, thine almighty defence. and thy gentleness hath made me great [תְּיַשְׁבֵּר]—thy condescending kindness (as shown to inferiors: cf. ch. vii. 18; Ps. viii. 4; Isa. lxvi. 2). 37. Thou hast enlarged my steps under me; so that my feet did not slip—*i. e.*, Thou hast given ample room and verge enough, so that, like a pedestrian, I can more freely walk, without the risk of stumbling, in a rugged or precipitous path. 38. I have pursued mine enemies, and destroyed them. This refers to the course of uninterrupted conquest that had attended his arms in the wars undertaken against the enemies of Israel. The language seems borrowed (Exod. xv. 9). 'David's kingdom was, is, and ever shall be a victorious kingdom. Any temporal limitation of this declaration is inadmissible, as David's celebration of the Divine grace cannot be narrower than this grace itself, partly already bestowed on him, and partly held in promise, which found its culminating point in Christ' (*Hengstenberg*). 40. For thou hast girded me with strength to battle. Warriors were accustomed to gird themselves with a broad belt, to keep up their long garments, to bind these and their armour close together, and to fortify their loins, that they might be stronger and more fitted for the strenuous efforts necessary to be made in the combat. But instead of arrogating to himself the gallant achievements and brilliant victories mentioned in the previous verses, David ascribes his military vigour and prowess to God, repeating the words he had formerly used, *v.* 32. 41. Thou hast also given me the necks of mine enemies. Conquerors sometimes made their captives, especially if they were persons of rank and eminence, lie prostrate on the ground, and then put a foot upon their neck, in token of complete humiliation. This act of insolent triumph over a vanquished foe was frequently practised in ancient warfare (Isa. li. 23), and the early Hebrews followed in this respect the war usage of their times (Josh. vii. 8, 12). Numerous examples of this custom are found also on the Assyrian monuments. But milder and more humane victors contented themselves with putting a rope, or merely their hand, round the neck of a captured adversary,

as a sign of their acquired right to them (Gen. xlix. 8; Exod. xxiii. 27; Deut. xxviii. 48; Isa. x. 27; Jer. xxvii. 8; Lam. v. 5). 42. They looked, but there was none to save; even unto the Lord, but he answered them not. David is here speaking of the enemies of Israel, into whose land he carried his victorious arms, and who, in the extremity of their distress, besides invoking the aid of their idols, did, it appears, sometimes pray to Jehovah (see on Jon. i. 14); but He did not hear favourably. The reason why He did not listen to their importunate cries was, that they were without the pale of the covenant and its promises,—that, being heathens, they were enemies to God, and could not address Him in the exercise of that faith which alone can render prayer acceptable. 43. Then did I beat them as small as the dust of the earth. This language may be only expressive of that contempt in which ancient conquerors were wont to indulge in speaking of worthless foes; they would tread them under foot as the dust (cf. Isa. x. 6; Zeph. i. 17; Zech. x. 5). But it is literally true that they might be reduced as small as dust. The bodies of slain enemies that lie exposed without the rites of burial on the field or streets, soon become the prey of dogs and vultures (1 Ki. xiv. 11; xvi. 4; xxi. 19-23), and the bones, stripped of all flesh, blanch in the warm climate, where they are not long in being crumbled to dust, and so trodden under the feet of their masters. It was this sad issue, doubtless, that David had in his mind when he penned this passage in the song. 44. Thou also hast delivered me from the strivings of my people [לְרִיבָי]—from the contentions—not wars, but strifes [מַעֲבָרִים]—of my people; *i. e.*, the civil broils occasioned by Saul, Ish-bosheth, Absalom, Shebah, and the Judahites' jealousy of the other tribes, at the king's restoration. From the evils and dangers attendant upon all of these, the providence of God, who had destined him for the throne, had happily provided a way of escape. thou hast kept me to be head of the heathen [יָמִים, of nations; מְשֻׁבָּרִים]—thou hast watched, preserved me as a shepherd guards his sheep. This deliverance from domestic or intestine adversaries was a natural and necessary preliminary to his conquest and acquired supremacy over adjoining nations—*viz.*, the Ammonites, Moabites, Edomites, Syrians, and others. a people which I knew not shall serve

- 45 ²¹Strangers shall submit themselves unto me:
As soon as they hear, they shall be obedient unto me.
- 46 Strangers shall fade away,
And they shall be afraid ⁹out of their close places.
- 47 The LORD liveth;—and blessed *be* my rock;
And exalted be the God of the ⁷rock of my salvation.
- 48 It *is* God that ²²avengeth me,
And that ⁹bringeth down the people under me,
- 49 And that bringeth me forth from mine enemies:
Thou also hast lifted me up on high above them that rose up against me:
Thou hast delivered me from the violent man.
- 50 Therefore I will give thanks unto thee, O LORD, among ^hthe heathen,
And I will sing praises unto thy name.

B. C. 1019.
²⁰ Sons of the stranger.
²¹ lie, or, yield feigned obedience Deut. 33. 29.
⁹ Mic. 7. 17.
⁷ Ps. 89. 27.
²² giveth vengeance for me.
 1 Sam. 25. 31.
^h Ps. 141. 2.
 Rom 15. 9.

me—*i. e.*, remote and barbarous nations, not specified by name in the covenant grant of the promised land. 45. Strangers shall submit . . . as soon as they hear, they shall be obedient unto me—*lit.*, the children of an unknown land. "As soon as they hear"—on the report of my extending course of conquests. [רָחַם־לִּי, shall lie to me (cf. Deut. xxxiii. 29; Ps. lxxvi. 3; lxxxii. 15), shall fawn upon or flatter me by professions of love and devotedness, which are only constrained tokens of homage, extorted from fear of the victor. An instance is furnished by the congratulatory message of Toi, king of Hamath (ch. viii. 10). But שָׁמַע־אָזְנִי signifies 'are heard,' not 'are made to hear,' or 'obey;,' and accordingly *Hengstenberg* maintains that it is both more grammatical, and more in the spirit of the parallelism, to render the clause, 'by the hearing of the ear those serve me,' or 'they who serve me are heard of me by the hearing of the ear.' I know them only by report.] 46. Strangers shall fade away [יָבֵשׁוּ]—shall wither or fall away; applied primarily in reference to leaves and flowers (Ps. i. 3; xxxvii. 2; Isa. i. 30; xxviii. 1; xl. 7, 8; Ezek. xlviii. 12), but trop. to men (Exod. xviii. 18; Ps. xviii. 46; xxxvii. 2). The strangers shall decay in their hopes as well as in their strength. and . . . be afraid out of their close places [יִרְאוּ]—and they gird themselves (Exod. xii. 11; 2 Ki. iv. 29), and go forth [יִצְאוּ] from their strongholds; used, preterit, here for their fortified cities. *Gesenius* suggests (and *Hitzig* coincides with him), according to the Syriac, 'they creep or limp out of their strongholds.' This, however, is a forced and unusual meaning of the word. [In the parallel passage (Ps. xviii. 46), the Hebrew text has יִרְאוּ, and they are dismayed out of their strongholds; they came out from their fortresses tremblingly, and surrendered them (Mic. vii. 17: cf. 1 Sam. xvi. 4; Hos. xi. 11).]

47. The Lord liveth [יְיָ־חַיִּים]—living be Jehovah, according to many interpreters, who consider there is here a transference to God of the acclamation usually made to earthly kings, 'O king, live for ever.' This expression, however, implying the liability to death, can only be proper to mortals, and seems most inappropriate to God. Besides, these words are the common form of Hebrew oath, and contain a strong affirmation, "as the Lord liveth." In that sense they must be taken here as describing the living God, in contrast to dead idols—imaginary beings, the creatures of superstitious fear. Thus interpreted, the words form the commencement of a doxology. and blessed be my rock—*i. e.*, praised (see on "rock," v. 2).

exalted be the God of the rock of my salvation—*i. e.*, the divine rock of my salvation (cf. Isa. xviii. 10; Mic. vii. 7; Hab. iii. 18), or the God who is my sure, unchangeable Saviour (Luke i. 47). God cannot receive any accessions either of power, majesty, or glory; but He can be magnified in the conceptions and by the praises of men. This doxology consists of three parts, conformable to the Mosaic blessing (Num. vi. 24-26). 48. It is God that avengeth me, and bringeth down the people under me. The reference is to Saul and other malignant enemies, on whom he did not execute vengeance himself, but left it to Him to whom vengeance belongeth. God had effected that result, and David here acknowledges it with gratitude and joy, not as gratified by the punishment inflicted as on his personal enemies, but on the enemies of God, through his instrumentality. 49. And that bringeth me forth from mine enemies—*lit.*, And bringing me out, leading me forth; *i. e.*, saving me. thou also hast lifted me up on high above them that rose up against me. The change from the participle in the previous clause to the second person, forming a direct address to God, imparts beauty and energy to the diction. thou hast delivered me from the violent man [עָשָׂה־לִּי, plural, or עָשָׂה, singular (Ps. xviii. 46); עָשָׂה, man of wrongs or wrong; an oppressor (cf. v. 16; Ps. cxl. 1-4)]—the ideal type of a numerous class, who, although from delicacy left unnamed in the body of the song, is mentioned in the introductory verse. Thus, in winding-up this song of praise and thanksgiving for all his deliverances, David recapitulates them, as previously enumerated, in three groups,—1. From Saul; 2. from intestine insurgents; and 3. from foreign enemies. 50. Therefore I will give thanks unto thee, O Lord, among the heathen [בְּגוֹיִם]—among the nations. Thank Thee for what?—for my deliverance, and for my advancement to the theocratic throne. [עַל־כֵּן] Wherefore—on which account, with reference to all that he had described, bearing not only on his past and present experience of the Divine goodness, but on the prospective blessings included in the covenant—I will thank Thee 'among the nations.' [The Septuagint has διὰ τοῦτο ἐξομολογήσομαι σοι κύριε ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσι.] Either—1. in the assembled congregation of the Israelitish tribes, to whom this word [עָשָׂה] is sometimes applied (Josh. iii. 17; iv. 1; Ezek. ii. 3); 2. *i. e.*, in the presence of those who from time to time resorted to Jerusalem on embassy of international importance, or before those of them to whom, as my tributaries, I may go or transmit correspondence; or, 3. among the heathen in the widest sense,—as referring not to David person-

51 *He is the tower of salvation for his king;*
 And showeth mercy to ^jhis anointed,
 Unto David, and to his seed for ^kevermore.

23 NOW these *be* the last words of David.

David the son of Jesse said,—and the man *who was raised up on high*,
 The anointed of the God of Jacob,—and the sweet psalmist of Israel, said,

2 The ^aSpirit of the LORD spake by me,—and his word *was* in my tongue.

B. C. 1014.
 Ps. 144. 10.
 1 Sam. 16.
 12, 13.
 2 Sam. 7. 12.
 Ps. 89. 27.
 CHAP. 27.
 2 Pet. 1. 21.

ally, but to his royal successors, especially to Christ. Accordingly, this praise has ever since been given to God, wherever this song has been known and used in the churches; and in this extended spiritual view it is applied by Paul to the preaching of his gospel among the Gentiles (Rom. xv. 9), "that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name." 51. *He is the tower of salvation for his king.* Here is a repetition of the figure used, v. 3. "His king," the king whom He Himself chose and appointed. and showeth mercy to his anointed. This phrase, being the special designation of the king of Israel, might be supposed limited in its application here to the author of the song; and therefore, in explanation of the comprehensive import of the term, he adds, "unto David, and to his seed for evermore," including all his royal posterity, and especially the Messiah, who is styled David's seed (Acts xiii. 1; Rom. i. 3; Gal. iii. 16), his son (Ps. lxxxix. 27; cx. 1, compared with Matt. xxii. 42), and the anointed king (Ps. ii. 2). This song is a noble effusion of lyrical poetry. In the wide and discursive range of its survey all the salient points of David's life and experience are touched upon and described under a variety of bold and most striking images. As dedicated to a personal retrospect of the way by which David had been led, this song was a fitting hallelujah to be composed and sung at the close of his remarkable career. But, adapted also for public worship, it is a sublime, no less than a most appropriate, vehicle for the thanksgiving of devout worshippers; and containing as it does Messianic elements interspersed throughout, it has been, and will continue in future ages to be, one of the favourite songs of Zion.

CHAP. XXIII. 1-7.—DAVID PROFFESSES HIS FAITH IN GOD'S PROMISES.

1. Now these *be* the last words of David. Various opinions are entertained as to the precise meaning of this statement, which, it is obvious, proceeded from the compiler or collector of the sacred canon. Some think that, as there is no division of chapters in the Hebrew Scriptures, this introduction was intended to show that what follows is no part of the preceding song; others regard this as the last of the king's poetical compositions; while a third party consider it the last of his utterances as an inspired writer. The fact seems to be, that they formed the last divine communication which David received of the kingly character and glory of the Messiah; and although he probably composed some of his sacred lyrics afterwards, especially Psalm lxxii., in which are embodied some glorious predictions of the great King, yet these were only an expansion or particular application of the "last words." The distinctness and fulness of the revelation left so vivid and permanent an impression, that it thenceforth formed the grand subject which filled and elevated his mental vision. His imagination dwelt upon it with increasing delight, till it eventually gave a tone to his habitual thoughts, and tinged with its golden hues his strong faith

in the perpetuity of his dynastic glory. (See his dying charge to Solomon, 1 Ki. ii. 4.) In this view the "last words" of David were analogous to the prophetic utterances of Jacob and Moses; and like theirs, too, these appear in the poetical form, extending over seven verses, which are subdivided by the nature of their contents into sections,—the one of five and the other of two verses.

David the son of Jesse said [דָּוִד]—a peculiar term, applied solely to solemn oracular utterances, implying a revelation, the word of God, and equivalent to "Thus saith the Lord" (see on Num. xxiv. 3), and the man who was raised up on high. הַיָּהוּי, "the man," an almost exclusively poetical word (implying strength). אָז, 'above,' 'upon,' 'over,' is here rendered "on high," the object being omitted; so that the imagination is left to picture to itself the greatness as well as the extent of sovereign power and glory to which the shepherd son of Jesse was raised (cf. ch. xxii. 44, 45.) With the exception of Abraham and of Moses, no Hebrew ever attained to a height of power or influence superior to, or was the honoured medium of more precious blessings to mankind than, David, the anointed of the God of Jacob—chosen to be king by the special appointment of that God to whom, by virtue of an ancient covenant, the people of Israel owed all their peculiar destiny and distinguished privileges, and consecrated to the high office of their king by the formal ceremony of the sacred oil sprinkled on his head by the hand of God's commissioned prophet (cf. ch. xxii. 51). In this respect he was pre-eminently the Lord's anointed, the type of Christ, the sweet psalmist of Israel—i. e., delightful, highly esteemed, 'sweet in psalms of Israel' (*Heustenbergen*); 'the darling of the songs of Israel' (*Bunsen*). This formal introduction bears a close resemblance to that of Balaam's prophetic utterance. In both cases the speaker introduces himself by the announcement of his name and parentage, in order to demonstrate his own insignificance, and to magnify the preternatural power of God imparted to him. But in the case of David there is superadded a statement of the grounds on which it was to be expected that he would be employed as an agent of God in the utterance of this important prophecy—his antecedents in the public service of Israel, as raised by a special act of Providence from an obscure family and condition to the throne of Israel, and called to the highest offices both in the kingdom and Church which He had chosen out of the world.

2. The Spirit of the Lord spake by me [רוּחַ-יְהוָה]—speaketh in me; referring, not to his general inspiration only, but to the revelation which immediately follows. and his word was in my tongue [לְשׁוֹנִי, His word]. Millah is an exclusively poetic term (Job vi. 26; xxxiii. 32; xxxvi. 2; Ps. xix. 5; cvi. 2; cxxxix. 4; Prov. xxiii. 9). The parallelism here employed is not to be viewed as consisting of two simply synonymous members,

- 3 The God of Israel said,—the Rock of Israel spake to me,
 1 He that ruleth over men *must be just*,—ruling ^b in the fear of God.
 4 And ^c *he shall be* as the light of the morning *when* the sun riseth,
Even a morning without clouds;
 As the tender grass *springing out of the earth* by clear shining after rain.
 5 Although ^a *my house be* not so with God;

B. C. 1018.

1 Or, Bethou ruler, etc.

b Ex. 18. 21.

c Pro. 4. 18.

d 1 Ki 9. 46.

1 Ki. 12. 14.

in which the same sentiment is taught without any difference of mode or degree, but is obviously of the class termed gradational, in which the idea introduced in the former member is continued, but amplified in the latter' (*Henderson*). In order to attach greater interest and importance to his composition, he premises that it was not the product of his own mind, the invention of his own poetic genius, or the result of his own penetrating sagacity: it was the inhabitation of the Divine Spirit, whose extraordinary influence had qualified him to be an inspired writer, supplying the matter, and afterwards enabling him to select appropriate language, a fitting vehicle for the embodiment of the ideas, in the form of sacred song. Having made this statement with reference to his character as an organ of divine communications generally, he goes on to announce a special revelation which had been communicated to him, either by direct inward impression on his mind (cf. 1 Pet. i. 11; 2 Pet. i. 21), or by an audible voice, of which the sacred history records many instances. Although many of the lyrical compositions of David contain prophetic elements wherever he is led to allude to his royal dynasty, developments more or less full of the grand promise made to him (ch. vii.), yet they were only incidentally or in part predictive; whereas these "last words" are wholly in this form, belonging exclusively to the high and pure domain of prophecy; and therefore they have not been, like the preceding song, incorporated with the book of Psalms. They contain a direct and beautiful prediction of the advent and benign government of the Messiah. But the whole poem is exceedingly elliptical, and therefore in several portions of it obscure. Our translators evidently felt great difficulty in rendering the Hebrew text, as may be inferred from the numerous interpolations or italicised words which they have employed as links to unite the apparently *dissecta membra* of the original, but by which, instead of harmonizing or illustrating the passage, they have produced confusion, and given a version to a great extent remote from the true meaning. The researches of *Kennicott*, who lived and wrote since the authorized version was published, have thrown welcome light upon the passage; for, in his 'Dissertation' (vol. i.) upon the Hebrew text, he mentions a remarkable feature in the oldest, most reliable of the MSS., viz. that it has the name *Jehovah* in this passage—thus determining the poem to be a prophetic song of the Messiah. This was a discovery of a most interesting nature; and on the importance of which to the cause of Biblical criticism, *Michaelis*, at the time of its announcement to the Christian world, enlarged in the warmest terms of admiration and gratitude. 3. The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me. The epithet, "the Rock," applied to God, expresses His immutability and inviolable faithfulness (see on ch. xxii. 3, 32, 47; Deut. xxxii. 4). A revelation made by the God of Israel, who is so unchangeable and true to His covenant promises, must have some reference either to the interests of Israel as a nation, or to their subserviency, in the economy of Providence, to the future well-being of the world at large. "Spake

to me," may be rendered, 'promised to me.' [In this sense אָמַר is used, Deut. vi. 3; xix. 8, &c.] He that ruleth . . . must be just [מִשְׁפָּט, participle; a ruler, a prince]—applied to the Messiah (Mic. v. 1). over men [עַל כָּל אָדָם]—over mankind, the human race (ch. xxii. 44. 45). The passage, according to the sense thus given to the words, will stand thus—

'The God of Israel said,
 The Rock of Israel promised to me
 A Ruler, just (righteous), a ruler—fear of God
 (i. e., ruling in the fear of God).'

This was to be the character of the universal Ruler (Isa. liii. 11; also ch. xi. 2, 3). The foundation of His government was to be righteousness, founded on principles of pure and undefiled religion (cf. Isa. ix. 6, 7; Mic. v. 2). 4. And he shall be as the light of the morning when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds. *Kennicott*, founding on the text of the old MS. referred to, which has the word 'Jehovah' in this passage, renders it, 'and as the morning light shall Jehovah, the Sun, arise, even an unclouded morning, and the verdure shall spring out of the earth by the warm, bright splendour after rain.' The Messiah is frequently compared to the sun (Mal. iv. 2; Rev. xxii. 16), and the blessings of His reign to "the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain" (cf. Ps. lxxii. 6; ex. 3; Isa. xlii. 3). Little patches of grass are seen rapidly springing up in Palestine after rain; and even where the ground has been long parched and bare, within a few days or hours after the enriching showers begin to fall, the face of the earth is so renewed that it is covered over with a pure, fresh mantle of green. This beautiful imagery was designed to convey an idea of the auspicious effects that would result from the reign of the great Ruler; and how truly descriptive it really was of the ministry and the religion of Christ needs no illustration,—the morning sun representing its gladdening influences, and the springing of the tender grass symbolizing the growth, the beautiful development and progress, the silent, but rapid and steady advancement of piety and virtue amongst nations and people that are subject to the benign power of Christianity. 5. Although my house be not so with God. Between his prediction of the beneficent effects of this Ruler's government and its destructive influences on his enemies, David throws in a parenthetical clause, relating to himself, which has been sadly marred in our translation. "The light of the morning"—i. e., the beginning of David's kingdom—was, unlike the clear, brilliant dawn of an Eastern day, overcast by many black and threatening clouds. Neither himself nor his family had been like the tender grass springing up from the ground, and flourishing by the united influences of the sun and rain; but rather like the grass that withereth, and is prematurely cut down. The meaning is, that although David's house had not flourished in an uninterrupted course of worldly prosperity and greatness, according to his hopes—although great crimes and calamities had beclouded his family history—

Yet 'he hath made with me an everlasting covenant,

Ordered in all things, and sure:

For *this* is all my salvation, and all my desire,

Although he make it not to grow.

6 But the sons of Belial shall be all of them as thorns thrust away,
Because they cannot be taken with hands.

7 But the man that shall touch them

Must be fenced with iron and the staff of a spear;

And they shall be utterly burned with fire in the same place.

B. C. 1018.

ch. 7, 14.
1 Chr. 17, 11,
14.
Ps. 59, 3.
Isa. 9, 6.
Isa. 55, 3.
Isa. 61, 8.
Jer. 22, 40.
Jer. 23, 25.
2 filled.

some of the most promising branches of the royal tree had been cut down in his lifetime—and many of his successors should suffer in like manner for their personal sins—although many reverses and revolutions may overtake his race and his kingdom—yet it was to him a subject of the highest joy and thankfulness that God will inviolably maintain His covenant with His family until the advent of His greatest Son, the Messiah, who was the special object of his desire, and the author of his salvation. This is the common view of the passage,—a view, however, encumbered by so many and so great difficulties as necessitates its abandonment. It represents David, whose doting fondness for his sons rendered him blind to their errors and crimes, as making a strong assertion to their disadvantage; as acknowledging his painful conviction that they were far from exemplifying the attributes of character that were symbolized by the morning sun and the springing of the tender grass; and selfishly congratulating himself, that though his house might be excluded from the blessings of the Great Ruler's government, he would personally enjoy them to the utmost extent of his wishes. It is opposed to the tenor of the context, which guarantees the fulfilment of the covenant promise, not to David personally so much as to his posterity; not to his family but to his house, his dynasty (see ch. vii. 11-16); so that it obviously could not be his intention to draw a picture that would be flattering to himself and disadvantageous to his house, or to admit the one, but exclude the other from the blessings of the promise. Besides, it rests upon an unsound philological basis; for it has given to the Hebrew conjunction [וְ, for], which stands at the commencement of the four clauses in v. 5, as many different significations,—*although, yet, for, and although* a second time. A word which is forced to play so many parts for the purpose of supporting a particular view is evidently perverted from its proper use; whereas, let it bear its legitimate sense, at the same time giving to the first and last clauses an interrogative form, and the several parts of the verse will appear to harmonize with each other, as well as with the context.

'For is not my house so with God?

For He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure;

For this is all my salvation, and all my desire:

For will He not make it (viz., my house) to grow?'

'Is not my house so with God?'—*i. e.*, my dynasty bearing a resemblance to the morning sun and the luxuriant growth of the grass after a seasonable shower; and that his own reign, and that of many of his royal successors on the throne of Judah, did wonderfully approximate in spirit and in beneficent influence to that of the Messiah, the course of the sacred history relating to David, Solomon, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, Josiah, &c., abundantly attests. An everlasting covenant, ordered in all things [עֲרֻךְ]—arranged, confirmed in all ways. 'The extent to which all

interposing obstacles were excluded, or rather had been considered and calculated beforehand, appears especially from 2 Sam. vii. 14, 15, according to which even the most fatal of all interpositions, the apostasy of the bearers of the covenant, should not destroy the covenant—should not annul the gracious promise made to the race' (*Hengstenberg*). and sure [וַיִּשְׁכַּח]—and kept, carefully observed; *i. e.*, inviolable, because guarded by Him who is "the faithful God, keeping covenant and mercy" (Deut. vii. 9; Dan. ix. 4; cf. 1 Ki. viii. 25). The concluding verses of the prophecy exhibit the destructive effects of the ruler's government on his enemies, (cf. ch. xxiii. 38; also Ps. ii.) 6. But the sons of Belial [בְּעִילִים]—worthlessness, wickedness = wicked men (cf. Deut. xiii. 13). shall be all of them as thorns thrust away, because they cannot be taken with hands. The enemies of Israel are represented as "thorns," Num. xxxiii. 55; and so the enemies of the Messiah's kingdom are here described under the same image. 'Shall be thrust away' [וְנִקְוּ], participle, Hoph, נָקַד, to move, to flee away], 'shall be put to flight;' referring to the men, not to the thorns. As thorns are extirpated out of a land which is about to be brought under culture, so wicked men will disappear from the kingdom of the Messiah—the wicked enemies and persecutors of this kingdom of righteousness. They resemble those prickly thorny plants which are twisted together, whose spires point in every direction, and are so sharp and strong that they cannot be touched or approached without danger; but hard instruments and violent means must be taken to destroy or uproot them. So God will remove or destroy all who are opposed to this kingdom. 7. But the man that shall touch them must be fenced with iron and the staff of a spear [וְנִקְוּ]—filled with armour; *i. e.*, must be well armed or defended. The verses, thus explained, will stand thus—

'But the sons of Belial, all of them

Are as thorns to be thrust out

(For they cannot be taken with the hand;

And the man who shall touch them

Must be armed with an axe and a spear-staff,

And to be utterly consumed with fire in the place.'

In proof that the sceptre of Christ will be a sceptre of judgment as well as of mercy, see Isa. lxi. 2, who was anointed to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and (at the same time) the day of vengeance of our God; in Psalm lxxiii. the Messiah is represented as 'trampling His enemies in His fury;' Mal. iv. 1, as burning all the proud, and all that do wickedly, as stubble, leaving neither root nor branch; Matt. iii. 12, John Baptist describes him as having 'His fan in His hand, and thoroughly purging His floor, and gathering His wheat into the garner, but burning the chaff with fire unquenchable;' and Rev. xix. 15, John, in the Apocalypse, says, 'Out of His mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it

8 These be the names of the mighty men whom David had: The Tachmonite that sat in the seat, chief among the captains; the same was Adino the Eznite: he lift up his spear against eight hundred, ³whom he 9 slew at one time. And after him was Eleazar the son of Dodo the

B. C. 1018.
³ slain.
 / 1 Chr. 11. 12.
 1 Chr. 27. 4.

He should smite the nations, ruling them with a rod of iron, and treading the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.' In short, the exercise of judgment along with mercy is essential to that character of righteousness which is the foundation of His government. As this brief but remarkable prophecy, though its reference to the Messiah is direct and clear, is yet, from its elliptical form, somewhat difficult to render, it may be interesting, in addition to the exegesis given above, to subjoin translations executed by three different persons. *Kimchi* offers the following:—'For a morning of mist and clouds, now it shines, and now it rains, and is good only for the growth of grass from the earth. But my house is not so with God; it will shine at all times, and at all seasons, for He has made with me an everlasting covenant. Surely this is all my salvation and all my delight, that promises so bright and so glorious should be connected with my house: shall it not prosper (according to God's promise)? *Dr. Pyle Smith* ('Scripture Testimony to the Messiah,' i., p. 262), following the text of *Kemicoth*, and assuming the prophecy to bear a Messianic reference, conceives that, as the cross was the way to the crown, the idea of a crucified Saviour must be introduced into a poem relating to Messiah the king; and accordingly he finds it in the strong figurative language of v. 7. This interpretation, however, is not supported by the original text, and in the concluding verse destroys the antithesis. His version is as follows:—

'The oracle of David, the son of Jessai;
 Even the oracle of the high-raised hero
 Anointed by the God of Jacob,
 And the delightful author of the songs of Israel.
 The Spirit of God speaketh by me,
 And His word is upon my tongue:
 The God of Israel saith,
 To me speaketh the God of Israel.
 Ruling over man is a righteous one,
 Ruling in the fear of God;
 Even as the light of the morning shall he shine,
 Jehovah, the sun,
 A morning without clouds for brightness,
 (As) After rain the herbage from the earth.
 Truly this is my house with God;
 For an everlasting covenant He has fixed with me
 But the wicked shall not grow
 As prickles, to be moved away all of them;
 For they cannot be taken by the hand.
 And the man who shall touch them
 Will be filled with the iron and the shaft of the spear.'

Hengstenberg's version ('Christology,' i., p. 149) is added, as a third specimen of translation—

'For is not thus my house with God?
 For He hath made with me an everlasting covenant,
 Ordered in all things, and sure;
 For all my salvation and all my pleasure—
 Should he not make it to grow?'

The "everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure," guaranteed the perpetuity of David's royal "house." So far as related to the temporal part of the promise, it was fulfilled by the Lord's continuing the house of David on the throne of Judah, notwithstanding all their rebellion against him (1 Ki. xi. 36; 2 Ki. viii. 19; 2 Chr. xxi. 7); and it was frequently pleaded by the Jewish church, when the judgments inflicted upon David's temporal house and kingdom seemed to nullify it. The promise contained in it, as it respected David's natural descendants, was conditional, so

that the Lord at length deprived them of the kingdom; but he did not by that dispensation violate the covenant with His servant. How, then, was the promise made good, in "the everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure"? Was the word "everlasting" to be taken, after all, in a limited, though a very extended sense? No; the duration of the covenant was, in the most strictly literal meaning of the word, to be "everlasting." It was to be fulfilled in the person of the Messiah, the last and greatest of David's descendants, and by His being raised from the dead, to sit for ever on His heavenly throne as King of Zion. The promise as it related to the Messiah was absolute, and in Him it had its full accomplishment. It is plain, from the "last words" of this passage, that David rejoices in the believing confidence that the covenant made with him was "an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure," and confesses that it was all his salvation and all his desire, at the very close of his life, when the prospect of perpetuating his dynasty on an earthly kingdom could yield him comparatively little comfort. But we are not left to our own conjectures upon this subject. Peter, by the infallible inspiration of the Holy Spirit, tells us expressly how David understood this promise. After having cited his prophecy of Christ's resurrection from Psalm xvi., he adds, "Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption" (Acts ii. 25-32). From these words it is evident that David understood, from the promise guaranteed to him by the everlasting covenant, not only that the Messiah was to come of his seed, but that He was to be raised up from the dead to sit on His heavenly throne. All the subsequent prophecies of the Messiah have a reference to this covenant promise made to David, and are just so many renewals, illustrations, and enlargements of it (Isa. ix. 6, 7; xi. 1; lv. 15; cf. Ps. lxxxix. 28, 29; Jer. xxiii. 5, 6; xxxiii. 14-26; Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24; Hos. iii. 5; Amos ix. 11 with Acts xv. 16, 17).

8-39.—A CATALOGUE OF HIS MIGHTY MEN.

8. These be the names of the mighty men whom David had. This verse should be translated thus:—'He who sits in the seat of the Tachmonite (i. e., of Jashobeam the Hachmonite), who was chief among the captains, the same is Adino the Eznite; he lifted up his spear against eight hundred, whom he slew at one time.—The text is corrupt in this passage; the number eight hundred should be three hundred (*Davidson's* 'Herm.'). Under Joab he was chief or president of the council of war. The first or highest order was composed of him and his two colleagues, Eleazar [Septuagint, Ἐλεαζάρ] and Shammah [Septuagint, Σαμαία]. Eleazar seems to have been left to fight the Philistines alone; and on his achieving the victory, they returned to the spoil. In like manner Shammah (see on 1 Chr. xi. 12) was left to stand alone in his glory, when the Lord by him wrought a great victory. It is not very easy to determine whether the exploits afterwards described were performed by the first or the second three.

Ahohite, one of the three mighty men with David, when they defied the Philistines that were there gathered together to battle, and the men of Israel were gone away: he arose, and smote the Philistines, until his hand was weary, and his hand clave unto the sword: and the LORD wrought a great victory that day; and the people returned after him only to spoil.

11 And after him was Shammah the son of Agee the Hararite. ⁹And the Philistines were gathered together ⁴into a troop, where was a piece of ground full of lentiles: and the people fled from the Philistines. But he stood in the midst of the ground, and defended it, and slew the Philistines: and the LORD wrought a great victory.

13 And ⁵three of the thirty chief went down, and came to David in the harvest time unto ^hthe cave of Adullam: and the troop of the Philistines pitched in the valley of ⁱRephaim. And David was then in ^jan hold, and the garrison of the Philistines was then in Beth-lehem. And David longed, and said, Oh that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Beth-lehem, which ^{is} by the gate! And the three mighty men brake through the host of the Philistines, and drew water out of the well of Beth-lehem, that was by the gate, and took it, and brought it to David: nevertheless he would not drink thereof, but poured it out unto the LORD; and he said, Be it far from me, O LORD, that I should do this: ^{is not this} the blood of the men that went in jeopardy of their lives? therefore he would not drink it. These things did these three mighty men.

18 And ^lAbishai the brother of Joab, the son of Zeruiah, was chief among three: and he lifted up his spear against three hundred, ^{and} slew them, and had the name among three. Was he not most honourable of three? therefore he was their captain: howbeit he attained not unto the ^{first} three.

20 And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the son of a valiant man, of ^mKabzeel, ⁿwho had done many acts, ^ohe slew two ^plion-like men of Moab: he went down also and slew a lion in the midst of a pit in time of snow: and he slew an Egyptian, ^qa goodly man: and the Egyptian had a spear in his hand; but he went down to him with a staff, and plucked the spear out of the Egyptian's hand, and slew him with his own spear. These things did Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and had the name among three mighty men. He was ¹⁰more honourable than the thirty, but he attained not to the ^{first} three: and David set him ^oover his ¹¹guard.

B. C. 1018.

⁹ 1 Chr. 11. 13.
⁴ Or, for foraging.
⁵ Or, The three captains over the thirty.
^h 1 Sam. 22. 1.
ⁱ 1 Chr. 29. 11.
^j 2 Chr. 14. 11-14.
^k 2 Chr. 25. 8.
^l Ps. 3. 5.
^m Or, giants, ch. 5. 18, 22.
ⁿ 1 Chr. 11. 15.
^o 1 Chr. 14. 9.
^p Isa. 17. 5.
^q 1 Sam. 22. 4.
^r 1 Chr. 12. 16.
^s Lev. 17. 10.
^t ch. 2. 18.
^u 1 Chr. 11. 20.
^v slain.
^w Josh. 15. 21.
^x great of acts.
^y Ex. 15. 15.
^z Lions of God.
^{aa} a man of countenance.
^{ab} or, sight.
^{ac} 1 Chr. 11. 13.
^{ad} a man of great stature:
^{ae} Or, honourable among the thirty.
^{af} ch. 8. 18.
^{ag} at his command, or, council.

15. the well of Beth-lehem. An ancient cistern, with four or five holes in the solid rock, at about ten minutes' distance to the north of the eastern corner of the hill of Beth-lehem, is pointed out by the natives as Bir-Daoud—that is, David's well. Dr. Robinson doubts the identity of the well; but others think that there are no good grounds for doing so. Certainly, considering this to be the ancient well, Beth-lehem must have once extended ten minutes farther to the north, and must have lain in times of old, not as now on the summit, but on the northern rise of the hill; for the well is by or (1 Chr. xi. 7) at the gate. 'I find in the descriptions of travellers that the common opinion is, that David's captains had come from the south-east, in order to obtain, at the risk of their lives, the so-much-longed-for water; while it is supposed that David himself was then in the great cave that is not far to the south-east of Beth-lehem; which cave is generally held to have been that of Adullam. But (Josh. xv. 35) Adullam lay "in the valley"—that is, in the undulating plain at the western base of the mountains of Judea, and consequently to the south-west of Beth-lehem. Be this as it may, David's three men had in any case to break through the host of the Philistines in order to reach the well; and the position of Bir-

Daoud agrees well with this' (*Van de Velde*). 16. he would not drink thereof, but poured it out unto the Lord. The probability is that a vivid recollection of the refreshing water of Beth-lehem excited a momentary wish to taste it again, and he gave utterance to the wish, without dreaming that any of his attendants heard or heeded his exclamation. When he thought of the imminent peril at which the draught had been procured, he would not partake of it, lest he should seem to prefer the selfish gratification of his palate to the lives of his most valued soldiers. "He poured it out unto the Lord," as a sort of libation or acknowledgment of the Divine goodness in preserving the lives of his men. 17. Be it far from me, O Lord [לֹא יִבְרַחַנִי]—Wo is me from Jehovah; God forbid [Septuagint, *ἀεὶς μοι, κύριε*, Far be it from me, O Lord]. By no means (cf. Matt. xvi. 22).

19. the first three. The mighty men or champions in David's military staff were divided into three classes—the highest, Jashobeam, Eleazar, and Shammah. The distinguished position of this warrior, who was in the first class of David's mighties, arose from the gallant service which, along with Eleazar, he rendered to the king, by

- 24 ²Asahel, the brother of Joab, was one of the thirty; Elhanan the son
- 25 of Dodo of Beth-lehem, Shamnah ²the Harodite, Elika the Harodite,
- 26 Helez the Paltite, Ira the son of Ikkesh the Tekoite, Abiezer the
- 28 Anethothite, Mebunnai the Hushathite, Zalmon the Ahohite, Maharai
- 29 the Netophathite, Heleb the son of Baanah, a Netophathite, Ittai the
- 30 son of Ribai out of Gibeah of the children of Benjamin, Benaiah the
- 31 ⁷Pirathonite, Hiddai of the ¹³brooks of ⁶Gaash, Abi-albon the Arbathite,
- 32 Azmaveth the Barhumite, Eliabha the Shaalbonite, of the sons of
- 33 Jashen, Jonathan, Shammah the Hararite, Ahiam the son of Sharar the
- 34 Hararite, Eliphelet the son of Ahasbai, the son of the Maachathite,
- 35 Eliam ⁴the son of Ahithophel the Gilonite, Hezrai the Carmelite, Paarai
- 36, the Arbite, Igal the son of Nathan of Zobah, Bani the Gadite, Zelek the
- 37 Ammonite, Naharai the Beerothite, armour-bearer to Joab the son of

	B C. 1018.
^p	ch. 2 18.
	1 Chr 11 29.
	1 Chr. 27. 7.
^q	1 Chr. 11. 7.
	28.
^r	Jed5. 12.15.
¹³	Or.
	valleys
	Deut. 1. 24.
^s	Judg. 2. 9.
^t	ch. 11. 3.
	ch. 15. 12.
	31.
	ch. 17. 23.
	1 Chr 27.33.
	34

enabling him to maintain a successful stand against a troop of Philistines. The second class, Abishai, Benaiah, and Asahel; and the third class, the thirty, of which Asahel was the chief.

24. **Asahel** [אַסָּחֵל, made by God]—youngest son of Zeruiah, David's sister. **Eihanan** [אֵיחָנָן, God bestowed]. 25. **Shammah** [שָׁמַח, astonishment]—or Shammoth (1 Chr. xi. 27), or Shamhuth (1 Chr. xxvii. 8). The genuine form of the name, according to *Kennicott* ('Dissertation,' p. 181), is Shammoth the Harodite. **Elika** the Harodite [אֵלִיקָא]—from a town, Charod (see on 1 Chr. xi. 27). 26. **Helez** the Paltite [הֶלֶז] (see on 1 Chr. xi. 27)—'the Paltite,' a corrupt form of Pelonite. **Ira** the son of Ikkesh the Tekoite [אִירָא, wakeful]. He was the sixth captain of the sixth monthly course of 24,000 (see 1 Chr. xxvii. 9). 27. **Abiezer** the Anethothite [אַבִּיעֶזֶר, father of help]. The Septuagint explains Anethothite to mean ἐκ τῶν οὐνῶν τοῦ Ἀνεθώτου. **Mebunnai** the Hushathite [מֵבֻנָּי, supposed to be a corruption for מֵבֵנַי (see on ch. xxi. 18; also 1 Chr. xxvii. 11: cf. Num. xxvi. 20)]. The Septuagint omits this name. 28. **Zalmon** the Ahohite [זַלְמוֹן, shady]. He is called, 1 Chr. xi. 29, Itai the Abohite, which, according to *Kennicott* ('Dissertation,' p. 187), is the correct reading. [The Septuagint has Ἐλλῶν ὁ Ἀωίτης.] **Maharai** the Netophathite [מַחֲרָי, impetuous]—belonging to Netophah, a city of Judah. [The Septuagint and Vatican call him Νοεὸς; Alexandrine, Μαεραεὶ (see other variations, 1 Chr. xi. 30; xxvii. 13).] 29. **Heleb** the son of Baanah [הֶלֶב] or הֶלֶבַי (1 Chr. xi. 30); or הֶלֶבַי (1 Chr. xxvii. 15). The Septuagint and Vatican omit; Alexandrine, Ἀλαφ. **Ittai** the son of Ribai [אִתָּי (perhaps near, *Gesenius*); also Ithai (1 Chr. xi. 31); Septuagint, Ἐσθα]. 30. **Benaiah** the Pirathonite [בְּנַיָּהּ, whom Jehovah has built] (see variation, 1 Chr. xi. 31; xxvii. 14)—from Pirathon, an Ephraimite city (Judg. xii. 15; 1 Chr. xi. 31), the site of which is unknown. The Septuagint omits. **Hiddai** of the brooks of Gaash [חִידַי; called Hurai, 1 Chr. xi. 32; Septuagint and Alexandrine, Ἀσθα: the Vatican omits חִידַי, from the wadies (valleys) around mount Gaash (shaking), in the territory of Ephraim (cf. 1 Chr. xi. 32).] 31. **Abi-albon** the Arbathite—called Abiel, 1 Chr. xi. 32, from Arab, a Benjamite town (Josh. xv. 52). **Azmaveth** the Barhumite [אַזְמַוֶּתַּי, strong like death (*Gesenius*) (cf. 1 Chr. xi. 33); Septuagint, Ἀσμοθ ὁ Βαρβουμίτης]. 32. **Eliabha** the Shaalbonite, of the sons of Jashen, Jonathan—probably from Shaalbin, or Shaalabbin (a city of

foxes), in the tribe of Dan (Josh. xix. 42; Judg. i. 35; 1 Ki. iv. 9). Instead of "the sons of Jashen, Jonathan," the parallel list (1 Chr. xi. 34) has "the sons of Hashem the Gizonite," and "Jonathan" stands in another connection. [The Septuagint has υἱοὶ Ἀσάν.] The disorderly state of the list in this passage *Kennicott* ('Dissertation,' i., pp. 201-203) has proposed to rectify by reading in both places, 'Gouni, of the sons of Hashem; Jonathan, the son of Shamha the Hararite.' This reading rests on the Alexandrine version of the passage in Chronicles. [*Bertheau* ('Chronik,' p. 134) thinks that υἱοὶ has been introduced into the text by a copyist, through an inadvertent repetition of the last letters of the word that precedes, υἱοὶ ψω; so that the text should read only, 'Hashem the Gizonite.'] 33. **Shammah** the Hararite. *Kennicott* ('Dissertation,' p. 181) conjoins this with Jonathan in the preceding verse; and, from a comparison of 1 Chr. xi. 34, proposes to correct the text by reading both in this and the parallel passage, 'Jonathan, the son of Shamha the Hararite.' **Ahiam** the son of Sharar the Hararite [אַחִיָּא, father's brother]. "Sharar" should be "Sacar" (1 Chr. xi. 35), according to *Kennicott's* suggestion. 34. **Eliphelet** the son of Ahasbai [אֵלִיפְהֵלֵת, God is his deliverance]—or Eliphah (1 Chr. xi. 35). "Ahasbai" (I take refuge in God, *Gesenius*) the Maachathite, from Maachah; probably the modern Lejah. [The Septuagint has Ἀλιφαλὲς υἱος τοῦ Μαχαχά.] **Eliam** the son of Ahithophel the Gilonite [אֵלִיָּא]—omitted in the parallel list of 1 Chr. xi.; traditionally believed to be the same as the person mentioned, ch. xi. 23 (*Jerome*, 'Quest. Hebraice,' in loco), the father of Bath-sheba. [The Septuagint calls him Ἐλιᾶβ.] 35. **Hezrai** the Carmelite—or Hezro (1 Chr. xi. 37). *Kennicott* decides, on the almost unanimous authority of MSS., in favour of the name in this passage being the true one. "The Carmelite," from the southern Carmel, the estate of Nabal [Septuagint, Ἀσαραὶ ὁ Καρμύλιος]. **Paarai** the Arbite—or Naarai, the son of Ezbai (1 Chr. xi. 37), which is preferred by *Kennicott*. [The Septuagint and Vatican, omitting the first letter, combine the rest of the letters with the following word into the strange compound, ὀνομαοερχί.] 36. **Igal** the son of Nathan of Zobah. The parallel list (1 Chr. xi. 38) has "Joel the brother of Nathan," which is considered by *Kennicott* as the correct reading [Septuagint, Γαᾶλ υἱος Ναθανά]. **Bani** the Gadite [בָּנִי, built. The Septuagint reads Πολυδυνάμειος υἱος Γαλααδῶ]. 37. **Zelek** the Ammonite [זֶלֶק, fissure; Septuagint, Ἐλιε]. **Nahari** the Beerothite [נָהָרִי, snorer]—or

38, Zeruiah, "Ira an Ithrite, Gareb an Ithrite, "Uriah the Hittite: thirty
39 and seven in all.

24 AND "again the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and
1 he moved David against them to say, ^bGo, number Israel and Judah.
2 For the king said to Joab the captain of the host, which *was* with him,
2 Go now through all the tribes of Israel, from Dan even to Beer-sheba,
and number ye the people, that "I may know the number of the people.
3 And Joab said unto the king, Now the LORD thy God add unto the
people, how many soever they be, an hundred-fold, and that the eyes of
my lord the king may see *it*: but why doth my lord the king delight in
4 this thing? Notwithstanding ^dthe king's word prevailed against Joab,
and against the captains of the host.

And Joab and the captains of the host went out from the presence of the
5 king to number the people of Israel. And they passed over Jordan, and
pitched in ^eAroer, on the right side of the city that *lieth* in the midst of
6 the ³river of Gad, and toward ^fJazer. Then they came to Gilead, and
to the ⁴land of Tahtim-hodshi; and they came ^gto Dan-jaan, and about
7 to ^hZidon, and came to the strong hold of Tyre, and to all the cities of
the Hivites, and of the Canaanites: and they went out to the south of
8 Judah, *even* to Beer-sheba. So when they had gone through all the
land, they came to Jerusalem at the end of nine months and twenty days.

B. C. 10 8.

^a ch. 20. 26.
^v Josh. 15. 48.
^w ch. 11. 3. 6.

CHAP. 24.
^a ch. 21. 1.

1 Ki. 22 : 2.
Acts 4. 24.

1 Satan.

1 Chr 21. 1.
Jas 1. 13.

^b 1 Chr 27. 23.

² Or, Com-
pass.

^c Gen 26 4.
Jer. 17. 5.

^d Eccl. 8. 4.
Acts 5. 19.

^e Deut. 2. 36.

^f Or, valley.

^g Num. 32. 1,
3.

⁴ Or, nether
land newly
inhabited.

^v Judg. 18. 23.

^w Josh. 19. 23.

Naharai, 1 Chr. xi. 39 [where the Septuagint calls him *Naxwp*, but omits the name in this passage]. "The Beerothite," from Beeroth, one of the four cities of the Hivites (Josh. ix. 17) [Septuagint, Γελωρὲ ὁ Βηθρωαῖός]. 38. Ira an Ithrite [אִירָא בֶּן־יִתְרִי]—Ira (wakeful), Ithrite, from Jattir ('Attir), a town in the highland district of Judah. He is called the Jairite, ch. xx. 26 [Septuagint, Ἰρας ὁ Ἐσραῖος]. Gareb an Ithrite [גָּרֵב בֶּן־יִתְרִי]—Gareb (scabby) the Ithrite; *i. e.*, according to a common opinion, 'the son of Jether,' But it is preferable to regard it, like the preceding, as denoting an inhabitant of Jattir. Uriah the Hittite [יֹרְיָהּ בֶּן־חֵיטִי, light of Jehovah]. There are thirty-one mentioned in the list, including Asabel; and these added to the two superior orders, make thirty-seven. Two of them, we know, were already dead—viz., Asabel and Uriah; and if the dead, at the drawing up of the list, amounted to seven, then we might suppose a legion of honour consisting of the definite number thirty, and in which the vacancies, when they occurred, were replaced by fresh appointments.

CHAP. XXIV. 1-9.—DAVID NUMBERS THE PEOPLE.

1. again the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he moved David, &c. "Again" carries us back to the former tokens of His wrath in the protracted famine which had severely scourged the kingdom (ch. xxi. 1); and it appears that national sin of some heinous nature still prevailed, which necessitated a renewed infliction of Divine judgments. God, though He cannot tempt any man (Jas. i. 13), is frequently described in Scripture as doing what He merely permits to be done; and so in this instance He permitted David to fall into temptation, by withholding His supporting and restraining grace. It will be observed that "he" before "moved" is improperly introduced. [יָרָא has no nominative; and as this verb signifies *stimulated, incited*, often in a bad sense, the meaning seems to be that David had been stirred up to the adoption of this measure either by the urgency of some minister, whose evil influence predominated in the privy council, or by the suggestion of some worldly and

unhallowed passion, which had acquired the ascendancy in his own breast. 2. the king said to Joab . . . Go now through all the tribes of Israel . . . and number ye the people, &c. The order was given to Joab, who, though not generally restrained by religious scruples, did not fail to represent in strong terms (see on 1 Chr. xxi. 3) the sin and danger of this measure, and used every argument to dissuade the king from his purpose. The sacred history has not mentioned the objections which he and other distinguished officers urged against it in the council of David. But it expressly states that they were all overruled by the inflexible resolution of the king.

5. they passed over Jordan. This census was taken first in the eastern parts of the Hebrew kingdom; and it would seem that Joab was accompanied by a military force, either to aid in this troublesome work or to overawe the people, who might display reluctance or opposition. the river of Gad [בְּרֵחַ הַגָּד בְּרֵחַ הַגָּד, in the midst of the torrent of Gad]—*i. e.*, the Arnon (Wady Mojib). It extends over a course estimated at about sixty miles, which, though in summer almost constantly dry, exhibits very evident traces of being swept over by an impetuous torrent in winter (see on Deut. ii. 36). and toward Jazer—or Jaazer, (Num. xxxii. 1, 3; Josh. xiii.) [Septuagint, Ἰαζωρ, a town near Gilead.] In this quarter the commissioners pitched their first encampment. 6. the land of Tahtim-hodshi. What place is meant has been a matter of various conjecture. Apparently the most literal meaning is 'low land newly acquired,' viz., that of the Hagarenes, conquered by Saul (1 Chr. v. 10). Others translate the words, 'the low land of Hodshi.' [The Septuagint has εἰς γῆν Θαβασών ἢ ἔστω Ἀδάσαι; the Alexandrine, εἰς γῆν Ἐσαων ἀδάσαι; which *Thenius* labours to render, 'into the land of Bashan, which is Edrei.' "The land of Tahtim-hodshi," says *Porter*, 'was manifestly a section of the upper valley of the Jordan, probably that now called *Ard el-Hulëh*, lying deep down at the western base of Hermon.' The progress, after landing in Moab, was northward to Gilead, then from Gilead to the land of Tahtim-hodshi to Dan-jaan. Thence they crossed the country to Zidon, and proceeding along the western

- 9 And Joab gave up the sum of the number of the people unto the king: and there were in Israel eight hundred thousand valiant men that drew the sword; and the men of Judah were five hundred thousand men.
- 10 And David's heart smote him after that he had numbered the people. And David said unto the LORD, I have sinned greatly in that I have done: and now, I beseech thee, O LORD, take away the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very foolishly. For when David was up in the morning, the word of the LORD came unto the prophet Gad, David's seer, saying, Go and say unto David, Thus saith the LORD, I offer thee three things; choose thee one of them, that I may do it unto thee. So Gad came to David, and told him, and said unto him, Shall seven years of famine come unto thee in thy land? or wilt thou flee three months before thine enemies, while they pursue thee? or that there be three days' pestilence in thy land? Now advise, and see what answer I shall return to him that sent me. And David said unto Gad, I am in a great strait:

B. C. 1017.

i 1 Chr. 21. 5.
 j 1 Sam. 24. 5.
 Pro. 18. 14.
 k ch. 12. 13.
 l 1 Chr. 21. 8.
 m 1 Sam. 13. 13.
 n 1 Sam. 22. 5.
 o 1 Sam. 9. 9.
 p 1 Chr 21. 12.
 That is,
 three years
 and the
 present
 added to
 those men-
 tioned,
 ch. 21. 1.

coast to the Gibeonite cities, then to the southern extremities of the kingdom, they at length arrived in Jerusalem, having completed the census of ten tribes (for Levi and Benjamin were not numbered (1 Chr. xxi. 6), and all persons under twenty years were omitted) in the space of nine months and twenty days. 9. Joab gave up the sum of the number of the people unto the king. The amount here stated, compared with 1 Chr. xxi. 5, gives a difference of 300,000. The discrepancy is only apparent, and admits of an easy reconciliation; thus (see 1 Chr. xxvii.) there were twelve divisions of generals, who commanded monthly, and whose duty was to keep guard on the royal person, each having a body of troops consisting of 24,000 men, which together formed an army of 288,000; and as a separate detachment of 12,000 was attendant on the twelve princes of the twelve tribes mentioned in the same chapter, so both are equal to 300,000. These were not reckoned in this book, because they were in the actual service of the king as a regular militia. But 1 Chr. xxi. 5 joins them to the rest, saying, "all those of Israel were one million one hundred thousand;" whereas the author of Samuel, who reckons only the eight hundred thousand, does not say, "all those of Israel," but barely, "and Israel were," &c. It must also be observed that, exclusive of the troops before mentioned, there was an army of observation on the frontiers of the Philistines' country, composed of 30,000 men, as appears by ch. vi. 1; which, it seems, were included in the number of 500,000 of the people of Judah by the author of Samuel; but the author of Chronicles, who mentions only 470,000, gives the number of that tribe exclusive of those 30,000 men, because they were not all of the tribe of Judah, and therefore does not say, "all those of Judah," as he had said, "all those of Israel," but only, "and those of Judah." Thus both accounts may be reconciled (*Davidson*).

10-14.—HE, HAVING THREE PLAGUES PROPOSED BY GAD, REPENTS, AND CHOOSES THREE DAYS' PESTILENCE.

10. David's heart smote him . . . And David said unto the Lord, I have sinned, &c. The act of numbering the people was not in itself sinful; for Moses did it twice, by the express authority of God. But David acted not only independently of such order or sanction, but from motives unworthy of the delegated king of Israel, and even inconsistent with constitutional principles—from pride and vain glory, from self-confidence and distrust of God, and, above all, from ambitious designs of conquest, in furtherance of which he

was determined to force the people into military service, and to ascertain whether he could muster an army sufficient for the magnitude of the enterprises he contemplated. It was a breach of the constitution, an infringement of the liberties of the people, and opposed to that divine policy which required that Israel should continue a separate people (*Michaelis*, 'Commentary,' vol. iii., pp. 22, 23). *Josephus* ('Antiquities,' b. vii., ch. xiii., sec. 1) mentions an additional element in the sin of David at numbering the people—viz., that he neglected a divine statute which had expressly ordered that if the multitude were numbered, a poll-tax of half a shekel should be levied on every individual for the sanctuary (Exod. xxx. 12). It is very doubtful, however, how far this statement of *Josephus* is correct; for there is reason to believe that the impost of the half shekel was required only at the first census, to help the contributions for the erection of the tabernacle; and besides, if this tax had been continued in after-times, so that it became David's duty to levy it at this new enumeration, it may be reasonably thought that he would require it. At all events, the silence of the historian is no proof that it was omitted or neglected. David's eyes were not opened to the heinousness of his sin till God had spoken unto him by His commissioned prophet. 11. The word of the Lord came unto the prophet Gad . . . saying . . . 12. Thus saith the Lord, I offer thee three things, &c. In the instances of Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, and others, effectual means were taken to humble their pride. They would doubtless have preferred any other means of punishment than that which was inflicted; but the choice was not permitted to them, as to David. Observe the difference of the two cases, and why a choice was in this latter instance granted. Before David was thus permitted to choose, or the Lord had announced by the seer what the three judgments were to be, he had himself turned to the Lord, and said, "Now, I beseech thee, do away the iniquity of thy servant, for I have done foolishly." He had already seen his error, he had repented of it, and turned again humbly to his God, and a choice was then in mercy granted to him. 14. David said . . . I am in a great strait. Well might he say so; for the chastisement was bitter in the extreme. Seven years of famine, three years of war, or three days of pestilence were the fearful alternatives set before him. They were all directly and eminently calculated to humble his pride and to diminish that confidence in human power and resources which had been the origin and mainspring of his

- let us fall now into the hand of the LORD; ² for his mercies are ⁵ great: and ² let me not fall into the hand of man.
- 15 So ¹ the LORD sent a pestilence upon Israel, from the morning even to the time appointed: and there died of the people from Dan even to Beer-sheba seventy thousand men. And when the ⁴ angel stretched out his hand upon Jerusalem to destroy it, ¹ the LORD repented him of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed the people, It is enough; stay now thine hand. And the angel of the LORD was by the threshing-place of
- 17 ¹ Araunah the Jebusite. And David spake unto the LORD, when he saw the angel that smote the people, and said, Lo, ¹ I have sinned, and I have done wickedly: but these sheep, what have they done? Let thine hand, I pray thee, be against me, and against my father's house.
- 18 And Gad came that day to David, and said unto him, ¹⁰ Go up, rear an altar unto the LORD in the threshing-floor of ⁶ Araunah the Jebusite.
- 19 And David, according to the saying of Gad, went up, as the LORD
- 20 commanded. And Araunah looked, and saw the king and his servants coming on toward him: and Araunah went out, and bowed himself before
- 21 the king on his face upon the ground. And Araunah said, Wherefore is my lord the king come to his servant? ² And David said, To buy the threshing-floor of thee, to build an altar unto the LORD, that the ³ plague
- 22 may be stayed from the people. And Araunah said unto David, Let my

B. C. 1017.

^p Ps. 103, 8.
 Ps. 119, 166.
 Isa. 55, 7.
 Jon. 4, 2.
 Mic. 7, 18.
⁵ Or, many.
⁹ 2 Ki. 13, 3-7.
 Isa. 47, 6.
 Zech. 1, 15.
¹ 1 Chr. 21, 14.
 1 Chr. 27, 24.
 Isa. 37, 33.
⁵ Ex. 12, 23.
 Ps. 104, 4.
¹ Ps. 78, 33.
 Jer. 18, 5-10.
 Joel 2, 13.
 Jon. 3, 10.
¹¹ 1 Chr. 21, 15.
 Ornan.
¹¹ 1 Chr. 21, 17.
¹¹ 1 Chr. 21, 15.
⁶ Araniah.
² Gen. 23, 8.
^v Num. 16, 43.

sinful policy. let us fall now into the hands of the LORD. An overwhelming sense of his sin led him to acquiesce in the punishment denounced, notwithstanding its apparent excess of severity. He proceeded on a good principle in choosing the pestilence. In pestilence he was equally exposed, as it was just and right he should be, to danger as his people, whereas in war and famine he possessed means of protection far superior to them. Besides, he thereby showed his trust, founded on long experience, in the Divine goodness.

15-25.—DAVID'S INTERCESSION WITH GOD—THE PLAGUE CEASES.

15. So the LORD sent a pestilence upon Israel, from the morning even to the time appointed—rather that morning, when Gad came, till the end of the three days. and there died of the people, from Dan even to Beer-sheba, seventy thousand men. What an awful panic must have prevailed throughout the land! What a dreadful agony must David have endured during these horrible three days and nights! The whole land was converted into a vast lazaret. Thus, by the sad removal of such multitudes of his subjects in all grades of society, was the pride of the self-willed and vain-glorious monarch, confiding in the extent of his population, deeply humbled. 16. And when the angel stretched out his hand upon Jerusalem to destroy it. The pestilence seems to have broken out at the opposite extremities of the country, and to have advanced with gigantic strides from all points, till it was ready to concentrate its violence upon Jerusalem. The LORD repented him of the evil. God is often described in Scripture as repenting, when He ceases to pursue a course he had begun. said to the angel that destroyed the people, It is enough; stay now thine hand. This destroying angel was hovering over mount Moriah, and brandishing his deadly sword over the inhabitants in the metropolis below, when the order to stay his hand was issued by the LORD. Such an apparition must have been a terrific spectacle. There are some who resolve this narrative into a strong and highly poetical description of an awful plague, which was with so fearful rapidity mowing down the people, and who maintain that "the angel of the LORD" is

like the Homeric figure of Apollo discharging his arrows upon the Greeks, when a pestilence broke out among them. But the introduction of a bold poetical figure into a narrative of plain, unvarnished prose is most improbable; and the mention of the "angel of the LORD," as an intelligent superhuman agent, while it is consistent with the general style of the Divine procedure in the ancient Church, is so much in keeping with the rest of this striking record that no one could doubt the reality of his interposition, whose mind was not warped by a preconceived theory against all occurrences contrary to the ordinary course of nature. But it is alleged by others that it was a popular belief amongst the Hebrews that angels presided over certain diseases; and hence it became common to speak of a particular malady, especially if it was of a malignant nature, as "the angel of the LORD." But this notion about the angels became prevalent after the captivity; and not a shadow of evidence can be adduced to prove that it was held by them in the early days of David. It was derived from their foreign conquerors, and imported into Palestine on their return from the captivity, (see further on 1 Chr. xxi.) 17. David spake (or, had said) . . . I have sinned . . . but these sheep, what have they done? The guilt of numbering the people lay exclusively with David. But in the body politic as well as natural, when the head suffers, all the members suffer along with it; and, besides, although David's sin was its immediate cause, the great increase of national offences at this time had (*v.* 1) kindled the anger of the LORD.

18. Araunah—or Ornan (1 Chr. xxi. 18), the Jebusite, one of the ancient inhabitants, who, having apparently become a convert to the true religion, retained his house and possessions. He resided on mount Moriah, the spot on which the temple was afterwards built (2 Chr. iii. 1); but that mount was not then enclosed. 21. To buy the threshing-floor of thee, to build an altar unto the LORD, that the plague may be stayed from the people. It is evident that the plague was not stayed till after the altar was built and the sacrifice offered; so that what is related, *v.* 16, was by anticipation. Previous to the offering of

lord the king take and offer up what *seemeth* good unto him: ^abehold, *here be* oxen for burnt sacrifice, and threshing instruments and *other* instruments of the oxen for wood. All these *things* did Araunah, as a king, give unto the king. And Araunah said unto the king, The LORD thy God accept ^bthee. And the king said unto Araunah, Nay; but I will surely buy *it* of thee at a price: neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the LORD my God of that which doth cost me nothing. So ^bDavid bought the threshing-floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver. And David built ^cthere an altar unto the LORD, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. So the LORD was entreated for the land, and the plague was stayed from Israel.

B C. 10 7.
^a 1 Ki. 19. 21.
^a Ps. 20. 3.
 Ps. 119. 108.
 Eze 20. 40.
 1 Pet. 2. 5.
^b 1 Chr. 21. 24.
 1 Chr. 22. 1.
^c Which became the site of the Temple.
 1 Chr. 22. 1.

this sacrifice, he had seen the destroying angel, as well as offered the intercessory prayer (v. 17). This was a sacrifice of expiation; and the reason why he was allowed to offer it on mount Moriah was partly in gracious consideration to his fear of reparing to Gibeon (1 Chr. xxi. 29, 30), and partly in anticipation of the removal of the tabernacle, and the erection of the temple there (2 Chr. iii. 1).
 23. All these things did Araunah, as a king [אֲרָאֻנָה מֶלֶךְ]—Araunah the king; probably the hereditary chief of the ancient Jebusites. Araunah said unto the king, The Lord thy God accept thee. The conduct of Araunah not only evinces a generous disposition and deep sympathy with David and his people in the alarming crisis, but this expression of his pious wishes creates a presumption that he had become a proselyte to the faith. 24. Nay; but I will surely buy it of thee at a price. The sum mentioned here—viz., fifty shekels of silver, equal to £5 sterling—was paid for the floor, oxen, and wood instruments only; whereas the large sum, 1 Chr. xxi. 25, was paid afterwards for the whole hill on which David made preparations for building the temple. 25. David . . . offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. There seems to have been two sacrifices,—the first expiatory, the second a thanksgiving for the cessation of the pestilence (see on 1 Chr. xxi. 26). Burnt offerings might be offered without a priest anywhere; and although it may appear probable, from some passages of Scripture (1 Sam. xi. 15), as well as the present, that peace offerings might be offered by non-Levitical Israelites, yet

when these passages are fully examined, they do not support such a conclusion. [In that which is under review, the Septuagint contains a remarkable addition at the end of v. 25, immediately after "peace offerings:" *Και προσέθηκε Σαλωμών ἐπὶ τὸ ἑπταστήριον ἐπ' ἐσχάτῳ, ὅτι μικρὸν ἦν ἐν πρῶτοις*—And Solomon added to the altar at last, because it was small at first.] 'It is possible that the first part of this verse, as given in the Septuagint, may be parenthetical, and refer to the subsequent fixing of the sacrifices there. Yet it is certain, from the fuller account in the Book of Chronicles, that when David perceived that the Lord accepted his offering, he understood that this was to be the place which had been intended for fixing the worship, and therefore he may have had less scruple in departing from the usual rule. For my own part, I incline to the belief that the offering of the peace offering refers to David's fixing the worship there from that time forward, and, as the Septuagint adds, Solomon's continuing it. But although others may not so understand the passage, yet it is beyond controversy that the peace offering could never have been *complete* unless God's portion were offered to Him at His own dwelling. It may be that it was allowable in the private peace offerings for the worshipper to eat his part there, and afterwards send God's portion to the tabernacle. And at any rate this, the only well-decided instance of making the peace offering away from the sanctuary, was at that place where henceforward the peace offerings were always to be made' ('Israel after the Flesh,' p. 145).

THE
FIRST BOOK OF THE KINGS,

COMMONLY CALLED,
THE THIRD BOOK OF THE KINGS.

1 **N**OW king David was old and ¹stricken in years; and they covered
2 him with clothes, but he gat no heat. Wherefore his servants said
unto him, ²Let there be sought for my lord the king ³a young virgin;
and ⁴let her stand before the king, and let her ⁴cherish him, and let her
3 lie in thy bosom, that my lord the king may get heat. So they sought
for a fair damsel throughout all the coasts of Israel, and found Abishag
4 a Shunammite, and brought her to the king. And the damsel *was*
very fair, and cherished the king, and ministered to him: but the king
knew her not.
5 Then Adonijah the son of Haggith exalted himself, saying, I will ⁵be
king: and he prepared him chariots and horsemen, and fifty men to run
6 before him. And his father had not displeased him ⁶at any time in
saying, Why hast thou done so? and he also *was a* very goodly man;
7 and *his mother* bare him after Absalom. And ⁷he conferred with Joab
the son of Zeruiah, and with Abiathar the priest: and they ⁸following
8 Adonijah helped *him*. But Zadok the priest, and Benaiah the son of

B C. 1015.
CHAP. I.
1 entered
into days.
2 Let them
seek
3 a damsel, a
virgin.
4 1 Sam. 16. 21.
4 be a
cherisher
unto him.
5 re'gn
6 from his
days.
7 his words
were with
Joab.
8 helped
after
Adonijah.

CHAP. I. 1-4.—ABISHAG CHERISHES DAVID IN HIS EXTREME AGE.

1. Now king David was old. He was in the seventieth year of his age (2 Sam. v. 4, 5); but the wear and tear of a military life, bodily fatigue, and mental care, had prematurely, if we may say it, exhausted the energies of David's strong constitution (1 Sam. xvi. 12). In modern Palestine and Egypt the people, owing to the heat of the climate, sleep each in a *separate* bed. They only depart from this practice for medical reasons (Ecl. iv. 11). The expedient recommended by David's physicians is the regimen prescribed in similar cases still in the East, particularly among the Arab population, not simply to give heat, but to "cherish," as they are aware that the inhalation of young breath will give new life and vigour to the worn-out frame. The fact of the health of the young and healthier person being as it were stolen, to support that of the more aged and sickly, is well established among the medical faculty. And hence the prescription for the aged king was made in a hygeian point of view, for the prolongation of his valuable life, and not merely for the comfort to be derived from the natural warmth imparted to his withered frame ('Tent and Khan,' p. 108). The polygamy of the age and country may account for the introduction of this practice; and it is evident that Abishag was made a concubine or secondary wife to David (see on ch. ii. 22). 3. a Shunammite. Shunem, in the tribe of Issachar (Josh. xix. 18), lay on an eminence in the plain of Esdraelon, five miles south of Tabor. It is now called Sulam.

5-31.—ADONIJAH USURPS THE KINGDOM.

5. Then Adonijah the son of Haggith exalted himself. Nothing is said as to the origin or rank of Haggith, so that it is probable she was not distinguished by family descent. Adonijah, though David's fourth son (2 Sam. iii. 4; 1 Chr. iii. 2), was now the eldest alive; and his personal attractions and manners (cf. 1 Sam. ix. 2) not only

recommended him to the leading men about court, but made him the favourite of his father, who, though seeing him assume an equipage becoming only the heir-presumptive to the throne (2 Sam. xv. 1), said nothing, and his silence was considered by many, as well as by Adonijah, to be equivalent to an expression of consent. It was one of the characteristic weaknesses of David to be doatingly fond of, and culpably indulgent to, his children. To such an excess did he carry his paternal affection, as to be blind to their faults, and never durst rebuke their delinquencies. 6. his father had not displeased him [כָּבַד, had pained, grieved him; Septuagint, ἀπενώλησε, prevented, challenged him] at any time [לֹא מָצָא, from his days, all his life (cf. 1 Sam. xxv. 28; Job xxxviii. 12). and his mother bare him after Absalom. This supplement by our translators is apt to convey the impression that the same wife bore both. But Maachah, not Haggith, was the mother of Absalom (2 Sam. iii. 3). It should be, and as for him (David), begat him after Absalom. The sinking health of the king prompted him to take a decisive step in furtherance of his ambitious designs. 7. he conferred with Joab. The anxiety of Adonijah to secure the influence of a leader so bold, enterprising, and popular with the army, was natural; and the accession of the hoary commander is easily accounted for from his recent grudge at the king (see on 1 Sam. xix. 13). and with Abiathar the priest. His influence was as great over the priests and Levites—a powerful body in the kingdom—as that of Joab over the troops. It might be that both of them thought that the crown belonged to Adonijah by right of primogeniture, from his mature age, and the general expectations of the people (ch. ii. 15). 8. But Zadok the priest. He had been high priest in the tabernacle at Gibeon under Saul (1 Chr. xvi. 39). David, on his accession, had conjoined him and Abiathar equal in the exercise of their high functions (2 Sam.

Jehoiada, and Nathan the prophet, and ^bShimei, and Rei, and ^cthe 9 mighty men which *belonged* to David, were not with Adonijah. And Adonijah slew sheep and oxen and fat cattle by the stone of Zohelath, which *is* by ⁹En-rogel, and called all his brethren the king's sons, and 10 all the men of Judah the king's servants: but Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah, and the mighty men, and Solomon his brother, he called not.

11 Wherefore Nathan spake unto Bath-sheba the mother of Solomon, saying, Hast thou not heard that Adonijah the son of Haggith ^adoth 12 reign, and David our lord knoweth *it* not? Now therefore come, let me, I pray thee, give ^ethee counsel, that thou mayest save thine own life, and 13 the life of thy son Solomon. Go and get thee in unto king David, and say unto him, Didst not thou, my lord, O king, swear unto thine handmaid, saying, ^fAssuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he 14 shall sit upon my throne? why then doth Adonijah reign? Behold, while thou yet talkest there with the king, I also will come in after thee, and ¹⁰confirm thy words.

15 And Bath-sheba went in unto the king into the chamber: and the king was very old; and Abishag the Shunammite ministered unto the king.

16 And Bath-sheba bowed, and did obeisance unto the king. And the king 17 said, ¹¹What wouldst thou? And she said unto him, ⁹My lord, thou swarest by the LORD thy God unto thine handmaid, *saying*, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne: 18 and now, behold, Adonijah reigneth; and now, my lord the king, thou 19 knowest *it* not: and he hath slain oxen and fat cattle and sheep in abundance, and hath called all the sons of the king, and Abiathar the priest, and Joab the captain of the host: but Solomon thy servant hath 20 he not called. And thou, my lord, O king, the eyes of all Israel *are* upon

B. C. 1015.
^b ch 4. 18.
^c 2 Sam 23.8, 39.
 1 Chr. 11.10-47.
⁹ Or, the fuller's well.
 2 Sam. 17.17.
^d 2 Sam. 3. 4.
^e Pro. 11. 14.
 1 Ro. 12. 15.
 Pro. 15. 22.
 Pro. 17. 2.
 Pro. 20. 15, 22.
 1 Ro 21. 6
 Pro 27. 9.
^f Deut. 17.18.
 1 Chr. 22. 9.
 1 Chr 23. 5.
 1 Chr.29.23.
 1's. 132. 11, 12.
 Isa. 9. 7.
 Jer. 33. 21.
 Luke 1. 32, 33.
¹⁰ fill up.
¹¹ What to thee?
⁹ Gen. 18. 12
 Eph. 5. 31.
 1 Pet. 3. 6.

viii. 17; xv. 24; xxix. 35). But it is extremely probable that some cause of jealousy or discord between them had arisen, and hence each lent his countenance and support to opposite parties. Benaiah—distinguished for his bravery (1 Sam. xxiii. 20). He had been appointed captain of the king's body-guard (2 Sam. viii. 18; xx. 23; 1 Chr. xviii. 17), and was regarded by Joab as a rival. Nathan the prophet—was held in high estimation by David, and stood on the most intimate relations with the royal family (2 Sam. xii. 25). Shimei—probably the person of this name who was afterwards enrolled among Solomon's great officers (ch. iv. 18). Rei—supposed to be the same as Ira (2 Sam. xx. 26). and the mighty men—the select band of worthies. 9. En-rogel—now Bir-ayub, or the well of Joab, at the foot of Ophel, situated (Josh. xv. 7-10: see on 2 Sam. xvii. 17) east of Jerusalem, in a level place beyond Siloam, just below the junction of the valley of Hinnom with that of Jehoshaphat. It is a very deep well, measuring 125 feet in depth: the water is sweet, but not very cold, and it is at times quite full to overflowing. The Orientals are fond of enjoying festive repasts in the open air, at places which command the advantage of shade, water, and verdure; and those *fêtes champêtres* are not cold collations, but magnificent entertainments, the animals being killed and dressed on the spot. Adonijah's feast at En-rogel was one of this Oriental description, and it was on a large scale (2 Sam. iii. 4, 5; v. 14-16; 1 Chr. xiv. 1-7). by the stone Zohelath—stone of the serpent. Large and peculiar stones are distinguished by names in the East, and this one was probably so called from its long and twisted shape. At the accession of a new king there were sacrifices offered (1 Sam. xi. 15). But on such an occasion it was no less customary to entertain the grandees of the kingdom,

and even the populace, in a public manner (1 Chr. xii. 23-40). There is the strongest probability that Adonijah's feast was purely political, to court popularity, and secure a party to support his claim to the crown.

11. Nathan spake unto Bath-sheba. . . 12. let me . . . give thee counsel, &c. The revolt was defeated by this prophet, who, knowing the Lord's will (2 Sam. vii. 12; 1 Chr. xxii. 9), felt himself bound, in accordance with his character and office, to take the lead in seeing it executed. Hitherto the succession of the Hebrew monarchy had not been settled. The Lord had reserved to Himself the right of nomination (Deut. xvii. 15), which was acted upon in the appointments both of Saul and David; and in the case of the latter the rule was so far modified that his posterity were guaranteed the perpetual possession of the sovereignty (2 Sam. vii. 12). This divine purpose was known throughout the kingdom; but no intimation had been made as to whether the right of inheritance was to belong to the eldest son. Adonijah, in common with the people generally, expected that this natural arrangement should be followed in the Hebrew kingdom as in all others. Nathan, who was aware of the old king's solemn promise to Solomon, and, moreover, that this promise was sanctioned by the Divine will, saw that no time was to be lost. Fearing the effects of too sudden excitement in the king's feeble state, he arranged that Bath-sheba should go first to inform him of what was being transacted without the walls, and that himself should follow to confirm her statement. The narrative here not only exhibits the vivid picture of a scene within the interior of a palace, but gives the impression that a great deal of Oriental state ceremonial had been established in the Hebrew court.

20. And thou, my lord, O king [פָּנָי], and thou;

thee, that thou shouldst tell them who shall sit on the throne of my lord
 21 the king after him. Otherwise it shall come to pass, when my lord the
 king shall ¹²sleep with his fathers, that I and my son Solomon shall be
 counted ¹³offenders.

22 And, lo, while she yet talked with the king, Nathan the prophet also
 23 came in. And they told the king, saying, Behold Nathan the prophet.
 And when he was come in before the king, he bowed himself before the
 24 king with his face to the ground. And Nathan said, My lord, O king,
 hast thou said, Adonijah shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my
 25 throne? For he is gone down this day, and hath slain oxen and fat cattle
 and sheep in abundance, and hath called all the king's sons, and the
 captains of the host, and Abiathar the priest; and, behold, they eat and
 26 drink before him, and say, ¹⁴God save king Adonijah. But me, *even* me
 thy servant, and Zadok the priest, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and
 27 thy servant Solomon, hath he not called. Is this thing done by my lord
 the king, and thou hast not showed *it* unto thy servant, who should sit
 on the throne of my lord the king after him?

28 Then king David answered and said, Call me Bath-sheba. And she
 29 came ¹⁵into the king's presence, and stood before the king. And the
 king sware, and said, ¹⁶As the LORD liveth, that ¹⁷hath redeemed my soul
 30 out of all distress, even as I sware unto thee by the LORD God of Israel,
 saying, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit
 31 upon my throne in my stead; even so will I certainly do this day. Then
 Bath-sheba bowed with *her* face to the earth, and did reverence to the
 king, and said, ¹⁸Let my lord king David live for ever.

32 And king David said, Call me Zadok the priest, and Nathan the
 prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada. And they came before the
 33 king. The king also said unto them, ¹⁹Take with you the servants of your
 lord, and cause Solomon my son to ride upon ²⁰mine own mule, and bring
 34 him down to ²¹Gihon: and let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet
²²anoint him there king over Israel: and ²³blow ye with the trumpet, and
 35 say, God save king Solomon. Then ye shall come up after him, that he
 may come and sit upon my throne; for he shall be king in my stead: and
 36 I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel and over Judah. And

B. C. 1015.

¹² lie down.

Deut. 31. 16

Isa 57. 2.

ch. 2. 10.

¹³ sinners.¹⁴ Let king

Adonijah

live.

1 Sam 10.

21.

¹⁵ before the

king.

¹⁶ Judg 8 19.

1 Sam 14.

39.

1 Sam 25.

31.

2 Sam. 4. 9.

2 Sam. 12. 5.

ch. 17. 1.

¹⁷ Gen. 48. 16.

Ps. 31. 19.

22

Ps. 71. 23

¹⁸ Neh 2. 3.

Dan. 2. 4.

¹⁹ 2 Sam 20. 6.²⁰ which

belongeth

to me.

Esth. 6. 8.

²¹ 2 Chr. 32. 50.²² 1 Sam. 10. 1.

1 Sam. 16. 3.

12.

2 Sam. 2. 4.

2 Sam. 5. 3.

ch. 19. 16.

2 Ki. 9. 3.

2 Ki. 11. 12.

²³ 2 Sam. 15.

10.

2 Ki. 9. 17.

2 Ki. 11. 14.

evidently a corruption for מַלְאָכִים , and now], the eyes
 of all Israel are upon thee, that thou shouldst
 tell them who shall sit on the throne. When
 the kings died without declaring their will, then
 their eldest son succeeded. But frequently they
 designated long before their death which of their
 sons should inherit the throne. The kings of
 Persia, as well as of other Eastern countries, have
 exercised the same right in modern and even
 recent times. 21. I and my son . . . shall be
 counted offenders—*i. e.*, slain, according to the
 barbarous usage of the East towards all who are
 rivals to the throne.

28. Then king David answered and said, Call
 me Bath-sheba. He renews to her the solemn
 pledge he had given, in terms, the solemnity and
 impressiveness of which show that the aged
 monarch had roused himself to the duty the
 emergency called for. The cold, stiff, and repul-
 sive etiquette of an Oriental court is strikingly re-
 presented in the narrative of these interviews with
 the aged king. First, Bath-sheba was introduced
 into the presence-chamber; she bowed and did
 obeisance. On Nathan's entranceshe withdrew, and
 then, after a brief conversation between the king
 and the prophet, orders were given to the attend-
 ants to recall Bath-sheba. On her return, Nathan
 retired. This formality, however irksome, was
 the established usage of the court.

32-49.—SOLOMON, BY DAVID'S APPOINTMENT, IS
 ANOINTED KING.

33. cause Solomon my son to ride upon mine
 own mule. Directions were forthwith given for
 the immediate coronation of Solomon. A proces-
 sion was to be formed by the 'servants of their
 lord'—*i. e.*, the king's body-guard. Mules were
 then used by all the princes (2 Sam. xiii. 29); but
 there was a state mule, of which all subjects
 were forbidden, under pain of death, to make use
 without special permission; so that its being
 granted to Solomon was a public declaration in
 his favour as the future king (see on Esth. vi. 8,
 9). bring him down to Gihon—now Siloa, or
 Siloam, a pool or fountain on the west of Jeru-
 salem (see on 2 Chr. xxxii. 30) and the valley of
 Gihon (which began a little northward of the
 Damascus gate, and extended southward to a line
 with the Jaffa gate), was chosen as equally public
 for the counter proclamation, and well adapted to
 receive a vast multitude (*Robinson's* 'Biblical
 Despatches,' iii., p. 243-245; *Barclay*, 'City of the
 Great King,' p. 513; *Thrupp*, 'Ancient Jeru-
 salem,' p. 463). 34. anoint him—done only in the
 case of a new dynasty or disputed succession (see
 on 1 Sam. xvi. 13; 2 Sam. ii. 4). 35. he may come
 and sit upon my throne. The public recognition
 of the successor to the throne during the old king's
 lifetime is accordant with the customs of the East.

Benaiah the son of Jehoiada answered the king, and said, °Amen: the
 37 LORD God of my lord the king say so too. As ^pthe LORD hath been with
 my lord the king, even so be he with Solomon, and make his throne
 greater than the throne of my lord king David.

38 So Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and ^qBenaiah the son of
 Jehoiada, and the Cherethites, and the Pelethites, went down, and caused
 Solomon to ride upon king David's mule, and brought him to Gihon.

39 And Zadok the priest took an horn of oil °out of the tabernacle, and
 °anointed Solomon. And they blew the trumpet; and 'all the people
 40 said, God save king Solomon. And all the people came up after him;
 and the people piped with ^r17 pipes, and rejoiced with great joy, so that
 the earth rent with the sound of them.

41 And Adonijah, and all the guests that *were* with him, heard *it* as they
 had made an end of eating. And when Joab heard the sound of the
 trumpet, he said, Wherefore *is this* noise of the city being in an uproar?
 42 And while he yet spake, behold, Jonathan the son of Abiathar the priest
 came: and Adonijah said unto him, Come in; for thou ^sart a valiant
 43 man, and bringest good tidings. And Jonathan answered and said to
 44 Adonijah, Verily our lord king David hath made Solomon king. And
 the king hath sent with him Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet,
 and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites, and the Pelethites,
 45 and they have caused him to ride upon the king's mule: and Zadok the
 priest and Nathan the prophet have anointed him king in Gihon: and
 they are come up from thence rejoicing, so that the city rang again.

46 This *is* the noise that ye have heard. And also Solomon ^tsitteth on the
 47 throne of the kingdom. And moreover the king's servants came to bless
 our lord king David, saying, God make the name of Solomon better
 than thy name, and make his throne greater than thy throne. °And
 48 the king bowed himself upon the bed. And also thus said the king,
 Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel, which hath ^ugiven *one* to sit on my
 throne this day, mine eyes even seeing *it*.

49 And all the guests that *were* with Adonijah were afraid, and rose up,
 50 and went every man his way. And Adonijah feared because of Solomon,
 51 and arose, and went, and ^vcaught hold on the horns of the altar. And
 it was told Solomon, saying, Behold, Adonijah feareth king Solomon:
 for, lo, he hath caught hold on the horns of the altar, saying, Let king
 Solomon swear unto me to-day that he will not slay his servant with the

B. C. 1015.
 ° Deut. 27. 16-20.
 Ps 33 9.
 1's. 72. 13.
 Jer 11. 5.
 Jer. 28. 6.
 Matt 6. 3.
 Matt 23. 20.
 P Ex. 3. 12.
 Deut. 2. 7.
 Josh. 1. 5.
 17
 1 Sam. 20. 13.
 ch 8 57.
 2 Ki 2 9.
 1 Chr 2 13.
 1 Chr 25 9.
 1's 46. 7. 11.
 Isa 8. 10.
 Isa. 41. 10.
 Matt. 1. 28.
 Rom. 8. 21.
 Heb. 13. 5.
 2 Sam. 15.
 2 Sam 23. 20-23.
 Ex. 30. 13.
 25. 31.
 Ps. 89 20.
 1 Sam 10. 1.
 1 Sam. 16. 1.
 1 Chr 29. 22.
 Ps. 89. 20.
 1 Sam 10. 24.
 17 Or.
 flutes.
 ° 2 Sam. 18. 27.
 ° 1 Chr. 29. 23.
 ° Gen. 47. 31.
 ° ch. 7. 6.
 1's. 152. 11.
 13.
 ° Ex. 21. 14.
 Ex. 38. 2.
 ch. 2. 28.

39. an horn of oil out of the tabernacle. It was the sacred oil (Exod. xxx. 22) with which the kings were anointed (see on 1 Sam. xvi. 1, 13).
 40. all the people came up after him — *i. e.*, from the valley to the citadel of Zion, through the Jaffa gate, close by the castle of David. and . . . piped with pipes. [The שָׁפָר was a pipe made of a reed, with perforations at the side.] The Hebrew pipe was probably borrowed from that of the Egyptians, being of the same form and length, and seems to have been always used by the Hebrews on all occasions of joy and festivity.

41. Adonijah . . . heard it as they had made an end of eating. The loud shouts raised by the populace at the joyous proclamation at Gihon, and echoed by assembled thousands, whose voices, carried down the valley from Zion to En-rogel, were easily heard at that distance by Adonijah and his confederates. It is even in the present day the scene of frequent festivities, and is within the range of sounds such as were made at the proclamation of Solomon's inauguration (see Stewart's 'Tent and Khan,' p. 316; Drew's 'Scripture Lands,' p. 149). The valley of Hinnom,

through which the shouts of the multitude thus rang, is little more than a mile in its circuit to the spot where Adonijah and his friends were carousing. The arrival of a trusty messenger, who gave a full detail of the coronation ceremony, spread dismay in their camp. The wicked and ambitious plot they had assembled to execute was dissipated, and every one of the conspirators consulted his safety by flight.

50-53. — ADONIJAH, FLEEING TO THE HORNS OF THE ALTAR, IS DISMISSED BY SOLOMON.

50. Adonijah . . . went, and caught hold on the horns of the altar—most probably the altar of burnt offering, which, on the removal of the ark to Jerusalem, had been erected on mount Zion, where Abiathar, one of his partisans, presided as high priest. The horns, or projections at the four corners of the altar, to which the sacrifices were bound, and which were tipped with the blood of the victim, were symbols of grace and salvation to the sinner. Hence the altar was regarded as a sanctuary (Exod. xxi. 14); but not to murderers, rebels, or deliberate perpetrators. Adonijah, having acted in opposition to the will of the reigning prince, was guilty of rebellion, and stood

52 sword. And Solomon said, If he will show himself a worthy man,
 2 there shall not an hair of him fall to the earth: ^abut if wickedness shall
 53 be found in him, he shall die. So king Solomon sent, and they brought
 him down from the altar. And he came and bowed himself to king
 Solomon: and Solomon said unto him, Go to thine house.

2 NOW ^athe days of David drew nigh that he should die; and he
 2 charged Solomon his son, saying, I ^bgo the way of all the earth: ^cbe thou
 3 strong therefore, and show thyself a man; and keep the charge of the
 LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes, and his
 commandments, and his judgments, and his testimonies, as it is written
 in the law of Moses, that thou mayest ¹prosper in all that thou doest,
 4 and whithersoever thou turnest thyself; that the LORD may ^acontinue
 his word which he spake concerning me, saying, ^cIf thy children take
 heed to their way, to walk ⁷before me in truth with all their heart and
 with all their soul, ⁹there shall not ²fail thee (said he) a man on the
 5 throne of Israel. Moreover thou knowest also what Joab the son of
 Zeruiah ^bdid to me, and what he did to the two captains of the hosts of
 Israel, unto ⁱAbner the son of Ner, and unto ^jAmasa the son of Jether,
 whom he slew, and ^sshed the blood of war in peace, and put the blood of
 war upon his girdle that *was* about his loins, and in his shoes that *were*
 6 on his feet. Do therefore ^aaccording to thy wisdom, and let not his hoar
 7 head go down to the grave in peace. But show kindness unto the sons of
 Barzillai ^tthe Gileadite, and let them be of those that ^meat at thy table:
 for so they ⁿcame to me when I fled because of Absalom thy brother.
 8 And, behold, *thou hast* with thee Shimei ^othe son of Gera, a Benjamite
 of Bahurim, which cursed me with a ⁴grievous curse in the day when I
 went to Mahanaim: but he came down to meet me at Jordan, and I
 swore to him by the LORD, saying, I will not put thee to death with the
 9 sword. Now therefore ^uhold him not guiltless: for thou *art* a wise man,

B. C. 1015.

¹ 1 Sam. 14.
 45.
² 2 Sam. 14.
 11.
 Acts 27. 31.
^a Deut. 1. 17.

CHAP. 2.
^a Gen. 3. 19.
 Gen. 47. 23.
^b Josh. 21. 14.
^c Deut. 17. 13.

¹ Or, do
 wisely.

Deut. 29. 9.
^d 2 Sam. 7. 25.

^e Ps. 132. 12.
^f 2 Ki. 20. 3.

^g 2 Sam. 7. 12.
² be cut off
 from thee

from the
 throne

^h 2 Sam. 3. 9.
ⁱ 2 Sam. 3. 27.

^j 2 Sam. 10.
 10.

³ put.

^k Pr. 20. 26.
^l 2 Sam. 11.
 31.

^m 2 Sam. 6. 7.
ⁿ 2 Sam. 17.
 27.

^o 2 Sam. 16. 5.
⁴ strong

^p Ex. 20. 7.
 Job. 9. 23.

self-condemned. Solomon spared his life on the express condition of his good behaviour, of his living in strict privacy, leading a quiet, peaceable life, and meddling with the affairs neither of the court nor the kingdom. 53. they brought him down—from the ledge around the altar on which he was standing. he . . . bowed himself—i. e., did homage to Solomon as king.

CHAP. II. 1-11.—DAVID DIES.

1. David . . . charged . . . his son. The charge recorded here was given on his deathbed to Solomon, and is different from the farewell address delivered in public some time before (1 Chr. xxviii. 29). It is introduced with great solemnity. 2. I go the way of all the earth—a beautiful and impressive periphrasis for death. be thou strong therefore, and show thyself a man. This counsel is similar to the apostolic direction, 1 Cor. xvi. 13, and refers to the fortitude or strength of mind that was required to discharge the onerous functions of king. 3. keep the charge of the Lord thy God—i. e., the divine law, in all its ceremonial as well as moral requirements. But particular reference was intended to its political institutions, as it was only by strictly maintaining the conduct that became the Hebrew monarch (Deut. xvii. 16-20) that he should secure the blessing of peace and prosperity to his reign (see on Deut. iv. 6; xxix. 9-21). 4. there shall not fail thee . . . a man on the throne of Israel—a reference to the promise made to David, of his sovereignty being vested perpetually in his lineage (2 Sam. vii. 11-16), which was confirmed to Solomon afterwards (see on ch. ix. 5), and repeated with reference to its spirital meaning long after (Jer. xxxiii. 17).

5. thou knowest also what Joab . . . did. The insolent and imperious conduct of that general had not only been deeply offensive to the feelings (2 Sam. xviii. 5-15; xix. 5-7), but calculated to bring reproach on the character, to injure the prospects, and endanger the throne, of David. Passing over the injuries committed directly against himself, David dwelt with strong feelings on the base assassination of Abner and Amasa, shed the blood of war in peace, &c. The obvious meaning is, that in peace he acted towards them as if they had been in a state of warfare; but perhaps these graphic expressions might be designed to impress Solomon's mind more strongly with a sense of the malice, treachery, and cruelty by which those murders were characterized. 6. Do therefore according to thy wisdom. Joab's immense popularity with the army required that any proceedings instituted against him should be taken with great prudence and deliberation. But that ruthless and perfidious man should be doomed to expiate his crimes by his blood. 7. show kindness unto the sons of Barzillai. The devoted loyalty of that venerable chief and his family made upon David an impression which could not be effaced by time. 8. thou hast with thee Shimei. Though David promised him a pardon, which, being enforced by the presence of a thousand followers, could not have been well refused, he warned his son against Shimei as a turbulent and dangerous character. 9. Now therefore hold him not guiltless. He has the turbulent spirit of sedition, and may be of treason; do not regard him as an innocent, harmless person. for thou art a wise man, and knowest what thou oughtest to do. I would have you to act towards him

- and knowest what thou oughtest to do unto him; but his hoar head bring thou down to the grave with blood.
- 10 So ² David slept with his fathers, and was buried in ⁷ the city of David.
- 11 And the days that David ⁸ reigned over Israel were forty years: seven years reigned he in Hebron, and thirly and three years reigned he in Jerusalem.
- 12 Then ⁹ sat Solomon upon the throne of David his father; and his

B. C. 10 5.
^a Job 14. 1.
Eccl. 12. 5.
Acts 2. 29.
^r 2 Sam. 5. 7.
^s 2 Sam. 5. 4.
^t 1 Chr. 29. 24.
^u 1 Chr. 29. 23.
^v 2 Chr. 1. 1.

according to your discretion. but his hoar head bring thou down to the grave with blood. This latter clause seems to revoke the former part of the counsel, and instead of the discretionary power with which David had at first invested his son and successor, to lay him under an obligation to put Shimei to death. But there is no real discrepancy between the two parts of the sentence, when its grammatical construction is properly attended to. 'It is not uncommon in Hebrew,' says Kennicott ('Dissertation,' p. 131), 'to omit the negative in a second part of the sentence, and to consider it as repeated, when it has been once expressed, and is followed by the connecting particle' (Ps. i. 5; ix. 13; lxxv. 5). Applying this principle, the verse before us will run thus: 'Behold, thou hast with thee Shimei, who cursed me; but I swear to him by the Lord, saying, I will not put thee to death with the sword. Now therefore hold him nor guiltless; for thou art a wise man, and knowest what thou oughtest to do, but bring nor down his hoar head to the grave with blood.' It must not be supposed that in these dying instructions David was evincing a fierce, vindictive spirit. He is rather to be considered as acting in the character of a king and magistrate, in noticing crimes which he had not been in a condition to punish, and pointing out persons of whom Solomon would be under a necessity to rid himself, as dangerous to the state. There are three different descriptions of character to whom Solomon's attention as a monarch is specially directed by his dying father. The first is Joab, who is very plainly consigned to the awards of public justice; the second is the family of Barzillai, who were entitled to the highest tokens of royal favour; and the third is Shimei, who was neither doomed to punishment nor recommended to favour, but on whom, as a dangerous character, the young king was counselled to keep a strictly vigilant eye, to steer a middle course, but observe him, and put him under a certain measure of restraint; and then, if he violated the conditions imposed on him, treat him as a malefactor. Solomon's subsequent conduct shows that this was the real spirit and purport of the parental advice. The grateful mention of Barzillai's kindness was, however, a personal feeling that does honour to the warmth of David's heart; and his silence as to Mephiboseth, the son of his beloved Jonathan, would imply the previous death of that prince. "For thou art a wise man." Solomon had given early indications of wisdom before his miraculous endowment with the heavenly gift (see on ch. iii. 11); and his own sagacity would dictate the course that should be followed in any new offence Shimei might commit.

10. So David slept with his fathers—about six months after the coronation of Solomon (cf. 2 Sam. v. 5 with 1 Chr. xxix. 27). The interval was spent in developing his ideas and plans for the future glory of the kingdom, and providing for the permanent worship of God, (see on 1 Chr. xxii., *et seq.*) and was buried in the city of David. Sepulchres were not allowed within the precincts of cities. Jerusalem, however, formed an exception; and yet even there

the privilege was reserved chiefly for the royal family (Acts ii. 29). Tradition says that the bones of David repose on mount Zion, and the minaret of a small mosque points out the spot which tradition has fixed. In the year 1853 *M. de Sauley* in his tour examined the tombs of the kings of Judah on the north side of Jerusalem, and amongst other extraordinary discoveries which he claims to have made, is that of a sarcophagus, which he brought to France, depositing it in the gallery of the Louvre, where, with matchless assumption, it is exhibited as the identical sarcophagus of king David! 11. the days that David reigned over Israel were forty years, &c. His was a noble, a wondrous, and an humbling history. He was a good man, yet his life was deformed by various crimes of a very gross character. But there were many bright and noble traits in his character. He was an earnest lover of the divine law, his reign was signalized by many important services that contributed to the glory of God and the exaltation of his kingdom, and his name, as the sweet Psalmist of Israel, will be held in honour to the latest age of the Church. But as a king of Israel, he, with all his great qualities, fell short of raising his kingdom to the influential position assigned to it in the moral and religious education of the world. 'It had been appointed that in and through the Hebrew nation all the families of the earth should be blessed; and when David had subdued his territory up to the covenanted limits, he should with this view, and in fulfilment of what he knew to be the Divine intention respecting Israel's national calling, have applied himself to consolidate his conquests. These various races, instead of being formed into one compacted people, were merely tied and joined together by a common allegiance, like the widely scattered tribes of the great kingdom-empires on the east. And instead of being rallied at some central point, where they might have all been convened in the name of their common Lord, the subjects of his vast dominion were compelled to look away to Jerusalem, which was far remote from many of them, as the metropolitan centre of their government and worship. For David still adhered to his purpose, that this should be the chief city of his territory. It was central and well fitted for its purpose when the kingdom was comprised within its former limits; but now there were many sites farther north that were far more eligible for the building of his capital, whither the tribes might have "gone up" from all sides of the consecrated land, "unto the testimony of Israel," and the selection of which might have averted the jealous enmities by which the kingdom was afterwards rent in twain' (*Drew's 'Scripture Lands,'* p. 146).

12. 24.—SOLOMON SUCCEEDS HIM.

12. Then sat Solomon upon the throne of David his father. His ascension to the royal dignity was made under the happiest auspices. Having been born after his father became monarch of the whole kingdom, his claim, according to the notions of Oriental people, was preferable to that of all, even his elder brothers. The Hebrew kingdom

13 kingdom was established greatly. And Adonijah the son of Haggith came to Bath-sheba the mother of Solomon. And she said, "Comest thou peaceably? And he said, Peaceably. He said moreover, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And she said, Say on. And he said, Thou knowest that the kingdom was mine, and that all Israel set their faces on me, that I should reign: howbeit the kingdom is turned about, and is become my brother's: for ²it was his from the LORD. And now I ask one petition of thee, ⁵deny me not. And she said unto him, Say on.

17 And he said, Speak, I pray thee, unto Solomon the king, (for he will not say thee nay,) that he give me, ²Abishag the Shunammite to wife. And Bath-sheba said, Well, I will speak for thee unto the king.

19 Bath-sheba therefore went unto king Solomon, to speak unto him for Adonijah. And the king rose up to meet her, and bowed himself ²unto her, and sat down on his throne, and caused a seat to be set for the king's mother; ³and she sat on his right hand. Then she said, I desire one small petition of thee; *I pray thee*, say me not nay. And the king said unto her, Ask on, my mother; for I will not say thee nay. And she said, Let Abishag the Shunammite be given to Adonijah thy brother to wife.

22 And king Solomon answered and said unto his mother, And why dost thou ask Abishag the Shunammite for Adonijah? ask for him the kingdom also; (for he *is* mine elder brother;) even for him, and for Abiathar ²the priest, and for Joab the son of Zeruiah. Then king Solomon swore by the LORD, saying, "God do so to me, and more also, if Adonijah have not spoken this word against his own life. Now therefore, *as* the LORD liveth, which hath established me, and set me on the throne of David my father, and who hath made me an house, as he ^bpromised, Adonijah shall be put to death this day. And king Solomon sent by the hand of Benaiah the son of Jehoiada; and he fell upon him that he died.

26 And unto Abiathar the priest said the king, Get thee to ^cAnathoth, unto thine own fields; for thou *art* ⁶worthy of death: but I will not at this time put thee to death, ^dbecause thou barest the ark of the Lord God before David my father, and because ^ethou hast been afflicted in all

B. C. 1017.
¹ 1 Sam. 16. 4.
² 1 Chr. 22. 9.
 Job 9. 12.
 Job 23. 14.
 Pro. 21. 30.
 Isa. 14. 27.
 Isa. 43. 13.
⁵ turn not away my face.
 Ps. 132. 10.
¹⁰ ch. 1. 3. 4.
² Ex. 20. 12.
 Lev. 19. 32.
 Pro. 23. 22.
 Pro. 31. 28.
⁷ Ps. 45. 9.
 Ps. 110. 1.
 Matt. 20. 21.
 Matt. 23. 33.
² ch. 1. 7.
^a Ruth 1. 17.
 1 Sam. 14. 44.
 ch. 20. 10.
 2 Ki. 6. 31.
^b 2 Sam. 7. 11.
^c Josh. 21. 15.
 Jer. 1. 1.
⁶ a man of death.
^d 1 Sam. 21. 6.
 2 Sam. 15. 24, 29.
^e 1 Sam. 22. 50.
 2 Sam. 15. 24.
 Matt. 10. 2.
 Luke 22. 28.
 Gal. 3. 4.

enjoyed internal prosperity; it was respected and renowned abroad; and Solomon well knew how to improve these advantages. 13. Adonijah . . . came to Bath-sheba. Her question to him, "Comest thou peaceably?" betrays an apprehension which his recent conduct might well warrant; but his pious acknowledgment of the Divine will seemed apparently to indicate so entire an acquiescence in the settlement of the succession, that, in her womanly simplicity, she perceived not the deep cunning and evil design that was concealed under his request, and readily undertook to promote his wishes.

19. Bath-sheba therefore went unto king Solomon. The filial reverence and the particular act of respect which Solomon rendered was quite in accordance with the sentiments and customs of the East. The right hand is the place of honour; and as it is expressly said to have been assigned to "the king's mother," it is necessary to remark, that when a husband dies, his widow acquires a higher dignity and power, as a mother over her son, than she ever possessed before. Besides, the dignity of "king's mother" is a state office, to which certain revenues are attached. The holder has a separate palace or court, as well as possesses great influence in public affairs; and as the dignity is held for life, it sometimes happens, in consequence of deaths, that the person enjoying it may not be related to the reigning sovereign by natural maternity. Bath-sheba had evidently been invested with

this honourable office. 22. why dost thou ask Abishag? . . . ask for him the kingdom also—(see on 2 Sam. xvi. 11; also on xii. 8.) Solomon's indignation was roused; he in a moment penetrated the artful scheme; and, from Adonijah's associating the names of Abiathar and Joab, he seems to have suspected or known that those deep schemers had been his prompters. 23. God do so to me, and more also. The common form of introducing a solemn-oath. Adonijah . . . spoken this word against his own life. Whether there was a treasonable design concealed under this request or not, the act, according to Eastern notions, was criminal, and of dangerous consequence to the state. There is no ground of censure upon Solomon for cruelty or precipitation in this instance. He had pardoned Adonijah's former conspiracy; but this new attempt was rebellion against the viceroy appointed by the Divine King, and called for condign punishment. The office of executioner was, among the Hebrews, as in other ancient countries of the East, performed unceremoniously and privately—often without any previous warning—by the captain of the guard, or one of his officers (Matt. xiv. 10).

26. unto Abiathar . . . said the king. This functionary, as the counsellor or accomplice of Adonijah, had deserved to share his fate. But partly from regard to his priestly dignity, and partly from his long association with the late king, Solomon pronounced on him the mitigated sentence of banishment to his country estate at

- 27 wherein my father was afflicted. So Solomon thrust out Abiathar from being priest unto the LORD; that he might fulfil ¹the word of the LORD, which he spake concerning the house of Eli in Shiloh.
- 28 Then tidings came to Joab: for Joab ²had turned after Adonijah, though he turned not after Absalom. And Joab fled unto the tabernacle
- 29 of the LORD, and caught hold on ³the horns of the altar. And it was told king Solomon that Joab was fled unto the tabernacle of the LORD; and, behold, *he is* by the altar. Then Solomon sent Benaiah the son of
- 30 Jehoiada, saying, Go, fall upon him. And Benaiah came to the tabernacle of the LORD, and said unto him, Thus saith the king, Come forth. And he said, Nay; but I will die here. And Benaiah brought the king
- 31 word again, saying, Thus said Joab, and thus he answered me. And the king said unto him, ⁴Do as he hath said, and fall upon him, and bury him; that ⁵thou mayest take away the innocent blood, which Joab
- 32 shed, from me, and from the house of my father. And the LORD ⁶shall return his blood upon his own head, who fell upon two men more righteous ⁷and better than he, and slew them with the sword, my father David not knowing *thereof, to wit,* ⁸Abner the son of Ner, captain of the host of Israel, and ⁹Amasa the son of Jether, captain of the host of
- 33 Judah. Their blood shall therefore return upon the head of Joab, and ¹⁰upon the head of his seed for ever: ¹¹but upon David, and upon his seed, and upon his house, and upon his throne, shall there be peace for ever
- 34 from the LORD. So Benaiah the son of Jehoiada went up, and fell upon him, and slew him: and he was buried in his own house in ¹²the wilderness. And the king put Benaiah the son of Jehoiada in his room over the host; and Zadok ¹³the priest did the king put in the room of Abiathar.
- 36 And the king sent and called ¹⁴for Shimei, and said unto him, ¹⁵Build thee an house in Jerusalem, and dwell there, and go not forth thence any
- 37 whither. For it shall be, *that* on the day thou goest out, and passest over ¹⁶the brook Kidron, thou shalt know for certain that thou shalt surely
- 38 die: ¹⁷thy blood shall be upon thine own head. And Shimei said unto the king, The saying *is* good: as my lord the king hath said, so will thy
- 39 servant do. And Shimei dwelt in Jerusalem many days. And it came to pass at the end of three years, that two of the servants of Shimei ran away unto ¹⁸Achish son of Maachah king of Gath: and they told Shimei,
- 40 saying, Behold, thy servants *be* in Gath. And Shimei ¹⁹arose, and saddled

B. C. 10 4.

¹ 1 Sam. 2.31.
² ch. 1. 7.
³ Ex. 21. 14.
⁴ Ex. 38. 2.
⁵ ch. 1. 50.
⁶ Ex. 21. 14.
⁷ Deut. 19. 12, 13.
⁸ Num. 35. 37.
⁹ Deut. 19. 13.
¹⁰ Judg. 9. 21.
¹¹ Ps. 7. 16.
¹² 2 Sam. 3. 27.
¹³ 2 Chr. 21. 13.
¹⁴ 2 Sam. 3. 27.
¹⁵ 2 Sam. 1. 10.
¹⁶ 2 Sam. 3. 20.
¹⁷ 1 Ro. 25. 5.
¹⁸ Isa. 9. 6, 7.
¹⁹ Isa. 1. 6.
²⁰ Jer. 13. 21, 26.
²¹ Hos. 2. 19.
²² Luke 2. 14.
²³ Rom. 5. 1.
²⁴ Phil. 4. 7.
²⁵ Josh. 15. 61.
²⁶ Matt. 3. 1.
²⁷ Num. 25. 11-13.
²⁸ 1 Sam. 2. 35.
²⁹ 1 Chr. 6. 54.
³⁰ 1 Chr. 21. 3.
³¹ 2 Sam. 16. 5.
³² 1 Ro. 1. 8.
³³ 16.
³⁴ Ro. 21. 3.
³⁵ 2 Sam. 15. 13.
³⁶ 2 Ki. 23. 6.
³⁷ John 18. 1.
³⁸ Lev. 20. 9.
³⁹ Josh. 2. 19.
⁴⁰ 2 Sam. 1. 16.
⁴¹ 1 Ze. 18. 13.
⁴² 1 Sam. 27. 2.
⁴³ 2 Ro. 15. 27.

Anathoth, about three miles distant from Jerusalem (Anáta), and thereby, as God's vicegerent in the theocratic kingdom, deprived him of his office and its emoluments, for opposing the declared will of God in the settlement of the succession (1 Chr. xxii. 9, 10; xxviii. 4, 5: cf. 2 Sam. xii. 25). The sacred writer notices the remarkable fulfilment, in Abiathar's degradation from the high priesthood (see on ch. iv. 4), of the doom denounced against the house of Eli and the ancestral house of Ithamar (1 Sam. ii. 30).

28-35.—JOAB SLAIN.

28. Then tidings came to Joab. The execution of these sentences respectively on Adonijah and Abiathar prepared Joab for his fate. Death, due to his great crimes (Num. xxxv. 33), would long ago have been inflicted had not his power and popularity with the army been too formidable for the old king. He now fled to the altar, which, though a recognized asylum, afforded no sanctuary to the rebel and murderer (Exod. xxi. 14). And, as he refused to leave it, he seems to have cherished some faint hope that a religious scruple would have been felt at the thought of violating the sanctity of the place by bloodshed. Benaiah, not liking to assume any responsibility, referred

the matter to Solomon, who determined that the law should take its course (Deut. xix. 13). 33. Their blood shall therefore return, &c. A reference is here made to the curse publicly and solemnly pronounced by king David (2 Sam. iii. 28, 29). 34. Benaiah . . . went up, and fell upon him. According to the terms of the statute (Exod. xxi. 14), and the practice in similar cases (2 Ki. xi. 15), the criminal was to be dragged from the altar and slain elsewhere. But the truth is, that the sanctity of the altar was violated as much by the violence used in forcing the criminal from the place as in shedding his blood there: the express command of God authorized the former, and therefore by implication permitted the latter. was buried in his own house—or family vault, at his property in the wilderness of Judah. His interment was included in the king's order, as enjoined in the divine law (Deut. xxi. 23).

36-46.—SHIMEI PUT TO DEATH.

36. the king sent and called for Shimei. He was probably residing at Bahurim, his native place. But, as he was a suspicious character, Solomon condemned him henceforth to live in Jerusalem, on the penalty of death for going without the gates. He submitted to this confine-

his ass, and went to Gath to Achish to seek his servants: and Shimei
 41 went, and brought his servants from Gath. And it was told Solomon
 that Shimei had gone from Jerusalem to Gath, and was come again.
 42 And the king sent and called for Shimei, and said unto him, Did I not
 make thee to ^yswear by the LORD, and protested unto thee, saying, Know
 for a certain, on the day thou goest out, and walkest abroad any whither,
 that thou shalt surely die? and thou saidst unto me, 'The word that I
 43 have heard is good. Why then hast thou not kept ^zthe oath of the LORD,
 44 and the commandment that I have charged thee with? The king said
 moreover to Shimei, Thou knowest all the wickedness which thine heart
 is privy to, that thou didst to David my father: therefore the LORD shall
 45 return ^athy wickedness upon thine own head: and king Solomon *shall be*
 blessed, and the ^bthrone of David shall be established before the LORD for
 46 ever. So the king commanded Benaiah the son of Jehoiada; which went
 out, and fell upon him, that he died. And the kingdom was established
 in the hand of Solomon.

3 AND Solomon made affinity with Pharaoh king of Egypt, and took
 Pharaoh's daughter, and brought her into the city of David, until he
 had made an end of building his own house, and the house of the LORD,
 2 and ^cthe wall of Jerusalem round about. Only ^dthe people sacrificed
 in high places, because there was no house built unto the name of the
 3 LORD, until those days. And Solomon ^eloved the LORD, walking in the
 statutes of David his father: only he sacrificed and burnt incense in
 high places.

B. C. 1011.
^y Ps. 17. 4.
 Luke 19. 22.
^z 2 Sam. 21. 2.
 Eze. 17. 18.
 19.
^a Ps. 7. 16.
 Fro. 5. 22.
 Eze. 17. 19.
 Hs. 4. 9.
^b Fro. 25. 5.
 CHAP. 3.
^c ch. 9. 15.
^d Lev. 17. 3.
 Lev. 26. 33.
 Deut. 12. 2.
 ch. 12. 43.
 2 Chr. 13. 17.
^e Deut. 6. 5.
 Deut. 10. 12.
 Deut. 11. 1.
 Deut. 31. 16.
 Ps. 31. 23.
 Ps. 145. 20.
 Matt. 22. 37.
 Mark 12. 31.
 Luke 10. 27.
 Rom. 8. 23.
 1 Cor. 8. 3.
 1 John 5. 3.
 2 John 6.

ment for three years, when, violating his oath, he was arrested and put to death by Solomon for perjury, aggravated by his former crime of high treason against David. 46. the kingdom was established in the hand of Solomon—now that, by the death of Shimei, all the leaders of the rival factions had been cut off. This episode of Shimei embraces a period of three years. The narrative having been begun, is finished, and the thread of the history is resumed, relating to some events that occurred prior in time to the death of Shimei.

CHAP. III. 1.—SOLOMON MARRIES PHARAOH'S DAUGHTER.

1. Solomon made affinity with Pharaoh. This was a royal title, equivalent to Sultan; and the personal name of this monarch is said to have been Vaphres, of the twenty-first dynasty, called the military Pontiffs, whose dominion extended to Upper Egypt, as appears from monumental inscriptions at Karnac. But *Ewald* identifies him with Psuseenes, the last king of the twenty-ninth dynasty, whose metropolis was Tanis in Lower Egypt. He is erroneously stated by *Josephus* to have been the last king of Egypt who bore the title of Pharaoh ('Antiquities,' b. viii., ch. vi., sec. 2; cf. 2 Ki. xxiii. 29; Jer. xlv. 30). The formation, on equal terms, of this matrimonial alliance with the royal family of Egypt shows the high consideration to which the Hebrew kingdom had now risen. *Rosellini* has given, from the Egyptian monuments, what is supposed to be a portrait of this princess. She was received in the land of her adoption with great eclat; for the Song of Songs and the forty-fifth Psalm are supposed to have been composed in honour of this occasion, although they may both have a higher typical reference to the introduction of the Gentiles into the Church. Assuming that they have a historical basis, they furnish evidence of the attractive and graceful appearance of Solomon's person—an important quality for Eastern monarchs—his being "fairer than the children of men" (Song v. 10-16). brought her into the city of David—

i. e., Jerusalem. She was not admissible into the stronghold of Zion, the building where the ark was (Deut. xxiii. 7, 8). She seems to have been lodged at first in his mother's apartments (Song iii. 4; viii. 2), as a suitable residence was not yet provided for her in the new palace (ch. vii. 8; ix. 24; 2 Chr. viii. 11). building . . . the wall of Jerusalem. Although David had begun (Ps. li. 18), it was, according to *Josephus* ('Antiquities,' b. viii., ch. ii., sec. 1), reserved for Solomon to extend and complete, the fortifications of the city. Her arrival in Jerusalem was previous to the finishing of the temple, which was in the eleventh year of Solomon's reign (see on ch. vi. 1, 37, 38). It has been questioned whether this marriage was in conformity with the law (see Exod. xxxiv. 16; Deut. vii. 3; Ezra x. 1-10; Neh. xiii. 26). But it is nowhere censured in Scripture, as are the connections Solomon formed with other foreigners (ch. xi. 1-3); whence it may be inferred that he had stipulated for her abandonment of idolatry, and conforming to the Jewish religion (Ps. xlv. 10, 11). At all events, the princess of Egypt was not the cause of his seduction into idolatry.

2-5.—HIGH PLACES BEING IN USE, HE SACRIFICED AT GIBEON.

3. Solomon loved the Lord. This declaration, illustrated by what follows, affords undoubted evidence of the young king's piety; nor is the word "only," which prefaces the statement, to be understood as introducing a qualifying circumstance that reflected any degree of censure upon him. The intention of the sacred historian is to describe the generally prevailing mode of worship before the temple was built. [מִזְבְּחֵי] the "high places" were altars, with (ch. xiii. 32; 2 Ki. xvii. 29) or without tabernacles, erected on natural or artificial eminences, probably from the idea that men were there ([ἐπι τοῖς ὄρηλοις] brought nearer the Deity. They had been used by the patriarchs, and had become so universal among the heathen that they were almost identified with idolatry. They were prohibited in the law (Lev. xvii. 3, 4;

4 And the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there; ^dfor that *was* the great high place: a thousand burnt offerings did Solomon offer upon
5 that altar. In ^eGibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon ^fin a dream by
6 night: and God said, Ask ^gwhat I shall give thee. And ^hSolomon said, Thou hast showed unto thy servant David my father great ⁱmercy, according as he walked before thee in truth, and in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with thee; and thou hast kept for him this great kindness, that thou hast given him a son to sit on his throne, as *it is* this
7 day. And now, O LORD my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father; ^jand *I am but a little child*: I know not *how* ^kto go out or come in. And thy servant *is* in the midst of thy people which thou ^lhast chosen, a great people, ^mthat cannot be numbered nor counted for
8 multitude. Give ⁿtherefore thy servant an ^ounderstanding heart ^pto judge thy people, that I may ^qdiscern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?
9
10 And the speech pleased the LORD, that Solomon had asked this thing.
11 And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast ^rnot asked for thyself ^slong life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding ^tto discern judgment; behold, ^uI have done according to thy words: ^vlo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like
12 unto thee. And I have also ^wgiven thee that which thou hast not asked, both ^xriches and honour: so that there ^yshall not be any among the kings
13 like unto thee all thy days. And if thou wilt walk in my ways, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as thy father David did walk, then
14 I will lengthen ^zthy days. And Solomon ^{aa}awoke; and, behold, *it was a dream*. And he came to Jerusalem, and stood before the ark of the

B. C. 1014.
^d 1 Chr. 16. 39.
^e ch. 9. 2.
^f Num. 12. 6.
^g Matt. 1. 20.
^h Matt. 2. 13.
ⁱ John 15. 7.
^j 2 Chr. 1. 8.
^k 1 Cr.
^l bounty.
^m 1 Chr. 21. 1.
ⁿ Num. 27. 17.
^o Deut. 7. 6.
^p Gen. 13. 16.
^q Gen. 15. 5.
^r 2 Chr. 1. 10.
^s hearing.
^t 1's. 72. 1.
^u Heb. 5. 14.
^v Jas. 4. 3.
^w many
^x days.
^y to hear.
^z 1 John 5. 14.
^{aa} 1 Chr. 29. 17.
^{ab} ch. 5. 12.
^{ac} ch. 10. 21.
^{ad} Eccl. 1. 16.
^{ae} Matt. 6. 33.
^{af} Eph. 3. 20.
^{ag} ch. 4. 21, 21.
^{ah} Pro. 3. 16.
^{ai} Or, hath
^{aj} not been.
^{ak} Ps. 91. 16.
^{al} Pro. 3. 2.
^{am} Gen. 41. 7.

Deut. xii. 13, 14; Jer. vii. 31; Ezek. vi. 3, 4; Hos. x. 8). But so long as the tabernacle was migratory, and the means for the national worship were merely provisional, the worship on those high places was tolerated; and hence, as accounting for their continuance, it is expressly stated (v. 2), that God had not yet chosen a permanent and exclusive place for His worship.

4. the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there [גִּבְעוֹן, a hill-city, standing on a hill (el-Jib).] The prominent distinction of this place arose from the old tabernacle and the brassen altar which Moses had made in the wilderness (1 Chr. xvi. 39; xxi. 29; 2 Chr. i. 3-6) having been removed from Nob thither, and established on the heights called Neby Samwil, Mizpeh (*Stanley*, 'Sinai and Palestine,' p. 212). That hill, which rises between 500 and 600 feet, is the highest point in all the adjoining country, and corresponds to the description גִּבְעוֹן הַגָּדוֹל, 'the great high place.' The Septuagint has ἡ ἄριστη ὄψηλοσάτη καὶ μεγάλη, because it was the highest and great one.] But it is objected to Ne'y Samwil that its distance, about a mile from Gibeon, is unfavourable to the idea of its being 'the high place,' which is more likely to have been the hill overhanging the town (*Reind.*, 'Palestina,' p. 339). Besides, it would seem that the sanctuary at Gibeon was designated "the great high place," principally, if not solely, from a comparison of it with other high places mentioned, *vv.* 2, 3; and as "high places" are said to have been in the valley of the son of Hinnom (Jer. xxxiii. 35), it is not absolutely necessary to assume that the tabernacle was upon a hill at Gibeon. The designation 'high place' was undoubtedly used at first in respect to elevation; but in course of time

it became the name of a place devoted to religious rites, whether it was on a hill or on a plain. *Josephus* erroneously represents the king as going to Hebron, instead of Gibeon ('Antiquities,' b. viii., ch. ii., sec. 1). The royal progress was of public importance. It was a season of national devotion. The king was accompanied by his principal nobility (2 Chr. i. 2); and, as the occasion was most probably one of the great annual festivals which lasted seven days, the rank of the offerer and the succession of daily oblations may help in part to account for the immense magnitude of the sacrifices. 5. In Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream. It was probably at the close of this season, when his mind had been elevated into a high state of religious fervour by the protracted services. Solomon felt an intense desire, and he had offered an earnest petition, for the gift of wisdom. In sleep his thoughts ran upon the subject of his prayer, and he dreamed that God appeared to him, and gave him the option of everything in the world, that he asked wisdom, and that God granted his request. His dream was but an imaginary repetition of his former desire; but God's grant of it was real.

6-15.—HE CHOOSES WISDOM.

6. Solomon said—*i. e.*, had dreamed that he said. 7. I am but a little child—not in age, for he had reached manhood (ch. ii. 9), and must have been at least twenty years old (*Josephus* erroneously makes him only fourteen, 'Antiquities,' b. viii., ch. vii., sec. 8); but he was raw and inexperienced in matters of government.

10. the speech pleased the Lord. It was Solomon's waking prayers that God heard and requited; but the acceptance was signified in this vision. 15. behold, it was a dream. The vivid impression, the indelible recollection he had of

- covenant of the LORD, and offered up burnt offerings, and offered peace offerings, and ¹⁰made a feast to all his servants.
- 16 Then came there two women *that were* ²harlots unto the king, and
- 17 ³stood before him. And the one woman said, O my lord, I and this woman dwell in one house; and I was delivered of a child with her
- 18 in the house. And it came to pass the third day after that I was delivered, that this woman was delivered also: and we *were* together; *there was* no stranger with us in the house, save we two in the house.
- 19 And this woman's child died in the night; because she overlaid it.
- 20 And she arose at midnight, and took my son from beside me, while thine handmaid slept, and laid it in her bosom, and laid her dead child
- 21 in my bosom. And when I arose in the morning to give my child suck, behold, it was dead: but when I had considered it in the morning,
- 22 behold, it was not my son which I did bear. And the other woman said, Nay; but the living *is* my son, and the dead *is* thy son. And this said, No; but the dead *is* thy son, and the living *is* my son. Thus they spake before the king.
- 23 Then said the king, The one saith, 'This *is* my son that liveth, and thy son *is* the dead: and the other saith, Nay; but thy son *is* the dead, and
- 24 my son *is* the living. And the king said, Bring me a sword. And they
- 25 brought a sword before the king. And the king said, Divide the living
- 26 child in two, and give half to the one, and half to the other. Then spake the woman whose the living child *was* unto the king, for ²her bowels ⁶yearned upon her son, and she said, O my lord, give her the living child, and in no wise slay it. But the other said, Let it be
- 27 neither mine nor thine, *but* divide it. Then the king answered and said, Give her the living child, and in no wise slay it: she *is* the mother thereof.
- 28 And all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had judged; and they ⁴feared the king: for they saw that ⁵the wisdom of God *was* ⁷in him to do ⁶judgment.
- 4, SO king Solomon was king over all Israel. And these *were* the princes
- 2, which he had; Azariah the son of Zadok ¹the priest; Elihoreph and

B. C. 914.

¹⁰ Gen. 31. 54.
Gen. 40. 23.
ch. 8. 65.
Esth. 1. 3.
Dan. 5. 1.
Mark 6. 21.
² Lev. 19. 23.
Deut. 23. 17.
Jo-h. 2. 1.
³ Ex. 18. 13,
16.
Num. 27. 2.
⁴ Gen. 43. 30.
Isa. 49. 15.
Jer. 31. 20.
Hos. 11. 8.
⁶ were hot
⁴ Ex. 11. 31.
Josh. 4. 14.
1 Sam. 12,
18.
1 Chr. 29. 21.
Pro. 21. 21.
⁵ Ezra 7. 25.
Ecd. 7. 19.
Isa. 11. 3.
Dan. 1. 17.
Dan. 2. 21,
47.
Dan. 5. 11.
1 Cor. 1. 24,
30.
Col. 2. 2, 3.
⁷ in the
midst of
him.
⁶ Ps. 72. 2,
4.
CHAP. 4.
¹ Or, the
chief
officer.

this dream, together with the new and increased energy communicated to his mind, and the flow of worldly prosperity that rushed upon him, gave him assurance that it came by divine inspiration, and originated in the grace of God. The wisdom, however, that was asked and obtained was not so much of the heart as the head; it was wisdom, not for himself personally, but for his office, such as would qualify him for the administration of justice, the government of a kingdom, and for the attainment of general scientific knowledge. he came to Jerusalem, and stood before the ark of the covenant. This being the first act of public worship since his accession, and he being under strong religious impressions, it was thought expedient that he should celebrate the sacred rites not only at the old tabernacle in Gibeon, but also at the provisional sanctuary in Jerusalem. and made a feast to all his servants [שָׂמֵחַ, a drinking; Septuagint, ποσων, used in a vague sense for a feast (Esth. i. 3; ii. 18; viii. 17)].

16-23.—HIS JUDGMENT BETWEEN TWO HARLOTS.

16. Then came there two women. Eastern monarchs, who generally administer justice in person—at least in all cases of difficulty—having their seat in the gate of the city (Solomon afterwards built "the porch of judgment," ch. vii. 7), often appeal to the principles of human nature when they are at a loss otherwise to find a clue to the

truth, or see clearly their way through a mass of conflicting testimony. The modern history of the East abounds with anecdotes of judicial cases in which the decision given was the result of an experiment similar to this of Solomon, upon the natural feelings of the contending parties.

CHAP. IV. 1-6.—SOLOMON'S PRINCES.

1. So king Solomon was king. This chapter contains a general description of the state and glory of the Hebrew kingdom during the flourishing and advanced years of his reign, as is evident from two of the officers mentioned marrying Solomon's daughters. 2. these were the princes—or chief officers. Azariah the son of Zadok the priest [אֶזְרִיָּהוּ]. This word *cohen*, priest, has been generally considered to be synonymous with *prince*. It is so interpreted in the Chaldee version (Gen. xli. 45; Exod. ii. 16; 2 Sam. viii. 18: cf. 1 Chr. xviii. 17; Ps. cx. 4). 'From all these passages it appears that there were priests connected with the court, partly exercising their proper functions, and partly as friends and counsellors of the sovereign, as was also often the case with prophets and priests in later times. The author of Chronicles, in the passage quoted, seems to have chosen his interpretation of the more ancient context, because priests of any other than the Levitical family were unknown to him. Hence in all the passages referred to, the signification *priest* is the only true one' (*Gesenius*). From the precedency

- 3 Ahiah, the sons of Shisha, ²scribes; "Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud, the ⁴recorder. And ⁵Benaiah the son of Jehoiada *was over the host*; and ⁵Zadok and ⁶Abiathar *were the priests*; and Azariah the son of Nathan *was over the officers*; and Zabud the son of Nathan *was principal officer*, ⁶and the king's friend; and Ahishar *was over the household*; and Adoniram the son of Abda *was over the* ⁴tribute.
- 7 And Solomon had twelve officers over all Israel, which provided victuals for the king and his household: each man his month in a year made ⁸provision. And these *are* their names: ⁵The son of Hur, in mount ⁹Ephraim: ⁶the son of Dekar, in Makaz, and in Shaalvim, and Beth-

B. C. 10⁴.

- ² Or. secretaries.
^a 2 Sam 8.16.
³ Or, remembrancer.
^b ch. 2. 35.
^c ch. 2. 27.
⁴ Or. 'evy.
⁵ Or. Ben-hur.
⁶ Or, Bendekar.

given to Azariah in this list, many commentators (as *Kül*, in loco) have concluded that he was prime minister, the highest office next the king. But there is another word used in this very passage for *princes* [כֹּהֲנִים]; and it is certain that he was the high priest (cf. 1 Chr. vi. 10). The prominence given to him in this passage arose in all probability from circumstances noticed on the last clause of v. 4. [The Alexandrine version has *δὲ ἱερεὺς* in this passage; but the Vatican has only Ἀζαρίας υἱὸς Σαδὸκῶν.] 3. **Elioreph and Ahiah** [אֶלִי־רֵפְהִי אַחִיָּה, God is his recompense; אָחִיָּה, brother—i. e., friend of Jehovah], scribes [סֹפְרִים; Septuagint, γραμματεῖς]—secretaries of state, who wrote the royal edicts. Under David there had been only one. And the employment of three functionaries in this department indicates either improved regulations by the division of labour, or a great increase of business, occasioned by the growing prosperity of the kingdom, or a more extensive correspondence with foreign countries. **recorder** [רֹשֵׁתִיב]—i. e., historiographer, or annalist; an office of great importance in Oriental courts, and the duties of which consisted in chronicling the most interesting and important occurrences of every day. 4. **Benaiah** . . . over the host. Formerly captain of the guard, he had succeeded Joab as commander of the forces. **Zadok and Abiathar were the priests**. The latter had been banished to his country seat, and retained nothing more than the name of high priest, Zadok having been promoted to the pontificate in his stead. In the course of the sacred history a double priesthood appears, the origin or cause of which arrangement is nowhere explained. Jewish writers say that the one was high priest and the other sagan, or deputy—as, according to them, Moses was of Aaron, and Annas of Caiaphas. In like manner, Zadok and Abiathar stood in the same relative position; but if there was a distinction between them, it must have been very slight, as these persons are always associated as equals in official dignity, as also were Eleazar and Ithamar, Hophni and Phinehas. The common opinion is, that Zadok had been appointed high priest by Saul, the latter by David; and that as a matter of policy both were retained as joint-pontiffs when the son of Jesse became king of all Israel. But there is no Scriptural authority for this hypothesis. Zadok is always mentioned first, the precedence being assigned to him probably on account of his belonging to the elder branch of the Aaronic house, and of the superior influence of his ancestral house; there being among the sons of Eleazar sixteen chief men, and only eight among the sons of Ithamar, for the twenty-four courses (1 Chr. xxiv. 4). As to the division of pontifical duties between them, Zadok appears to have ministered in the tabernacle at Gibeon (1 Chr. xvi. 1-7, 37-40). Abiathar took charge of the

ark at Jerusalem principally, though not exclusively (see on 2 Sam. xv. 24-29; 1 Chr. xv. 11). Abiathar must have been an old man at the time of Solomon's accession; and it is probable that owing to age and bitter mortification under the sentence of degradation, he did not long survive that public disgrace. Zadok, too, must have been advanced in life, considering that he was "a young man" when he is first mentioned as joining David's party at Ziklag (1 Chr. xii. 28), and that not a single act of his is recorded in the history of Solomon's reign. We may conclude, therefore, that though nominally the high priest, he devolved the active duties of the pontificate on his grandson Azariah (v. 2). The appointment of the high priest seems at first to have lain with the Sanhedrim or elders; but in the times of the monarchy the crown exercised the patronage. 5. **over the officers** [מְרַבֵּי]—the prefects; i. e., the provincial governors enumerated in vv. 17-19. and **Zabud** . . . was **principal officer**, and the **king's friend**—perhaps president of the privy council, and Solomon's confidential friend or favourite (cf. 2 Sam. xv. 37). This high functionary had probably been reared along with Solomon. That he should heap those honours on the sons of Nathan was most natural, considering the close intimacy of their father with the late king, and the deep obligations under which Solomon personally lay to the prophet. 6. **over the household**—steward or chamberlain of the palace (cf. Isa. xxii. 15), whose duties embraced a supervision of the arrangement and expenditure, including probably that of the royal harem. **Adoniram**—or **Adoram** (2 Sam. xx. 24; ch. xii. 18), or **Hadoram** (2 Chr. x. 18). **was over the tribute** [מְרַבֵּי]—the tribute service (see on ch. ix. 21). Not the collection of money or goods, but the levy of compulsory labourers (cf. ch. v. 13, 14).

7-21.—HIS TWELVE OFFICERS.

7. **twelve officers over all Israel**. The royal revenues were raised according to the ancient, and still in many parts existing, usage of the East, not in money payments, but in the produce of the soil. There would be always a considerable difficulty in the collection and transmission of these tithes (1 Sam. viii. 15); and therefore, to facilitate the work, Solomon appointed twelve officers, who had each the charge of a tribe or particular district of country, from which, in monthly rotation, the supplies for the maintenance of the king's household were drawn, having first been deposited in 'the store cities' which were erected for their reception (ch. ix. 19; 2 Chr. viii. iv. 6). 8. **The son of Hur**—or, as the margin has it, *Ben-hur*. 9. **The son of Dekar**—margin, *Bendekar*. In the rural parts of Syria, and among the Arabs, it is still common to designate persons not by their own names, but as the sons of their fathers. **Shaalvim** (Josh. xix. 42)—*Shaalabbin*.

10 shemesh, and Elon-beth-hanan: ⁷the son of Hesed, in Aruboth; to him
 11 *pertained* Sochoh, and all the land of Hopher: ⁸the son of Abinadab, in
 all the region of Dor; which had Taphath the daughter of Solomon to
 12 wife: Baana the son of Ahilud; to him *pertained* Taanach and Megiddo,
 and all Beth-shean, which is by Zartanah beneath Jezreel, from Beth-
 13 shean to Abel-meholah, *even* unto the place that is beyond Jokneam: ⁹the
 son of Geber, in Ramoth-gilead; to him *pertained* ^athe towns of Jair the
 son of Manasseh, which are in Gilead; to him also *pertained* ^ethe region
 of Argob, which is in Bashan, threescore great cities with walls and brasen
 14 bars: Ahinadab the son of Iddo had ¹⁰Mahanaim: Ahimaaz was in
 15 Naphtali; he also took Basmath the daughter of Solomon to wife:
 16 Baanah the son of Hushai was in Asher and in Aloth: Jehoshaphat the
 18, son of Paruah in Issachar: Shimei the son of Elah in Benjamin: Geber
 19 the son of Uri was in the country of Gilead, in ^jthe country of Sihon
 king of the Amorites, and of Og king of Bashan; and he was the only
 officer which was in the land.
 20 Judah and Israel were many, ^gas the sand which is by the sea in
 21 multitude, eating ^band drinking, and making merry. And Solomon
 reigned over all kingdoms from ⁱthe river unto the land of the Philistines,
 and unto the border of Egypt: they brought presents, and served Solomon
 all the days of his life.
 22 And Solomon's ¹¹provision for one day was thirty ¹²measures of fine
 23 flour, and threescore measures of meal, ten fat oxen, and twenty oxen out
 of the pastures, and an hundred sheep, beside harts, and roebucks, and
 24 fallow deer, and fatted fowl. For he had dominion over all the region
 on this side the river, from Tiphseh even ^jto Azzah, over all the kings on
 25 this side the river: and he had peace on all sides round about him. And
 Judah and Israel ^kdwelt ¹³safely, every man under his vine and under his
 fig tree, from Dan even to Beer-sheba, all the days of Solomon.
 26 And Solomon had forty thousand stalls of ^lhorses for his chariots, and

B C 10 4.

⁷ Or, Ben-hesed.
⁸ Or, Ben-abinadab.
⁹ Or, Ben-geber.
^a Num. 32 41.
^e Deut. 3. 4.
^j Or, to Mahanaim.
^j Deut. 3. 8.
^v Gen. 2. 17.
 Pro. 14. 28.
^h 1 Sam. 30. 16.
 Ps 72 3.
 Mic 4. 4.
ⁱ Gen. 15. 15.
 Josh 1. 4.
^l br-ad.
¹² cors.
 A cor is about 75 gallons.
^j Gen. 10. 19.
^k Deut 31 28, 29.
 2 Ki. 18. 1.
 Isa. 60. 18.
 Jer 13. 6.
 Mic. 4. 4.
 Zech 3. 10.
¹³ con-
 fidently.
^l Deut. 17. 6.
 ch. 10. 25.
 2 Cl r. 9 25.
 Ps. 20. 7.

Beth-shemesh—(see on 1 Sam. vi. 12, 20.) 10. The son of Hesed—or Ben-hesed. Sochoh—(see on Josh. xv. 37.) all the land of Hopher—(see on Josh. xii. 17; xvii. 2.) 11. The son of Abinadab—or Ben-abinadab. Dor—(see on Josh. xii. 23; xvii. 11; Judg. i. 27.) 12. Taanach—(see on Josh. xvii. 11; Judg. v. 19.) and Megiddo—(see on 2 Ki. i. 23, 29, 30.) and all Beth-shean—(see on 1 Sam. xxxi. 10, 12.) which is by Zartanah—(ch. vii. 46, Zartan.) beneath Jezreel—(ch. xviii. 40.) Abel-meholah—(ch. xix. 16.) 13. The son of Geber—or Ben-geber. in Ramoth-gilead—(ch. xxii. 3; Deut. iv. 43; Josh. xx. 8; xxi. 38.) the towns of Jair—(Num. xxxii. 41; Deut. iii. 14.) Argob—(see on Deut. iii. 4-8, 13, 14.) 15. Ahimaaz—probably a native of Naphtali; at all events, a different person from the son of Zadok of that name (2 Sam. xvii. 17).

21. Solomon reigned over all kingdoms from the river. All the petty kingdoms between the Euphrates and the Mediterranean, which are always mentioned in the Pentateuch as the extreme limits of the kingdom, were tributary to him. Similar is the statement in v. 24.

22. Solomon's provision for one day—not for the king's table only, but for all connected with the court, including, besides the royal establishment, those of his royal consorts, his principal officers, his body-guards, his foreign visitors, &c. The quantity of fine flour used is estimated at 240 bushels; that of meal, or common flour, at 480. The number of cattle required for consumption, besides poultry and several kinds of game, which were got in abundance on the mountains, did not exceed in proportion what is needed in other

courts of the East. It may serve to illustrate this statement to quote *Morier's* account of the household provision of the king of Persia in the present day ("Second Journey through Persia"):—"The provisions collected for the king were brought from different parts of the country; and the allowance, like the provision made for Solomon, was calculated daily at so many *manus*, or measures, and consisted of fine flour, distinct from the common, on purpose for the king's use; and meal, besides provisions of meat, poultry, and game. Barley and straw in large quantities were laid up for the cattle. These are the two articles of food principally used for that purpose in the present, as in the most ancient times (cf. v. 23, 28). 23. fatted fowl [פִּתְרָיִם]. *Kimchi* thinks capons are meant, but more probably geese. 24. from Tiphseh—i. e., Thapsaeus, a large and flourishing town on the west bank of the Euphrates, the name of which was derived from a celebrated ford near it, the lowest on that river. even to Azzah—i. e., Gaza, on the south-western extremity, not far from the Mediterranean. This period is a splendid parenthesis in the historic page of Israel. 25. every man under his vine and . . . fig tree. This is a common and beautiful metaphor for peace and security (Mic. iv. 4; Zech. iii. 10), founded on the practice, still common in modern Syria, of training these fruit trees up the walls and stairs of houses, so as to make a shady arbour, beneath which the people sit and recreate themselves.

26. forty thousand stalls [רִבְעֵי אַלְפֵי]—perhaps pairs of horses for the royal mews (see on 2 Chr. i.

27 twelve thousand horsemen. And those officers provided victual for king Solomon, and for all that came unto king Solomon's table, every man in 28 his month: they lacked nothing. Barley also and straw for the horses and ¹⁴dromedaries brought they unto the place where the officers were, every man according to his charge.

29 And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, 30 and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea-shore. And Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children ^mof the east 31 country, and all ⁿthe wisdom of Egypt. For he was wiser than all men; ^othan Ethan the Ezrahite, ^pand Heman, and Chalcol, and Darda, the sons 32 of Mahol: and his fame was in all nations round about. And ^qhe spake 33 three thousand proverbs: and his ^rsongs were a thousand and five. And he spake of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall: he spake also of beasts, and of 34 fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes. And ^sthere came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom.

5 AND Hiram king of Tyre sent his servants unto Solomon; for he had heard that they had anointed him king in the room of his father: ^tfor 2 Hiram was ever a lover of David. And ^uSolomon sent to Hiram, saying, 3 Thou knowest how that David my father could ^vnot build an house unto the name of the LORD his God, ^wfor the wars which were about him on

B. C. 1044.
¹⁴ Or, mules, or, swift beasts.
 Esth 8. 11.
 Mic 1. 13.
^m Gen. 25. 6.
 Job 4. 38.
 Dan 4. 7.
 Matt. 2. 1.
ⁿ Acts 7. 22.
^o 1 Chr. 15. 19.
 Ps. 89.
 title.
^p 1 Chr. 6. 33.
^q Fro 1. 1.
 Eccl. 12. 9.
^r Song 1. 1.
^s ch. 10. 1.
 2 Chr. 9. 1.
 Isa. 2. 2.
 Isa. 53. 5.
 CHAP. 5.
^t 2 Sam 5. 11.
 Amos 1. 9.
^u 2 Chr. 2. 3.
^v 2 Sam. 7. 5.
^w 1 Chr. 22. 8.

14-17; ix. 25). The word, according to *Gesenius*, denotes a certain number, which usually stood in one stall, or were harnessed to one vehicle—probably two. [The Hebrews applied עֲרִיָּוִת to chariot horses, and רִכְשִׁים to riding horses: so that the passage is rendered by the great lexicographer, 'And Solomon had forty thousand pairs of horses for his chariots, and twelve thousand steeds'—*i. e.*, for riding.] The Hebrew kings were forbidden to multiply horses (Deut. xvii. 16). 'The nation was concerned in this matter. But there is not even a hint dropped that Solomon was wrong; and he certainly was not personally punished for it. Whereas transgressing as ruler and representative of the nation, the sin was national, and so was the punishment, which is evident from the history, although not expressed in words. For, before Solomon's time, the nation, with no war horses, were singularly fortunate in battle; yet after his time, when they had a cavalry, they were as remarkably unfortunate' (see *Michaelis*, 'Commentary,' Appendix to article 166; 'Israel after the Flesh,' p. 112; *Rawlinson's* 'Herodotus,' ii., p. 178). 28. Barley also and straw. Straw is not used for litter, but barley mixed with chopped straw is the usual fodder of horses. dromedaries—the one-humped camels, distinguished for their great fleetness.

29-34.—HIS WISDOM.
 29. wisdom and understanding. . . and largeness of heart—*i. e.*, high powers of mind, great capacity for receiving, as well as aptitude for communicating, knowledge. 30. the children of the east—*i. e.*, the Arabians, Chaldeans, and Persians (Gen. xxv. 6). all the wisdom of Egypt. Egypt was renowned as the seat of learning and sciences; and the existing monuments, which so clearly describe the ancient state of society and the arts, show the high cultivation of the Egyptian people (see *Wilkinson's* 'Ancient Egyptians,' ii., p. 23). 31. wiser than all men—*i. e.*, all his contemporaries, either at home or abroad. than Ethan—or Jeduthun, of the family of Merari (1 Chr. vi. 44). Heman (1 Chr. xv. 17-19)—the chief of the temple musicians, and the king's seers (1 Chr. xxv. 5); the other two are not known. the sons

of Mahol—either another name for Zerah (1 Chr. ii. 6) or, taking it as a common noun, signifying a dance, a chorus; "the sons of Mahol" signify persons eminently skilled in poetry and music. The regions south of Palestine, and bordering upon Egypt, were very celebrated for the sages who resided there; and even the Temanites in Idumæa were distinguished in this respect (Jer. xlix. 7; Obad. 8). In fact, the whole spirit of refinement proceeded from the south. The wise woman employed by Joab was brought from Tekoah (2 Sam. xiv. 2); and the celebrated sages mentioned here (cf. 1 Chr. ii. 6) belonged to the tribe of Judah. 32. three thousand proverbs—embodying his moral sentiments and sage observations on human life and character. songs were a thousand and five. [The Septuagint, translating from a copy in which the *tau*, and, was omitted, or from the smallness of the letter *tau* overlooked, rendered it, 'and his songs were πεντακισχίλια, five thousand.] Ps. lxxii., cxxvii., cxxxii., and the Song of Songs, are his. 33. he spake of trees, from the cedar . . . unto the hyssop [חִיָּוִת]—the hyssop, called by the Arabs sahtary; the wild marjoram, an aromatic plant of the labiate order, loving a dry and rocky soil, and often seen growing up in the midst of old ruins (see *Munk's* 'Palestine'). But *Hasselquist* supposed that the reference is to a species of moss, *Gymnostomum fasciculare*, which grows still on the shady parts of the walls of Jerusalem. The meaning is, that his works comprehended a description of all plants, from the greatest to the least. The Spirit of God has seen fit to preserve comparatively few memorials of the fruits of his gigantic mind. The greater part of those here ascribed to him have long since fallen a prey to the ravages of time, or perished in the Babylonish captivity, probably because they were not inspired.

CHAP. V. 1-6.—HIRAM SENDS TO CONGRATULATE SOLOMON.

1. Hiram . . . sent his servants unto Solomon. This Hiram was the grandson of David's contemporary (*Kitto*). He was the same Hiram, according to *Winer* and others. The friendly relations which the king of Tyre had cultivated with David are

- 4 every side, until the LORD put them under the soles of his feet. But now the LORD my God hath given me ⁶rest on every side, *so that there is*
- 5 neither adversary nor evil occurrent. And, ⁷behold, I ¹purpose to build an house unto the name of the LORD my God, as ⁹the LORD spake unto David my father, saying, Thy son, whom I will set upon thy throne in thy room, he shall build an house unto my name. Now therefore command thou that they hew me ^hcedar trees out of Lebanon; and my servants shall be with thy servants: and unto thee will I give hire for thy servants according to all that thou shalt ²appoint: for thou knowest that *there is* not among us any that can skill to hew timber like unto the ¹Sidonians.
- 7 And it came to pass, when Hiram heard the words of Solomon, that he rejoiced greatly, and said, Blessed *be* the LORD this day, which hath given unto David a wise son over this great people. And Hiram sent to Solomon, saying, I have ³considered the things which thou sentest to me for: *and* I will do all thy desire concerning timber of cedar, and concerning

B. C. 1014.

⁶ 1 Chr. 22. 9.

Ps. 73. 7.

Isa. 9. 7.

Matt. 11. 28-

:0.

^f 2 Chr. 2. 4.

Zech. 6. 12.

13.

¹ say.⁷ 2 Sam. 7. 13.

1 Chr. 22. 10.

^h ch. 6. 9, 10.

16:0.

² Chr. 2. 8.² say.ⁱ Ezra 3. 7.

Eze 27. 5.

³ heard.

here seen renewed with his son and successor, by a message of condolence, as well as of congratulation on his accession to the throne of Israel. The alliance between the two nations had been mutually beneficial by the encouragement of useful traffic. Israel, being agricultural, furnished corn and oil, while the Tyrians, who were a commercial people, gave in exchange their Phœnician manufactures, as well as the produce of foreign lands. A special treaty was now entered into in furtherance of that undertaking which was the great work of Solomon's splendid and peaceful reign. Solomon speaks of his having been destined by divine pre-ordination to be the builder of the temple (cf. with *v. 5*, 1 Chr. xxii. 9; 2 Chr. vi. 7). **6. command thou that they hew me cedar trees out of Lebanon** [עֲרֵבָי]—trees very like deal in appearance, but their peculiar scent and great durability show them to be very superior to firs. [עֲרֵבָי, a name expressing the firmness of its roots, was the *Cedrus conferta*, a very tall and wide-spreading tree.] Nowhere else could Solomon have procured materials for the woodwork of his contemplated building. The forests of Lebanon, adjoining the sea in Solomon's time, belonged to the Phœnicians, and the timber being a lucrative branch of their exports, immense numbers of workmen were constantly employed in the felling of trees, as well as the transportation and preparation of the wood. It is, however, the opinion of some that the cedars pointed to by Solomon lay within his own dominions (see *Stanley*, 'Sinai and Palestine,' p. 139, note). **my servants shall be with thy servants.** The operations were to be on so extensive a scale that the Tyrians alone would be insufficient. A division of labour was necessary; and while the former would do the work that required skilful artisans, Solomon engaged to supply the labourers. **thou knowest that there is not among us any that can skill to hew timber like unto the Sidonians.** *Josephus* ('Antiquities,' b. xv., ch. iv., sec. 1) says that although Sidon and Tyre were appropriated to the tribe of Asher, 'they were, from their ancestors, free cities.' The Sidonians were, as *Strabo* informs us, distinguished for their attainments in philosophy, geometry, astronomy, navigation—in short, in all sciences and arts (see *Rawlinson's* 'Herodotus,' ii., p. 178; *Hooker*, p. 153; *Bartlett's* 'Pilgrimage,' p. 37). Hiram stipulated to furnish Solomon with as large a quantity of cedars and cypresses as he might require; and it was a great additional obligation that he engaged to render the important service of having it brought down, probably by the Dog River, to the sea-side, and conveyed along the

coast in floats—i. e., the logs being bound together—to the harbour of Joppa (2 Chr. ii. 16), whence they could easily find the means of transport to Jerusalem.

7-12.—FURNISHES TIMBER TO BUILD THE TEMPLE.

7. Blessed be the Lord. This language is no decisive evidence that Hiram was a worshipper of the true God, as he might use it only on the polytheistic principle of acknowledging Jehovah as the God of the Hebrews (see on 2 Chr. ii. 12). At the same time, it must be mentioned that they were accustomed, doubtless from a spirit of religion, to join the name of God to their own, conformably to the genius of the Hebrews, (*Bochart*, lib. ii., cap. xvi.) **8. I have considered the things . . . and I will do.** The contract was drawn out formally in a written document (2 Chr. ii. 11), which, according to *Josephus*, was preserved both in the Jewish and Tyrian records. No hint is given that either of the letters was translated; and hence it is inferred that, like the Canaanites, the Tyrians, as well as Carthaginians, spoke the Hebrew tongue, or at least a language related to the Hebrew. In consequence of the labour of carrying wood so far to the sea-coast, some have supposed that the cedars of old could not have been brought down from that part of the Lebanon where they are now found, and have now concluded that they formerly grew in the vicinity of the sea-shore; but the name of Lebanon (white), or, as it is now called, Lubnon, having been given to the mountain from its 'white summit,' shows that it was from the immediate vicinity of the snowy mountain that the trees were obtained; and 'the mountain-loving cedar,' as it was called by the ancients, is never described as growing on the hills near the shore. Nor can it be doubted that the Eden of Ezekiel (ch. xxxi. 16-18), which he mentions in connection with the old cedars, is represented by the present village of Eden, close to which the celebrated grove now stands; and when we recollect to what immense distances the ancients carried most ponderous blocks of stone, we can scarcely doubt that, if necessary, the timber for sacred and royal buildings would be conveyed from the most distant parts of that mountain to the shore. The labour, however great, would not have deterred them; and though *Diodorus* (xix., 38) says that Ptolemy employed 1,000 beasts of burden to carry wood from the Lebanon for shipbuilding purposes, that mode of transport may not have been adopted on all occasions; and any one who has witnessed the conveyance of timber by means of the rapid torrents

- 9 timber of fir. My servants shall bring *them* down from Lebanon ^junto the sea; ^kand I will convey them by sea in floats unto the place that thou shalt ^lappoint me, and will cause them to be discharged there, and thou shalt receive *them*: and thou shalt accomplish my desire, ^min giving food for my household.
- 10 So Hiram gave Solomon cedar trees and fir trees, *according to* all his
- 11 desire. And ⁿSolomon gave Hiram twenty thousand ^omeasures of wheat for food to his household, and ^ptwenty measures of pure oil: thus gave
- 12 Solomon to Hiram year by year. And the LORD gave Solomon wisdom, as ^qhe promised him: and there was peace between Hiram and Solomon; and they two made a league together.
- 13 And king Solomon raised a ^rlevy out of all Israel; and the levy was
- 14 thirty thousand men. And he sent them to Lebanon, ten thousand a month by courses; a month they were in Lebanon, *and* two months at
- 15 home: and ^sAdoniram was over the levy. And Solomon had threescore and ten thousand that bare burdens, and fourscore thousand hewers in
- 16 the mountains; besides the chief of Solomon's officers which *were* over the work, three thousand and three hundred, which ruled over the people
- 17 that wrought in the work. And the king commanded, and they brought great stones, costly stones, *and* hewed stones, to lay the foundation of the
- 18 house. And Solomon's builders and Hiram's builders did *hew them*, and the ^tstone-squarers: so they prepared timber and stones to build the house.
- 6 AND it came to pass, in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year

B. C. 1011.

^j Judg. 3. 5.
ch. 9. 20.
21.
^k 2 Chr. 2. 13.
^l send.
^m Ezra 3. 7.
Eze. 27. 17.
Ac's 12. 29.
ⁿ 2 Chr. 2. 0.
^o cors.
That is,
about
42,500
bols
^p About 1500
gallons,
wine
measures.
^q ch. 3. 14.
^r 2 Chr. 1. 12.
Jas. 1. 5.
^s tribute of
men.
^t ch. 12. 13.
^u 2 Chr. 2. 17.
18.
^v 1 Chr. 22. 2.
^w Cr Gib-
lites
Eze. 27. 9.

of the Alps and other mountainous regions, will at once perceive, on visiting the neighbouring Wady Kadeesha (the 'Holy Valley'), how easily they might have availed themselves of its powerful stream, after the melting of the snows, for conveying the timber to the coast near Tripoli, where it was formed into rafts, and floated to Jaffa (Joppa) by the Tyrians and 'Sidonians' (Ezra iii. 7: cf. *Josephus*, 'Antiquities,' b. iii., ch. v., sec. 3); and the Hebrew word which we translate in 1 Ki. v. 9, "shall bring," may also apply to the act of bringing down by water; being used in Joel ii. 23, in the sentence, "cause rain" to come down 'by or for you;' and the very name of the Jordan is derived from the same word 'vered,' to descend or 'flow' (Extract from Letter, 'Athenæum,' 1863). *Josephus* ('Antiquities,' b. viii., ch. ii., sec. 8) says that copies of these letters were preserved in his day in the public records of Tyre.

10. fir trees—rather, the cypress. 11. food to his household. This was an annual supply for the palace, different from that mentioned in 2 Chr. ii. 10, which was for the workmen in the forests.

13-18.—SOLOMON'S WORKMEN AND LABOURERS.

13. Solomon raised a levy out of all Israel [עַרְוָה]—(see on ch. iv. 6, last clause.) The renewed notice of Solomon's divine gift of wisdom (v. 12) is evidently introduced to prepare for this record of the strong but prudent measures he took towards the accomplishment of his work. So great a stretch of arbitrary power as is implied in this compulsory levy must have raised great discontent, if not opposition, had not his wise arrangement of letting the labourers remain at home two months out of three, added to the sacredness of the work, reconciled the people to this forced labour. The carriage of burdens and the irksome work of excavating the quarries was assigned to the remnant of the Canaanites (ch. ix. 20; 2 Chr. viii. 7-9) and war-prisoners made by David, amounting to 153,600. The employment of persons of that condition in Eastern countries for carrying on any

public work would make this part of the arrangements the less thought of. 17. brought great stones. The stone of Lebanon is 'hard, calcareous, whitish, and sonorous, like freestone' (*Shaw*). The same white and beautiful stone is to be got in every part of Syria and Palestine. hewed stones—or neatly polished, as the Hebrew word signifies (Exod. xx. 25). Both Jewish and Tyrian builders were employed in hewing these great stones. 18. and the stone-squarers. The margin, which renders it 'the Giblites' (Josh. xiii. 5), has long been considered a preferable translation. This marginal translation also must yield to another which has lately been proposed, by a slight change in the Hebrew text, and which would be rendered thus: 'Solomon's builders and Hiram's builders did hew them and bevel them' (*Thenius*). These great bevelled or grooved stones, measuring some twenty, others thirty feet in length, and from five to six feet in breadth, are still seen in the substructures about the ancient site of the temple; and in the judgment of the most competent observers, were those originally employed 'to lay the foundation of the house.' *Josephus* ('Antiquities,' b. viii., ch. ii., sec. 9) says that king Solomon ordered large stones for the foundation of the temple to be hewn, and that they should be prepared and united, and then removed to the city. [The Septuagint adds, *καὶ ἠτοίμασαν τοὺς λίθους καὶ ξύλα τρία ἔτη*, and they spent three years in preparing the stones and the timber.]

CHAP. VI. 1-4.—THE BUILDING OF SOLOMON'S TEMPLE

1. And it came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt. This statement involves a question of great chronological difficulty. As to the evidence for the authenticity of this opening clause, and the two systems of chronology, called the long and the short, that have been adopted for the events that preceded the great national undertaking of Solomon, the

of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month Zif, which is the second¹ month, that he² began to build the house of the LORD.

2 And the house which king Solomon built for the LORD, the length thereof was threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof twenty cubits, and

3 the height thereof thirty cubits. And the porch before the temple of the house, twenty cubits was the length thereof, according to the breadth of the house; and ten cubits was the breadth thereof before the house.

4, And for the house he made³ windows of narrow lights. And⁴ against

5 the wall of the house he built⁵ chambers round about, against the walls of the house round about, both of the temple and of the⁶ oracle: and he

6 made⁷ chambers round about. The nethermost chamber was five cubits broad, and the middle was six cubits broad, and the third was seven cubits broad: for without in the wall of the house he made narrowed rests round about, that the beams should not be fastened in the walls of

7 the house. And the house, when it was in building, was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither: so that there was neither hammer nor ax nor any tool of iron heard in the house while it was in

8 building. The door for the middle chamber was in the right side of the

B. C 1014.

CHAP. 6.

1 Of the sacred year: about the end of April.

2 built.

3 Or, windows broad within, and narrow without: or, skewed and closed.

4 Or, upon, or, joining to.

5 floors.

6 Or, Holy of holies.

7 ribs.

reader is referred to the Introduction, in which the subject is fully considered. in the fourth year of Solomon . . . in the month Zif, which is the second month . . . he began to build the house of the Lord [זִיִּף]—*lit.*, he built; rather, he laid the foundations of the house of the Lord (cf. 2 Chr. iii. 1). "Zif"—May.

2. the house which king Solomon built for the Lord. The dimensions are given in cubits, which are to be reckoned according to the early standard (2 Chr. iii. 3), or holy cubit (Ezek. xl. 5; xliii. 13), a handbreadth longer than the common or later one (see on 2 Chr. iii. 4). 3. the porch—or portico, extended across the whole front (see on 2 Chr. iii. 4). The design of the porch, which was four times the height of the temple, was chiefly to serve as an ornament to the edifice. The view from its elevated top is said to have been very extensive—to the Mediterranean on one side, and to the Dead Sea on another, up the course of the Jordan, and over Arabia. 4. windows of narrow lights [צַדְיִיִּם חַלְזֵי אֵשׁ]—apertures with fixed bars, or closed lattices; *i. e.*, the bars or lattices being inserted in the walls, or the beams could not be opened and shut at pleasure. They were necessary, partly to let out the vapour of the lamps, the smoke of the frankincense, and partly to give light. [The Septuagint has, καὶ ἐποίησε τῶ ὀκτῶ θυρίδας παρακωντιζόμενας κρυπτάς, and he made concealed windows (holes), incurved within—*i. e.*, windows narrow without and wide within (Song ii. 9; Ezek. xl. 16-26, 41)].

5-10.—THE CHAMBERS THEREOF.

5. against the wall of the house he built chambers round about. The number of these chambers is not stated. Ezekiel (ch. xli. 6) in his visionary temple places thirty; and Jewish writers say this was the number in Solomon's temple. On three sides there were chambers—*i. e.*, corridors or galleries, in three storeys, each storey wider than the one beneath it, as the walls were narrowed or made thinner as they ascended, by a rebate being made, on which the beams of the side floor rested, without penetrating the walls. Josephus ('Antiquities,' b. viii., ch. iii., sec. 2) says that each of these side rooms was twenty cubits in height; otherwise there must have been a long unoccupied space between the lower chamber and that above it, with double floors, the

one six cubits distance from the floor beneath it. These chambers were approached from the right-hand side, in the interior of the under storey, by a winding staircase of stone, which led to the middle and upper storeys. of the temple [הַיְיָ]—the palace or temple of Jehovah, here used for that part of it which intervened between the entrance and the most holy place [Septuagint, τῶ ναῶ, the nave], and of the oracle [הַיְיָ]—the adytum, or inner sanctuary; called "the oracle" from its being the place where, on the erection of the temple, divine responses were given. [The Septuagint retains the original term, τῶ δαβίῳ; Vulgate, oraculum (cf. ch. viii. 6; 2 Chr. iv. 20).] 'From the particular way in which it is mentioned in these passages, there appears to be no ground for the opinion of Hales ('Analysis of Sacred Chronology,' ii., p. 210) and others, that this mode of revelation absolutely ceased after the construction of Solomon's temple. The very fact of its being then first mentioned under the name "oracle" implies that supernatural responses still continued to be given; though, in consequence of the institution of the prophetic order which had recently taken place, they were in all probability employed only on extraordinary emergencies, such as the death or absence of any of these accredited messengers of God, on which occasions it was found necessary to consult His will in this particular way. It must be observed, however, that it was only to the high priest for the time being that the peculiar honour was conceded of receiving these oracular communications' (Henderson, 'On Inspiration,' p. 73). 7. there was neither hammer, nor ax, nor any tool of iron heard in the house. A subterranean quarry has been very recently discovered near Jerusalem, where the temple stones are supposed to have been hewn. There is unequivocal evidence to be found in this quarry that the stones were dressed there, for there are blocks exactly similar in size, as well as in the nature of the stone, to the ancient remains. Thence probably they would be moved on rollers down the Tyropean valley to the very side of the temple. The discovery of the great quarry under Bezetha has shown that these immense stones were excavated, hewn, and fully prepared on the spot, whence they were conveyed on trucks or on rollers down the gently-inclined plane to the site chosen for the temple. {See a full and graphic

house: and they went up with winding stairs into the middle chamber, 9 and out of the middle into the third. So he built the house, and finished 10 it; and covered the house ⁸with beams and boards of cedar. And then he built chambers against all the house, five cubits high: and they rested on the house with timber of cedar.

11, And the word of the LORD came to Solomon, saying, *Concerning this* 12 house which thou art in building, if thou wilt walk in my statutes, and execute my judgments, and keep all my commandments to walk in them; then will I perform my word with thee, which I spake unto David thy 13 father: and ^a"I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will not ^bfor- 14 sake my people Israel. So Solomon built the house, and finished it.

15 And he built the walls of the house within with boards of cedar, ⁹both the floor of the house, and the walls of the ceiling: and he covered them on the inside with wood, and covered the floor of the house with planks 16 of fir. And he built twenty cubits on the sides of the house, both the floor and the walls with boards of cedar: he even built them for it within, 17 even for the oracle, even for the ^cmost holy place. And the house, that 18 is, the temple before it, was forty cubits long. And the cedar of the house within was carved with ¹⁰knops and ¹¹open flowers: all was cedar; 19 there was no stone seen. And the oracle he prepared in the house within, 20 to ^dset there the ark of the covenant of the LORD. And the oracle in the fore part was twenty cubits in length, and twenty cubits in breadth, and twenty cubits in the height thereof: and he overlaid it with ¹²pure gold; 21 and so covered the altar which was of cedar. So Solomon overlaid the house within with pure gold: and he made a partition by the chains of 22 gold before the oracle; and he overlaid it with gold. And the whole house he overlaid with gold, until he had finished all the house: also ^ethe whole altar that was by the oracle he overlaid with gold.

23 And within the oracle ^fhe made two cherubim of ¹³olive tree, each ten

B. C. 1005.

⁸ Or, the vault beams and the ceilings with cedar
^a 2 Cor. 6. 16. Eze. 37. 26. Heb. 3. 6. Rev. 21. 3.
^b Deut. 31. 6. Heb. 13. 5.
⁹ Or, from the floor of the house unto the walls, etc. and so, ver. 16.
^c Lev. 16. 2. Num. 18. 10. ch. 8. 6.
¹⁰ Or, gourds.
¹¹ openings of flowers.
^d Ex. 40. 21. ch. 8. 6-10.
¹² shut up
^e Ex. 30. 1.
^f Ex. 37. 7-9.
 2 Chr. 3. 10-12.
 1 Pet. 1. 12.
¹³ trees of oil, or, oily trees.

narrative of it in *Barclay's* 'City of the Great King,' pp. 118, 458-468; *Drew's* 'Scripture Lands,' p. 152, note; *Dupin's* 'Holy Places,' *Porter's* 'Handbook,' pp. 112-132, 265-267; *Tent and Khan*, pp. 273, 274).

^aNo workman's steel, no ponderous axes rang.
 Like some tall palm the noiseless fabric sprang.'

9. built the house. The temple is here distinguished from the wings or chambers attached to it, and its roofing was of cedar wood. 10. chambers . . . five cubits high. That was the height of the whole three storeys. they rested on the house with timber of cedar—i. e., because the beams of the side stones rested on the ledges of the temple wall; the wing was attached to the house; it was connected with the temple, without, however, interfering injuriously with the sanctuary (*Keil*). [FXX, floor, or chamber, is feminine (v. 6), where it is used in regard to single storeys; but in v. 5, 10, it is masculine, and is put collectively for the entire portion of the edifice.] *Josephus*, followed by many modern writers on the Temple, represents these storeys as of equal height with that of the temple; but that is at variance with the tenor of the sacred text (see *Gesenius*, 'Lexicon,' sub voce).

11-14.—GOD'S PROMISES UNTO IT.

11. the word of the Lord came to Solomon—probably by a prophet. It was very seasonable, being designed, first, To encourage him to go on with the building, by confirming anew the promise made to his father David (2 Sam. vii.); and secondly, To warn him against the pride and presumption of supposing that, after the erection of so magnifi-

cent a temple, he and his people would always be sure of the presence and favour of God. The condition on which that blessing could alone be expected was expressly stated. The dwelling of God among the children of Israel refers to those symbols of His presence in the temple which were the visible tokens of His spiritual relation to that people.

15-22.—THE CEILING AND ADORNING OF IT.

15. he built the walls of the house within. It is probable that the walls were only wainscoted with cedar wood, the floor paved with cypress planks (see 'Nineveh and its Remains,' ii., p. 264, note; also *Wilkinson's* 'Ancient Egyptians,' ii., p. 125); the interior was divided by a partition, consisting of folding doors, which were opened and shut with golden chains, into two apartments: the back, or inner room, i. e., the most holy place, was twenty cubits long and broad; the front, or outer room, i. e., the holy place, was forty cubits. The cedar wood was beautifully embellished with figures in relief, representing clusters of foliage and open flowers, cherubim, and palm trees; and the whole interior was overlaid with gold, so that neither wood nor stone was seen; nothing met the eye but gold, either plain or richly chased. 17. the house, that is, the temple before it, was forty cubits long—from east to west; i. e., from the porch to the oracle. 20. the oracle in the fore part was twenty cubits in length, &c. It was a perfect cube. 21. he made a partition by the chains of gold before the oracle—i. e., to hang the veil upon them.

23. within the oracle he made two cherubim of olive tree. [The Septuagint (Alexandrine) has *ξύλων κυπριαίων*, cypress wood, overlaid with

- 24 cubits high. And five cubits *was* the one wing of the cherub, and five cubits the other wing of the cherub: from the uttermost part of the one
- 25 wing unto the uttermost part of the other *were* ten cubits. And the other cherub *was* ten cubits: both the cherubim *were* of one measure and
- 26 one size. The height of the one cherub *was* ten cubits, and so *was it of*
- 27 the other cherub. And he set the cherubim within the inner house: and ¹⁴they stretched forth the wings of the cherubim, so that the wing of the one touched the *one* wall, and the wing of the other cherub touched the other wall; and their wings touched one another in the midst of the house.
- 28 And he overlaid the cherubim with gold.
- 29 And he carved all the walls of the house round about with carved figures of cherubim and palm trees and ¹⁵open flowers, within and without.
- 30 And the floor of the house he overlaid with gold, within and without.
- 31 And for the ⁹entering of the oracle he made doors of olive tree: the
- 32 lintel *and* side posts *were* ¹⁶a fifth part of the wall. The ¹⁷two doors also *were* of olive tree; and he carved upon them carvings of cherubim and palm trees and ¹⁸open flowers, and overlaid *them* with gold, and spread
- 33 gold upon the cherubim, and upon the palm trees. So also made he for the door of the temple posts of olive tree, ¹⁹a fourth part of the wall.
- 34 And the two doors *were* of fir tree: the two ²⁰leaves of the one door *were*
- 35 folding, and the two leaves of the other door *were* folding. And he carved *thereon* cherubim and palm trees and open flowers; and covered
- 36 *them* with gold fitted upon the carved work. And he built the inner court with three rows of hewed stone, and a row of cedar beams.
- 37 In the fourth year was the foundation of the house of the LORD laid,
- 38 in the month Zif: and in the eleventh year, in ²⁰the month Bul, which *is* the eighth month, was the house finished ²¹throughout all the parts thereof, and according to all the fashion of it. So was he ²²seven years in building it.
- 7 BUT Solomon was building his own nouse ^athirteen years, and he finished all his house.
- 2 He built also the house of the forest of Lebanon; the length thereof

B. C. 1005.

¹⁴ Or, the cherubim stretched forth their wings.
Ex. 25. 20.
Ex. 37. 9.
2 Chr. 5. 8.

¹⁵ openings of flowers.
⁹ John 10. 7.

¹⁶ Or, five-square.

¹⁷ Or, leaves of the doors.

¹⁸ openings of flowers.

¹⁹ Or, four-square.

²⁰ Eze. 41 23-25.

²⁰ About the end of October.

²¹ Or, with all the appurtenances thereof, and with all the ordinances thereof.

²² ver. 1.

CHAP. 7.

^a ch. 9. 10.
ch. 10. 17.
2 Chr 8.
Matt 6. 33.
Col 3. 1.

gold.] *Josephus* ('Antiquities,' b. viii., ch. iii., sec. 13) says they were of solid gold. each ten cubits high. [The Septuagint has *δεκα πηχηνων μεγεθος*, the size of ten cubits.] *Josephus* represents the height of each of them as five cubits; probably, however, the error was not that of *Josephus*, but a transcriber. *Layard* ('Nineveh and Babylon,' p. 652) gives it as his opinion that what is called "gold" in these passages, as well as in the profane authors of antiquity, was really copper, alloyed with other metals—the aurichalcum, or orichalcum, of the Greeks—such as was used in the bowls and plates discovered at Nimroud.

31. for the entering of the oracle. The door of the most holy place was made of solid olive tree, and adorned with figures; that of the holy place was made of cypress wood, the sides being of olive wood. 32. he carved upon them carvings of cherubim and palm trees. The date palm seems to have had a certain typical significance, for it was profusely represented in the decorations of the temple, on the walls along with the cherubim, and also on the furniture and vessels (cf. v. 35; ch. vii. 36). 36. the inner court—was for the priests; and its wall, which had a coping of cedar, is said to have been so low that the people could see over it.

37, 38.—THE TIME TAKEN TO BUILD IT.

37. In the fourth year was the foundation . . . laid. *Josephus* says ('Antiquities,' b. viii., ch. iv., sec. 9) that the summit of the mount was levelled with incredible labour, in order that the lower

parts might be raised four hundred cubits, to the same height with the top of the hill on which the temple was to stand. The building was begun in the second month of the fourth year, and completed in the eighth month of the eleventh year of Solomon's reign, comprising a period of seven and a half years, which is reckoned here in round numbers. It was not a very large, but a very splendid building, requiring great care, and ingenuity, and division of labour. The immense number of workmen employed, together with the previous preparation of the materials, serves to account for the short time occupied in the process of building.

CHAP. VII. 1. — BUILDING OF SOLOMON'S HOUSE.

1. Solomon was building his own house thirteen years. The time occupied in building his palace was nearly double that spent in the erection of the temple, because neither had there been the same previous preparations for it, nor was there the same urgency, as in providing a place of worship, on which the national well-being so much depended. Solomon, who was at this time animated with strong feelings of piety, acted in the spirit of Christ's admonition (Matt. vi. 33). On the other hand, the Jews who returned from the captivity were reproved for building their own habitations before the temple of God (Hagg. i. 4; xi. 9).

2-7.—OF THE HOUSE OF LEBANON.

2. He built also the house of the forest of

was an hundred cubits, and the breadth thereof fifty cubits, and the height thereof thirty cubits, upon four rows of cedar pillars, with cedar beams upon the pillars. And it was covered with cedar above upon the beams, that lay on forty-five pillars, fifteen in a row. And there were windows in three rows, and light was against light in three ranks. And all the doors and posts were square, with the windows: and light was against light in three ranks. And he made a porch of pillars; the length thereof was fifty cubits, and the breadth thereof thirty cubits: and the porch was before them; and the other pillars and the thick beam were before them. Then he made a porch for the throne where he might judge, even the porch of judgment: and it was covered with cedar from one side of the floor to the other. And his house where he dwelt had another court within the porch, which was of the like work.

Solomon made also an house for Pharaoh's daughter, whom he had taken to wife, like unto this porch.

All these were of costly stones, according to the measures of hewed stones, sawed with saws, within and without, even from the foundation unto the coping, and so on the outside toward the great court. And the foundation was of costly stones, even great stones, stones of ten cubits, and stones of eight cubits. And above were costly stones, after the

B. C. 1005.

- 1 ribs.
- 2 sight against sight.
- 3 Or spaces and pillars were square in prospect.
- 4 (r, according to them
- 5 Or, according to them.
- 6 ch. 10. 18. Ps. 122. 5. Pro. 20. 8. Fro. 20. 4. Isa. 9. 7.
- 7 from floor to floor.
- 8 Deut. 17. 13. 17. ch. 3. 1.

Lebanon. It is scarcely possible to determine whether this was a different edifice from the former, or whether his house, "the house of the forest of Lebanon," and the one for Pharaoh's daughter, were not parts of one grand palace. It would seem from the form and proportions, as given in the context, that this "house" was an immense hall, as the Hebrew word and its Arabic equivalent frequently bear this sense. In this view it would correspond to the large central halls in the Assyrian palaces ('Niueveh and Babylon,' p. 650). As difficult is it to decide what was the origin of the name—some supposing it was so called because built on Lebanon; others, that it was in or near Jerusalem, but contained such a profuse supply of cedar columns as to have occasioned this peculiar designation. We have a similar peculiarity of name in the building called the East India House, though situated in London. The description is conformable to the arrangement of Eastern palaces. The building stood in the middle of a great oblong square, which was surrounded by an inclosing wall, against which the houses and offices of those attached to the court were built. The building itself was oblong, consisting of two square courts, flanking a large oblong hall which formed the centre, and which, being 100 cubits long by 50 broad, was properly the house of the forest of Lebanon, being the part where were the cedar pillars of this hall. In front was the porch of judgment, which was appropriated to the transaction of public business. On the one side of this great hall was the king's house, and on the other the harem or royal apartments for Pharaoh's daughter (Esth. ii. 3, 9). This arrangement of the palace accords with the Oriental style of building, according to which a great mansion always consists of three divisions, or separate houses, all connected by doors and passages—the men dwelling at one extremity, the female portion of the family at the other, while public rooms occupy the central part of the building.

9. sawed with saws. Some have averred that saws for cutting stones were not invented earlier than the fourth century B.C. But this opinion is erroneous, being contradicted by the present passage. It may be noticed that Eastern saws differ from those used by European nations in this remarkable feature, that the point

of the teeth is inclined towards, not from, the handle, so that the sawyer makes his impression on the wood, not in thrusting the instrument from him, but in pulling it towards him.

10. the foundation was of costly stones, even great stones. Enormous stones, corresponding exactly with the dimensions given, are found in Jerusalem at this day. Not only the walls from the foundation to the roof-beams were built of large hewn stones, but the spacious court also around the palace was paved with great square stones. Of those cyclopean stones which formed the substruction of the ancient temple, Dr. Robinson, in his description of the temple area ('Biblical Researches,' i. p. 422), gives the following account:—'The upper part of the walls (viz., of the Mosque el-Haram) is obviously of modern origin; but to the most casual observer it cannot be less obvious that these huge blocks, which appear only in portions of the lower part, are to be referred to an earlier date. The appearance of the walls in almost every part seems to indicate that they have been built upon ancient foundations—as if an ancient and far more massive wall had been thrown down, and in later times a new one erected upon its remains. We first noticed these large stones at the south-east corner of the inclosure, where, perhaps, they are as conspicuous, and form as great a portion of the wall, as in any part. There are several courses, both on the east and south sides, alternating with each other, in which the stones measure from 17 to 19 feet in length by 3 or 4 feet in height, while one block at the corner is 7½ feet thick. Further to the north all is new until towards the north-east corner of the area, where the ancient stones appear, one of them measuring 24 feet in length by 3 feet in height and 6 feet in breadth. The corner stone on the west side, now next above the surface of the ground, measures 30 feet 10 inches in length by 6½ feet broad; and several others vary from 20½ to 24½ feet long by 5 feet in thickness. It is not, however, the great size of these stones alone, which arrests the attention of the beholder; but the manner in which they are hewn gives them also a peculiar character. In common parlance, they are bevelled, which here means that, after the whole surface has been first hewn and squared, a narrow strip along the edges is cut down a quarter or

- 12 measures of hewed stones, and cedars. And the great court round about *was* with three rows of hewed stones, and a row of cedar beams, both for the inner court of the house of the LORD, ^aand for the porch of the house.
- 13, And king Solomon sent and fetched Hiram ^eout of Tyre. He ^fwas ^ga widow's son of the tribe of Naphtali, and ^hhis father *was* a man of Tyre, a worker in brass: and ⁱhe was filled with wisdom and understanding, and cunning to work all works in brass.
- 15 And he came to king Solomon, and wrought all his work. For he ^scast ^ttwo pillars of brass, of eighteen cubits high apiece; and a line of 16 twelve cubits did compass either of them about. And he made two chapiters *of* molten brass, to set upon the tops of the pillars: the height of the one chapter *was* five cubits, and the height of the other chapter 17 *was* five cubits: and nets of checker-work, and wreaths of chain-work, for the chapiters which *were* upon the top of the pillars; seven for the 18 one chapter, and seven for the other chapter. And he made the pillars, and two rows round about upon the one net-work, to cover the chapiters that *were* upon the top with pomegranates: and so did he for the other 19 chapter. And the chapiters that *were* upon the top of the pillars *were*

B. C. 1005.
^a John 10. 23.
 Acts 3. 11.
 Acts 5. 12.
^e 2 Chr. 4. 11.
 Hiram
^f 2 Chr. 2. 11.
^g the son of a widow woman,
^h 2 Chr. 4. 16.
ⁱ Ex 21. 3.
 Ex 23. 3.
 Ex. 35. 31.
 35.
 Ex 36. 1.
 Job 35. 11.
 Isa. 28. 23.
 Dan. 1. 17.
 Luke 2. 40.
^s fashioned.
^t 2 Ki. 15. 17.
 2 Chr. 3. 15.
 2 Chr. 4. 12.
 Jer. 52. 21.

half an inch lower than the rest of the surface. When these bevelled stones are laid up in a wall, the face of it of course exhibits lines or grooves, formed by these depressed edges at their junction, marking more distinctly the elevation of the different courses, as well as the length of the stones of which they are composed. At the first view of these stones, I was led to the persuasion that the lower portion had belonged to the ancient temple; and every subsequent visit only served to strengthen this conviction. The size of the stones and the heterogeneous character of the walls render it a matter beyond all doubt that the former were never laid in their present places by the Mohammedans; and the peculiar form in which they are hewn does not properly belong either to Saracenic or to Roman architecture. Indeed, everything seems to point to a Jewish origin; and a discovery (viz., of the arch of the bridge over the Tyropœon) which we made in the course of our examination, reduces this hypothesis to an absolute certainty' (see also *Raumer's 'Palästina,'* p. 290; *Bähr, 'Der Salomonische Tempel,'* part 2; *Porter's 'Handbook,'* p. 118; *Stewart's 'Tent and Khan,'* p. 261; *Barclay's 'City of the Great King,'* p. 273). 12. for the inner court of the house of the Lord—should be, as in the inner court of the house of the Lord. The meaning is, that in this palace, as in the temple, rows of hewed stones and the cedar beams formed the inclosure.

13-51.—HIRAM'S WORKS.

13. Solomon sent and fetched Hiram out of Tyre. The Tyrians and other inhabitants of the Phœnician coast were the most renowned artists and workers in metal in the ancient world. Here is a specimen of the Semitic style of narration. The historian has previously declared the completion of the temple (ch. vi. 9-14, 37, 38), stating the exact date. Besides, he has given an account of the erection of the royal palace, with the time spent in rearing it. And yet, after these statements, he recurs, in conformity with the Hebrew historiography, to the arrangement made previous to the commencement of the great undertaking for enlisting the services of an eminent Tyrian artizan. The immediate occasion of introducing his name was, that at this passage the historian enters upon a detailed enumeration of the principal articles of furniture he executed for the sacred

edifice. 14. He was a widow's son of the tribe of Naphtali. In 2 Chr. ii. 14 his mother is said to have been of the daughters of Dan. The apparent discrepancy may be reconciled thus:—Hiram's mother, though belonging to the tribe of Dan, had been married to a Naphtalite, so that when married afterwards to a Tyrian, she might be described as a widow of the tribe of Naphtali. Or, if she was a native of the city of Dan (Lais), she might be said to be of the daughters of Dan, as born in that place; and of the tribe of Naphtali, as really belonging to it. a worker in brass—referring particularly to the works described in this chapter; but in 2 Chr. ii. 13 his artistic skill is represented as extending to a great variety of departments; and, in fact, he was appointed, from his great natural talents and acquired skill, to superintend the execution of all the works of art in the temple.

15. two pillars of brass, of eighteen cubits high. They were made of the brass (bronze) which was taken from the king of Zobah (1 Chr. xviii. 8). In 2 Chr. iii. 15 they are said to have been thirty-five cubits high. There, however, their joint lengths are given; whereas here the length of the pillars is given separately. Each pillar was seventeen and a half cubits long, which is stated in round numbers as eight. Their dimensions in English measure are as follows:—The pillars without the capitals measured 32½ feet long and 7 feet diameter; and if hollow, as *Whiston*, in his translation of *Josephus*, thinks (Jer. lii. 21), the metal would be about 3½ inches thick; so that the whole casting of one pillar must have been from sixteen to twenty tons. The height of the capitals was 8½ feet; and, at the same thickness of metal, would not weigh less than seven or eight tons each. The nature of the workmanship in the finishing of these capitals is described, *vv.* 17-22. The pillars, when set up, would stand 40 feet in height, (*Napier's 'Metal.'*) 17. nets of checker-work—*i. e.*, branch-work, resembling the branches of palm trees, and *wreaths of chain-work*; *i. e.*, plaited in the form of a chain, composing a sort of crown or garland. Seven of these were wound in festoons on one capital, and over and underneath them fringes, one hundred in a row; and two rows of pomegranates strung on chains (2 Chr. iii. 16) ran round the capital (*v.* 42: cf. 2 Chr. iv. 12, 13; Jer. lii. 23), which itself was

20 of lily-work in the porch, four cubits. And the chapters upon the two pillars *had pomegranates* also above, over against the belly which *was* by the net-work: and the pomegranates *were* ^jtwo hundred, in rows round about upon the other chapter. And ^khe set up the pillars in ^lthe porch of the temple: and he set up the right pillar, and called the name thereof ^oJachin; and he set up the left pillar, and called the name thereof ¹⁰Boaz. And upon the top of the pillars *was* lily-work: so was the work of the pillars finished.

23 And he made ^ma molten sea, ten cubits ¹¹from the one brim to the other: *it was* round all about, and his height *was* five cubits; and a line of thirty cubits did compass it round about. And under the brim of it round about *there were* knops compassing it, ten in a cubit, ⁿcompassing the sea round about: the knops *were* cast in two rows when it was cast.

25 It stood upon ^otwelve oxen, three looking toward the north, and three looking toward the west, and three looking toward the south, and three looking toward the east: and the sea *was set* above upon them, and all 26 their hinder parts *were* inward. And it *was* an hand-breadth thick, and the brim thereof was wrought like the brim of a cup, with flowers of lilies: it contained ¹²two thousand baths.

27 And he made ten bases of brass; four cubits *was* the length of one base, and four cubits the breadth thereof, and three cubits the height of 28 it. And the work of the bases *was* on this *manner*: they had ^pborders, 29 and the borders *were* between the ledges: and on the borders that *were* between the ledges *were* ^qlions, oxen, and cherubim: and upon the ledges *there was* a base above: and beneath the lions and oxen *were* certain 30 additions made of thin work. And every base had four brasen wheels, and plates of brass; and the four corners thereof had undersetters: under 31 the laver *were* undersetters molten, at the side of every addition. And the mouth of it within the chapter and above *was* a cubit: but the mouth thereof *was* round, *after* the work of the base, a cubit and an half: and also upon the mouth of it *were* gravings with their borders, four-square, 32 not round. And under the borders *were* four wheels; and the axletrees of the wheels *were* ¹³joined to the base: and the height of a wheel *was* a 33 cubit and half a cubit. And the work of the wheels *was* like the work of a chariot wheel: their axletrees, and their naves, and their fellows, and

B. C. 1001.
^j 2 Chr. 3. 16.
^k 2 Chr. 4. 13.
^l 2 Chr. 3. 17.
^m ch. 6. 3.
ⁿ That is He shall establish.
^o That is, In it is strength.
^p 2 Kl. 25. 13.
^q 2 Chr. 4. 2.
^r Jer. 52. 17.
^s Zech. 13. 1.
^t 1 John 1. 7.
^u 11 from his brim to his brim
^v 2 Chr. 4. 3.
^w 2 Chr. 4. 4.
^x 5.
^y Jer. 52. 20.
^z Eze. 1. 10.
^{aa} 12 There were but 2,000 baths in it usually, but when quite filled, it contained 3,000 or, 22,340 gallons, wine measure.
^{ab} 2 Chr. 4. 5.
^{ac} P shootings
^{ad} 2 Gen. 3. 21.
^{ae} ch. 6. 3.
^{af} Ps. 18. 10.
^{ag} Eze. 1. 10.
^{ah} Rev. 4. 6-9.
^{ai} 13 In the base.

of a bowl-like or globular form (v. 41). These rows were designed to form a binding to the ornamental work, to keep it from falling asunder; and they were so placed as to be above the chain-work, and below the place where the branch-work was. 19. *lily-work*—representing the lotus leaf and flower; beautiful ornaments, resembling the stalks, leaves, and blossoms of lilies, of large dimensions, as suited to the height of their position. They were the characteristic ornaments of Egyptian architecture, and probably borrowed thence by Solomon. 21. *Jachin*: and . . . *Boaz* [יָבֹז], whom God makes firm (*Gesenius*)—‘the firm’ (Movers); יָבֹז, alacrity (*Gesenius*)—‘the moving’ or ‘advancing’ (Movers).] These names were symbolical, and indicated the strength and stability, not so much of the material temple, for they were destroyed along with it (Jer. lii. 17), as of the spiritual kingdom of God, which was embodied in the temple.

23. *he made a molten sea*. In the tabernacle was no such vessel; the laver served the double purpose of washing the hands and feet of the priests, as well as the parts of the sacrifices. But in the temple there were separate vessels provided for these offices (see on 2 Chr. iv. 6). The molten sea was an immense semicircular vase, measur-

ing 17½ feet diameter, and being 8¾ feet in depth. This, at 3½ inches, could not weigh less than from twenty-five to thirty tons in one solid casting, and held from 16,000 to 20,000 gallons of water. The brim was all carved with lily-work or flowers, and oxen were carved or cut on the outside all round, to the number of 300; and it stood on a pedestal of twelve oxen. These oxen must have been of considerable size, like the Assyrian bulls, so as their corresponding legs would give thickness or strength to support so great a weight; for, when the vessel was filled with water, the whole weight would be about 100 tons (*Napier*) (see on 2 Chr. iv. 5).

27. *he made ten bases of brass*—(see on Exod. xxx. 18-21, where the tabernacle is said to have had only one laver.) These were trucks, or four-wheeled carriages, for the support and conveyance of the lavers. The description of their structure shows that they were elegantly fitted up, and skilfully adapted to their purpose. They stood, not on the axles, but on four rests attached to the axles, so that the figured sides were considerably raised above the wheels. They were all exactly alike in form and size. The lavers which were borne upon them were vessels capable each of holding 300 gallons of water, upwards of a ton weight. The whole, when full of water, would

34 their spokes, *were* all molten. And *there were* four undersetters to the four corners of one base: *and* the undersetters *were* of the very base
 35 itself. And in the top of the base *was there* a round compass of half a cubit high: and on the top of the base the ledges thereof and the borders
 36 thereof *were* of the same. For on the plates of the ¹⁴ledges thereof, and on the borders thereof, he graved cherubim, lions, and palm trees, according
 37 to the ¹⁵proportion of every one, and additions round about. After this *manner* he made the ten bases: all of them had one casting, one measure,
 38 *and* one size. Then ^rmade he ten lavers of brass: one laver contained forty baths: *and* every laver was four cubits: *and* upon every one of the
 39 ten bases one laver. And he put five bases on the right ¹⁶side of the house, and five on the left side of the house: and he set the sea on the
 40 right side of the house eastward over against the south. And Hiram made the lavers, and the shovels, and the basins.

So Hiram made an end of doing all the work that he made king
 41 Solomon for the house of the LORD: the two pillars, and the *two* bowls of the chapters that *were* on the top of the two pillars; and the two net-works, to cover the two bowls of the chapters which *were* upon the top
 42 of the pillars; and four hundred pomegranates for the two net-works, *even* two rows of pomegranates for one net-work, to cover the two bowls of the
 43 chapters that *were* ¹⁷upon the pillars; and the ten bases, and ten lavers
 44 on the bases; and one sea, and twelve oxen under the sea; and ^sthe pots,
 45 and the shovels, and the basins: and all these vessels, which Hiram made
 46 to king Solomon for the house of the LORD, *were* of ¹⁸bright brass. In ^tthe plain of Jordan did the king cast them, ¹⁹in the clay ground ^ubetween
 47 Succoth and ^vZarthan. And Solomon left all the vessels *unweighed*,
 48 ²⁰because they were exceeding many: neither was the weight of the brass
 49 ²¹found out.

And Solomon made all the vessels that *pertained* unto the house of the LORD: the ^waltar of gold, and ^xthe table of gold, whereupon ^ythe show-
 49 bread *was*, and the candlesticks of pure gold, five on the right *side*, and five on the left, before the oracle, with the flowers, and the lamps, and
 50 the tongs, *of* gold; and the bowls, and the snuffers, and the basins, and the spoons, and the ²²censers, *of* pure gold; and the hinges *of* gold, *both* for the doors of the inner house, the most holy *place*, *and* for the doors of the house, *to wit*, of the temple.

B. C 1600 .
¹⁴ hands, cr. handles.
¹⁵ nakedness.
^r Ex 30 17.
 2 Chr. 3. 6.
 Zech. 14. 1.
 Tit. 3. 5.
 Heb. 10. 22.
 1 John 1. 7.
 Rev. 7. 14.
¹⁶ shoulter.
¹⁷ upon the face of the pillars
^s Ex. 27. 3.
 Ex. 30. 11
 21, 28.
 Ex. 38. 8.
 Ex. 40. 11.
 Zech. 13. 1.
 Zech. 14. 50, 21.
 Heb. 9. 10.
¹⁸ made bright, or. scoured.
^t 2 Chr. 4. 17.
¹⁹ in the thickness of the ground
^u Gen. 33. 17.
 Josh. 3. 16.
 Josh. 13. 27. ch. 4. 12.
^v Josh. 3. 16.
²⁰ for the exceeding multitude.
²¹ searched.
 1 Chr. :2. 11.
^w Ex. 37. : 5
^x Ex. 37. 10.
^y Ex. 55. 39.
 Lev. 24. 5.
²² ash pans.

be no less than two tons (*Napier*). Jewish writers say that the water was changed daily, so as to be always pure, and that ablution in this water was indispensable to every one; for none were allowed to enter until this ceremony was performed. ³⁹ he set the sea on the right side of the house eastward over against the south.—*i. e.*, eastward; in a south-easterly direction. **40.** And Hiram made. These verses contain a general enumeration of Hiram's works, as well those already mentioned as other minor things. The Tyrian artists are frequently mentioned by ancient authors as skilful artificers in fashioning and embossing metal cups and bowls; and we need not wonder, therefore, to find them employed by Solomon in making the golden and brassen utensils for his temple and palaces.

46. In the plain of Jordan did the king cast them. Zarthan, or Zaretan (Josh. iii. 16), or Zartanah (ch. iv. 12), or Zeredathah (2 Chr. iv. 17), was on the bank of the Jordan, in the territories of Western Manasseh. Succoth was situated on the eastern side of Jordan, at the ford of the river near the mouth of the Jabbok. One reason assigned by commentators for the castings being made there is, that at such a distance from Jerusalem that city would not be annoyed by the smoke

and noxious vapours necessarily occasioned by the process. But the true reason is to be found in the nature of the soil—*margin*, the thickness of the ground. That part of the Jordan valley abounds with marl. Clay and sand are the moulding material still used for bronze. Such large quantities of metal as one of these castings would contain could not be fused in one furnace, but would require a series of furnaces, especially for such a casting as the Brassen Sea—the whole series of furnaces being filled with metal, and fused at one time, and all tapped together, and the metal let run into the mould. Thus a national foundry was erected in the plain of Jordan (see *Napier*, 'The Ancient Workers and Artificers in Metal,' pp. 106-112).

48. the altar of gold—*i. e.*, the altar of incense. **49.** candlesticks of pure gold—made, probably, according to the model of that in the tabernacle, which, along with the other articles of furniture, were deposited with due honour, as sacred relics, in the temple. But these seem not to have been used in the temple service; for Solomon made new lavers, tables, and candlesticks, ten of each. (See further regarding the dimensions and furniture of the temple, in 2 Chr. iii.-v.)

51 So was ended all the work that king Solomon made for the house of the LORD. And Solomon brought in the ²³ things which David his father had dedicated; *even* the silver, and the gold, and the vessels, did he put among the treasures of the house of the LORD.

8 THEN Solomon assembled the elders of Israel, and all the heads of the tribes, the ¹ chief of the fathers of the children of Israel, unto king Solomon in Jerusalem, that ^a they might bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD ^b out of the city of David, which *is* Zion.

2 And all the men of Israel assembled themselves unto king Solomon at ³ the feast ^c in the month Ethanim, which *is* the seventh month. And all ⁴ the elders of Israel came, ^d and the priests took up the ark. And they brought up the ark of the LORD, ^e and the tabernacle of the congregation, and all the holy vessels that *were* in the tabernacle, *even* those did the ⁵ priests and the Levites bring up. And king Solomon, and all the congregation of Israel, that were assembled unto him, *were* with him before the ark, sacrificing sheep and oxen, that could not be told nor numbered ⁶ for multitude. And the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the LORD unto ^f his place, into the oracle of the house, to the most holy *place*, ⁷ *even* ^g under the wings of the cherubim. For the cherubim spread forth ^h their two wings over the place of the ark, and the cherubim covered the ⁸ ark and the staves thereof above. And they ⁱ drew out the staves, that the ² ends of the staves were seen out in the ³ holy *place* before the oracle, ⁹ and they were not seen without: and there they are unto this day. *There*

B. C. 1005.
²³ holy things of David.
 CHAP. 8.
¹ princes.
^a Num 10.31.
² Sam. 5. 7.
 9.
² Sam. 6.17.
 ch 3 15.
^f s. 9. 11.
 Isa. 46. 13.
^b 2 Sam. 5. 7.
^c Lev. 23. 34.
 Deut 16.13.
² Chr 7. 8.
^d Num. 4. 13.
 Deut. 31. 9.
 Josh. 3. 3.6.
 Josh. 6. 4.
¹ Chr.15.11.
^e ch. 3. 4.
² Chr. 1. 3.
^f Ex. 26. 33.
^g ch. 6. 27.
^h Ex. 25. 14.
² heads.
³ Or, ark.
² Chr. 5. 9.

CHAP. VIII. 1-12.—THE DEDICATION OF THE TEMPLE.

2. at the feast in the month Ethanim (October). [The Septuagint (Vatican), 'Αθανίω; Alexandrine, Αθανείω.] This name is mentioned only in connection with the erection and dedication of the temple. *Josephus* ('Antiquities,' b. viii., ch. iv., sec. 1) gives the common designation, *Tisri*. The public and formal inauguration of this national place of worship did not take place till eleven months after the completion of the edifice. The delay most probably originated in Solomon's wish to choose the most fitting opportunity when there should be a general rendezvous of the people in Jerusalem (v. 2); and that was not till the next year. That was a jubilee year, and he resolved on commencing the solemn ceremonial a few days before the feast of Tabernacles, which was the most appropriate of all seasons, as that annual festival had been instituted in commemoration of the Israelites dwelling in booths during their stay in the wilderness, as well as of the tabernacle, which was then erected, in which God promised to meet and dwell with His people, sanctifying it with His glory, (cf. Neh. viii.) As the tabernacle was to be superseded by the temple, there was admirable propriety in choosing the feast of Tabernacles as the period for dedicating the new place of worship, and praying that the same distinguished privileges might be continued to it in the manifestation of the Divine presence and glory. At the time appointed for the inauguration, the king issued orders for all the heads and representatives of the nation to repair to Jerusalem, and take part in the august procession. The lead was taken by the king, doubtless preceded by his royal guard (ch. xiv. 27, 28), and elders of the people, whose march must have been slow, as priests were stationed to offer an immense number of sacrifices (v. 5: cf. *Josephus*, 'Antiquities,' b. viii., ch. iv., sec. 1, who says 'the ground was moist with drink offerings and sacrifices') at various points in the line of road through which the procession was to go; then came the Levites

bearing the ark from its temporary resting-place (2 Sam. vi. 15-17) on mount Zion up to mount Moriah, a distance of about three-quarters of a mile, and by another procession the tabernacle—the old Mosaic tabernacle—was brought from Gibeon. Lastly, the Levites followed, carrying the vessels—viz., the brazen altar, the golden candlesticks, the table of showbread, &c., and ornaments belonging to the old, for lodgment in the new, house of the Lord. There was a slight deviation in this procedure from the order of march established in the wilderness (Num. iii. 31; iv. 15), but the spirit of the arrangement was duly observed. The ark was deposited in the oracle—*i. e.*, the most holy place, the second or inner division of the sanctuary—into which none was permitted to enter, save the high priest once a year—on the great day of atonement, and it was set without the adytum, called its "rest" (Ps. cxxxii. 8, 11), in order to screen from profane gaze the solemn symbol of the Jewish religion. In the Holy of holies, it was placed under the wings of the cherubim (cf. Ps. xviii. 10; lxxx. 1; Isa. vi. 1, 3)—not the Mosaic cherubim, which were firmly attached to the ark (Exod. xxxvii. 7, 8), but those made by Solomon, which were far larger and more expanded. 8. they drew out the staves [Septuagint, τὰ ἄγια, v. 7, and τὰ ἡγιασμένα, v. 8]—a little way, so as to project (see on Exod. xxv. 15; Num. iv. 6), and they were left in that position till an advanced period of the monarchy. The object was that these projecting staves might serve as a guide to the high priest in conducting him to that place where, once a year, he went to officiate before the ark; otherwise he might miss his way in the dark, the ark being wholly overshadowed by the wings of the gigantic cherubim, and he had nothing to guide him but the glowing embers in his censer, and the mysterious light that emanated from the mercy-seat. The partial removal of the staves might, like everything else in the temple, have a symbolical signification, that the tabernacle was now stationary, and not to be changed (see on 2 Chr

- ¹was nothing in the ark ²save the two tables of stone, which Moses ³put there at Horeb, ⁴when the LORD made a covenant with the children of Israel, when they came out of the land of Egypt.
- 10 And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place,
- 11 that the cloud filled the house of the LORD, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud: for the glory of the LORD had filled the house of the LORD.
- 12 Then spake Solomon, The LORD said that he would dwell ¹in the thick
- 13 darkness. I have surely built thee an house to dwell in, ²a settled place for thee to abide in for ever.
- 14 And the king turned his face about, and ³blessed all the congregation
- 15 of Israel: (and all the congregation of Israel stood:) and he said, ⁴Blessed be the LORD God of Israel, which spake with his mouth unto David my
- 16 father, and hath with his hand fulfilled it, saying, Since ⁵the day that I brought forth my people Israel out of Egypt, I chose no city out of all the tribes of Israel to build an house, that ⁶my name might be therein; but
- 17 I chose David to be over my people Israel. And it was in the heart of David my father to build an house for the name of the LORD God of Israel.
- 18 And the LORD said unto David my father, Whereas it was in thine heart to build an house unto my name, thou didst well that it was in thine
- 19 heart: nevertheless thou shalt not build the house; but thy son, that shall come forth out of thy loins, he shall build the house unto my name.
- 20 And the LORD hath performed his word that he spake; and I am risen up in the room of David my father, and sit on the throne of Israel, as the LORD promised, and have built an house for the name of the LORD God
- 21 of Israel. And I have set there a place for the ark, wherein is ⁷the covenant of the LORD, which he made with our fathers, when he brought them out of the land of Egypt.
- 22 And Solomon stood before ⁸the altar of the LORD, in the presence

B. C. 1011.

¹ Ex. 25. 21.

Deut. 10. 2.

² Deut. 10. 5.

Heb. 9. 4.

³ Ex. 40. 20.⁴ Or, where.

Ex. 31. 27.

Deut. 4. 13.

⁵ Lev. 16. 2.

Ps. 13. 11.

Ps. 97. 2.

⁶ Ps. 132. 14.

John 4. 21-

23.

Acts 6. 14.

⁷ Josh. 22. 6.

2Sam. 6. 18.

1 Chr. 16. 2.

2 Chr. 6. 3.

Ps. 118. 25.

Luke 24. 50.

51.

⁸ 1 Chr. 29. 10.

20.

Neh. 9. 5.

Luke 1. 63.

Eph. 1. 3.

1 Pet. 1. 3.

⁹ 2 Chr. 6. 5.¹⁰ Deut. 12. 11.¹¹ Deut. 31. 26.

2 Ki. 22. 8.

¹² 2 Chr. 6. 12.

Job 11. 13.

Ps. 63. 4.

Isa. 1. 15.

1 Tim. 2. 8.

xxxv. 3). 9. There was nothing in the ark save the two tables of stone (Deut. xxxi. 26). Some have concluded from this statement that Aaron's rod (Num. xvii. 10), the golden censer, and the manna (Exod. xvi. 33), had been removed since the Israelites were settled in the promised land, or lost while the ark was captive among the Philistines. But nothing else was ever in the ark, the articles mentioned, Heb. ix. 4, being not *in*, but *by* it, being laid in the most holy place before the testimony (Exod. xvi. 33; Num. xvii. 10).

10. the cloud filled the house of the Lord. The cloud was the visible symbol of the Divine presence, and its occupation of the sanctuary was a testimony of God's gracious acceptance of the temple as of the tabernacle (Exod. xl. 34). The dazzling brightness, or rather, perhaps, the dense portentous darkness, of the clouds, struck the minds of the priests, as it formerly had done Moses, with such astonishment and terror (Exod. xl. 35; Lev. xvi. 2-13; Deut. iv. 24), that they could not remain, for the cloud was the emblem of Him who made darkness His secret place (Ps. xviii. 11), who is invisible to mortal eyes, and "past finding out." Thus the temple became the place where the Divine glory was revealed, and the King of Israel established his royal residence.

12. 21.—SOLOMON'S BLESSING.

12. Then spake Solomon. For the re-assurance of the priests and people, the king reminded them that the cloud, instead of being a sign ominous of evil, was a token of approval. The Lord said—not in express terms, but by a continuous course of action (Exod. xiii. 21; xxiv. 16; Num. ix. 15). 13. I have surely built thee an house. This is an apostrophe to God, as perceiv-

ing His approach by the cloud, and welcoming Him, with humble but lively thankfulness, to enter as guest or inhabitant of the fixed and permanent dwelling-place which, at His command, had been prepared for His reception. [The Septuagint gives a different version of this devout ejaculation or song:—*Τότε ἐλάλησε Σαλωμων ὑπὲρ τοῦ οἴκου ὡς συνετέλεσε τοῦ οἰκοδομήσαι αὐτόν* "Ἥλιον ἐγνώρισεν ἐν οὐρανῷ, κύριος εἶπε τοῦ κατοικεῖν ἐν γούφῳ, οἰκοδόμησον οἶκόν μου, οἶκον εὐπρεπῆ σαυτῷ, του κατοικεῖν ἐπὶ καινότητος, οὐκ ἰδοῦ αὐτῆ γεγραπται ἐν βιβλίῳ τῆς ᾠδῆς—Then spake Solomon in behalf of the house when he had finished building it: He knew the sun in the heaven. The Lord said from his dwelling in darkness, Build my house, a magnificent house for thyself, to dwell in newness. Behold, is it not written in the book of the song?]

14. the king turned his face about—from the temple, where he had been watching the movement of the mystic cloud; and while the people were standing, partly as the attitude of devotion, partly out of respect to royalty, the king gave a fervent expression of praise to God for the fulfilment of His promise (2 Sam. vii. 6-16.)

22. 61.—HIS PRAYER.

22. Solomon stood before the altar—i. e., east of the altar. This position was, at the dedication—not on the king's canopied throne, by a pillar at the entrance of the inner court (2 Ki. xi. 14; xxxiii. 2), but in the outer court, or court of the people—on a brassen scaffold erected for the occasion (2 Chr. vi. 13; cf. *Josephus*, 'Antiquities,' b. viii., ch. iv., sec. 2), fronting the altar of burnt offering, and surrounded by a mighty concourse of people. The altar was probably that which had been

of all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands toward heaven:

- 23 And he said, LORD God of Israel, *'there is no God like thee, in heaven above, or on earth beneath,* *"who keepest covenant and mercy with thy*
 24 *servants that "walk before thee with all their heart; who hast kept with thy servant David my father that thou promisedst him: thou spakest also with thy mouth, and hast fulfilled it with thine hand, as it is this day.*
 25 *Therefore now, LORD God of Israel, keep with thy servant David my father that thou promisedst him, saying, "There shall not fail thee a man in my sight to sit on the throne of Israel; "so that thy children take heed to their way, that they walk before me as thou hast walked before me. And "now, O God of Israel, let thy word, I pray thee, be verified, which thou spakest unto thy servant David my father.*
 27 *But "will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, the heaven, and "heaven of heavens, cannot contain thee; how much less this house*
 28 *that I have builded! Yet have thou respect unto "the prayer of thy servant, and to his supplication, O LORD my God, to hearken unto the cry and to the prayer which thy servant prayeth before thee to-day.*
 29 *That thine eyes may be open toward this house night and day, even toward the place of which thou hast said, My name shall be there; that thou mayest hearken unto the prayer which thy servant "shall make*
 30 *toward this place. And "hearken thou to the supplication of thy servant, and of thy people Israel, when they shall pray "toward this place: and hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place; and when thou hearest, "forgive.*
 31 *If any man trespass against his neighbour, "and an oath be laid upon him to cause him to swear, and the oath come before thine altar in this*
 32 *house: then hear thou in heaven, and do, and judge thy servants, "condemning the wicked, to bring his way upon his head; and justifying the righteous, to give him according to his righteousness.*

B. C. 1001.
 4 Ex. 15. 11.
 1 Chr. 23. 10, 13.
 Mic. 7. 13.
 " Deut. 7. 9.
 Neh. 1. 5.
 Dan 9. 4.
 " Gen. 17. 1.
 2 Ki 20 3
 6 There shall not be cut off unto thee a man from my sight.
 Ps. 132. 12.
 6 only if.
 " 2 Sam. 7 25.
 2 Chr. 2. 6.
 Ps. 113 4.
 Isa 66. 1.
 Jer. 23 24.
 Acts 17. 24.
 " 2 Cor. 12. 2.
 5 Phil. 4 6.
 4 Dan. 6. 10.
 7 Or, in this place.
 b 2 Chr. 20. 9.
 Neh. 1 6.
 8 Or, in this place.
 c Ps 15 2.
 Matt. 6. 12.
 9 and he require an oath of him.
 d Deut. 25. 1.

erected by David (2 Sam. xxiv. 25); for there is no mention of it in either of the preceding chapters (see on 2 Chr. iv. 1). Assuming the attitude of a suppliant, kneeling (*v.* 54: cf. 2 Chr. vi. 24), instead of the usual standing posture, never used in the East but under circumstances of deep humiliation, and with uplifted hands, he performed the solemn act of consecration—an act remarkable, amongst other circumstances, for this, that it was done, not by the high priest, or any member of the Aaronic family, but by the king in person, who might minister *about*, though not *in*, holy things. and spread forth his hands toward heaven—not over the people (Num. vi. 22-27), but in the customary attitude of prayer; and so did not encroach upon the priest's office, by performing "the highest sacerdotal act of solemn benediction" (*Stanley's 'Lectures,'* xxvii., p. 218: see on ch. ix. 25). This sublime prayer, which breathes sentiments of the loftiest piety blended with the deepest humility, naturally bore a reference to the national blessing and curse contained in the law; and the burden of it, after an ascription of praise to the Lord for the bestowment of the former, was an earnest supplication for deliverance from the latter. He specifies seven cases in which the merciful interposition of God would be required; and he earnestly bespeaks it, on condition of the people praying toward that holy place. He then arose, looking eastward, and a second time blessed the people, the blessing at the close being substantially a brief recapitulation of the preceding prayer. It may be expedient to select some particular portions of it.

26. And now, O God of Israel, let thy word, I

pray thee, be verified, which thou spakest unto thy servant David my father. The reference is to the great promise, 2 Sam. vii. 11-14. It was made to David before Solomon was born. It began to be verified at his birth, and still more on his completion of the temple, when the glory of the Lord was visible in it; but it pointed to a far greater, nobler, and more extensive kingdom than was embraced by the dominion of that magnificent monarch, happy and extensive as his dominion was (ch. iv. 20, 21). He had probably been taught by his pious father, who had made him well acquainted with that promise, to "extend his views of it unto the distant future; and indeed he appears, from his language used here—"will God indeed dwell on the earth?"—to have been conscious that his own achievements were unable to exhaust the fulness of its meaning. For, from the announcement of that promise, the Messiah was expected as *the king*, the king of Israel, exalted on the throne of David, and in virtue of His close communion with the Lord Jehovah, an object of universal reverence, exercising justice and dispensing mercy to the various families of man" (*Hardwick, 'Christ and other Masters,'* i., p. 146).

30. hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place. That house of prayer which Solomon was then dedicating was a type of the spiritual temple afterwards to be built of living stones. And the purport of the king's petition, which was afterwards answered by a covenant or solemn agreement (see on ch. ix. 3), was, that whatever was spoken in the earthly temple should be heard and ratified in the heavenly temple.

- 33 When 'thy people Israel be smitten down before the enemy, because they have sinned against thee, and shall turn again to thee, and confess thy name, and pray, and make supplication unto thee ¹⁰ in this house: then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of thy people Israel, and bring them again unto the land which thou gavest unto their fathers.
- 35 When heaven is shut up, and there is no rain, because they have sinned against thee; if they pray toward this place, and confess thy name, and turn from their sin, when thou afflictest them: then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of thy servants, and of thy people Israel, that thou ⁹ teach them ^h the good way wherein they should walk, and give rain upon thy land, which thou hast given to thy people for an inheritance.
- 37 If ⁱ there be in the land famine, if there be pestilence, blasting, mildew, locust, or if there be caterpillar; if their enemy besiege them in the land of their ¹¹ cities; whatsoever plague, whatsoever sickness *there be*; what prayer and supplication soever be *made* by any man, or by all thy people Israel, which shall know every man the plague of his own heart, and spread forth his hands toward this house: then hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and forgive, and do, and give to every man according to his ways, whose heart thou knowest; (for thou, *even* thou only, knowest ^j the hearts of all the children of men;) that they may fear thee all the days that they live in the land which thou gavest unto our fathers.
- 41 Moreover concerning a stranger, that *is* not of thy people Israel, but cometh out of a far country for thy name's sake; (for they shall hear of thy great name, and of thy ^k strong hand, and of thy stretched-out arm;) when he shall come and pray toward this house: hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to thee for; ^l that all people of the earth may know thy name, to fear ^m thee, as *do* thy people Israel; and that they may know that ¹² this house, which I have builded, is called by thy name.
- 44 If thy people go out to battle against their enemy, whithersoever thou shalt send them, and shall pray unto the LORD ¹³ toward the city which

E. C. 1001.

* Lev. 26. 17,

25.

Deut. 28. 25.

Josh. 7. 8.

2 Chr. 6. 24.

† Lev. 26. 39.

Jer. 20. 12.

John 2. 25.

10 (r,

toward.

¶ Ps. 5. 8.

Ps. 25. 4, 5.

Ps. 27. 11.

Ps. 86. 11.

Ps. 94. 12.

Ps. 119. 133.

Ps. 143. 8.

Isa. 35. 8.

Hos. 2. 21.

† 1 Sam. 12

23.

Jer. 6. 16

* Lev. 26. 19.

Deut. 23. 21-

52.

11 Or, juris-

diction.

† 1 Sam. 16. 7.

1 Chr. 28. 9.

Ps. 11. 4.

Jer. 17. 10.

Acts 1. 24.

† Deut. 3. 21.

* 1 Sam. 17.

46.

2 Ki. 19. 19.

Ps. 17. 2.

m Ps. 102. 15.

12 thy name

is called

upon this

house.

13 the way of

the city.

37. If there be in the land famine, if there be pestilence, blasting, mildew, &c. The mildew which committed such terrible ravages in their fields, and destroyed their cereal crops, producing famine, was not then known to be of vegetable origin, and to be traceable, as modern science has taught us to trace it, to various parasitic fungi of the Uredo and Puccinia families (*Balfour's* 'Biblical Botany'), but was ascribed to meteorological influences, or rather regarded as a pestilence inflicted by the direct hand of God (see on Lev. xxvi. 25; Dent. xxviii. 22, upon the threatenings in which passages these petitions of Solomon are founded).

41. Moreover concerning a stranger, that is not of thy people Israel. Not only was prayer made in that house to be answered, but the petitions were to be granted in so conspicuous a manner that their accomplishment was to become, even to unbelievers, a proof of Jehovah's supreme existence and illimitable power. Solomon in this part of his dedication-prayer speaks of strangers, not of Israelitish descent, repairing to worship God in that temple, as a known and allowable usage (cf. Matt. xxi. 13; Mark xi. 17). There were probably a great number of foreigners resident in Canaan amongst the Jews, and it would certainly be increased in the reign of Solomon (see, for *ger*, the proselyte sojourner, on Exod. xii. 19, 43, 49; Lev.

xvii. 15; xxiv. 22; Num. ix. 14; and for *tosha'b*, or *zar*, the dispersed stranger, on Exod. xii. 45; Lev. xxii. 10; Num. i. 51). 'In this remarkable passage, which is the more decisive as it contains a solemn recognition of the principles and objects of the Jewish law, proceeding from the highest human authority, and sanctioned by the immediate approbation of God, whose glory filled the house of the Lord during the solemn supplication, we perceive it clearly laid down, not only that the Jewish scheme was adapted and designed "to make all the people of the earth know that the Lord was God, and that there was none else;" but also that the stranger from the remotest region, who should be led to believe in and to worship the true God, was not only permitted, but called and encouraged, to "pray toward the temple of Jerusalem," to join in the devotions of the chosen people of God, and equally with them to hope for the Divine favour, and the acceptance of his prayers, without becoming a citizen of the Jewish state, or submitting to the yoke of the Mosaic ritual or civil law. For the words of Solomon evidently suppose that the stranger whom he describes as thus supplicating God remained, as he had originally been, "not of the people of Israel" (*Graves*, ii., p. 368).

44. If thy people go out to battle . . . 46. and thou . . . deliver them to the enemy, so that

thou hast chosen, and *toward* the house that I have built for thy name: 45 then hear thou in heaven their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their ¹⁴cause.

46 If they sin against thee, (ⁿfor *there is* no man that sinneth not,) and thou be angry with them, and deliver them to the enemy, so that they 47 carry them away captives unto the land of the enemy, far or near; *yet* ^oif they shall ¹⁵betlink themselves in the land whither they were carried captives, and repent, and make supplication unto thee in the land of them that carried them captives, ^psaying, We have sinned, and have done 48 perversely, we have committed wickedness; and *so* ^qreturn unto thee with all their heart, and with all their soul, in the land of their enemies which led them away captive, and ^rpray unto thee toward their land which thou gavest unto their fathers, the city which thou hast chosen, and the 49 house which I have built for thy name: then hear thou their prayer and their supplication in heaven thy dwelling place, and maintain their ¹⁶cause, 50 and forgive thy people that have sinned against thee, and all their transgressions wherein they have transgressed against thee, and ^sgive them compassion before them who carried them captive, that they may have 51 compassion on them: for they *be* thy people, and thine inheritance, which thou broughtest forth out of Egypt, from the midst of the furnace of iron: 52 that thine eyes may be open unto the supplication of thy servant, and unto the supplication of thy people Israel, to hearken unto them in all 53 that they call for unto thee. For thou didst separate them from among all the people of the earth, *to be* thine inheritance, as thou spakest by the hand of Moses thy servant, when thou broughtest our fathers out of Egypt, O Lord God.

54 And it was *so*, that when Solomon had made an end of praying all this prayer and supplication unto the LORD, he arose from before the altar of the LORD, from kneeling on his knees with his hands spread up to heaven. 55 And he stood, ^vand blessed all the congregation of Israel with a loud 56 voice, saying, Blessed *be* the LORD, that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he promised: ^wthere hath not ¹⁷failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his 57 servant. The LORD our God be with us, as he was with our fathers: ^xlet 58 him not leave us, nor forsake us; that he may ^yincline our hearts unto him, to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and his 59 statutes, and his judgments, which he commanded our fathers. And let these my words, wherewith I have made supplication before the LORD, be nigh unto the LORD our God day and night, that he maintain the cause of his servant, and the cause of his people Israel ¹⁸at all times, as the 60 matter shall require: that ^zall the people of the earth may know that 61 ^athe LORD is God, and that *there is* none else. Let your ^bheart therefore

B. C. 1004.

¹⁴ Or, right.¹⁵ 2 Chr. 6. 35.

Job 9. 2.

Job 14. 4.

Ps. 150. 3.

Is. 14. 2.

1 ro. 20. 9.

Eccl. 7. 20.

Jas. 3. 2.

1 John 1. 8.

^o Lev. 23. 40.¹⁶ bring back

to their

heart.

^p Neh. 1. 6.

Ps. 106. 6.

Dan. 9. 5.

^q Deut. 4. 19.

Neh. 1. 9.

Pro. 21. 26.

Jer. 23. 12.

Dan. 6. 10.

Acts 8. 37.

Rom. 10. 10.

^r Dan. 6. 10.

Jon. 2. 4.

Heb. 4. 16.

¹⁶ Or, right.^s Ezra 7. 6.

Dan. 1. 9.

10.

Acts 7. 10.

Ps. 105. 46.

^t 2 Sam. 6. 13.

Heb. 7. 1-7.

^u Josh. 21. 45.

Josh. 23. 11.

¹⁷ fallen.^v Deut. 31. 6.^w Ps. 119. 36.

Jer. 10. 23.

2 Cor. 3. 5.

¹⁸ the thing

of a day in

his day.

^x Josh. 4. 24.

1 Sam. 17. 46.

2 Ki. 19. 19.

^y Deut. 4. 35.

ch. 18. 30.

Isa. 44. 6, 8.

^z ch. 11. 4.

2 Ki. 20. 3.

they carry them away, &c. This does not refer to the national captivity in Babylon, but to the smaller 'carrying away,' which might, and probably did, occur in every campaign; and Solomon mentions the case of those Israelites who, by the fate of war, should be carried away into the enemies' land far and near (Joel iii. 4; Amos i. 6-9), being delivered, on account of their apostasies and sins, into the power of foreign invaders (see Judges, *passim*). Solomon petitions that on their bethinking themselves or repenting, the Lord would hear their prayers, directed to Him in that temple (Dan. vi. 10), and restore them to liberty and their own land. It is evident that Solomon knew well the condition on which alone they could enjoy possession of the land. He speaks as one who had not the least idea of the Jews being recalled, either from a brief or a protracted captivity, while they continued in the sin which had caused their

captivity: he prays for their restoration only in the event of their returning unto the Lord with all their heart, and with all their soul. And this language of his was evidently borrowed from statements contained in the books of Moses (Deut. xxx. 1-3: cf. Neh. i. 8, 9).

59. let these my words . . . be nigh unto the Lord our God. In drawing to a close, the royal suppliant, adverting to the important nature of the petitions he had preferred, humbly but fervently prayed that they might be accepted. that he maintain the cause of his servant—i. e., of Solomon, as vv. 23, 29, and all his successors on the throne of David, and the cause of his people Israel—according to their necessities and wants in the contingent eventualities specified in the prayer. 60. That all the people of the earth may know that the Lord is God, &c.—not only by the exhibition of national piety and righteousness, but by the

be perfect with the LORD our God, to walk in his statutes, and to keep his commandments, as at this day.

62 And the king, and all Israel with him, offered sacrifice before the LORD.

63 And Solomon offered a sacrifice of peace offerings, which he offered unto the LORD, two and twenty thousand oxen, and an hundred and twenty thousand sheep. So the king and all the children of Israel dedicated the

64 house of the LORD. The same day did the king hallow the middle of the court that *was* before the house of the LORD: for there he offered burnt offerings, and meat offerings, and the fat of the peace offerings; because the brasen altar that *was* before the LORD *was* too little to receive the burnt offerings, and meat offerings, and the fat of the peace offerings.

65 And at that time Solomon held ^aa feast, and all Israel with him, a great congregation, from ^bthe entering in of Hamath unto ^cthe river of Egypt, before the LORD our God, seven days and seven days, *even* fourteen

66 days. On the eighth day he sent the people away: and they ¹⁹blessed the king, and went unto their tents joyful and glad of heart, for all the goodness that the LORD had done for David his servant, and for Israel his people.

9 AND ^ait came to pass, when Solomon had finished the building of the house of the LORD, ^band the king's house, and all ^cSolomon's desire

2 which he was pleased to do, that the LORD appeared to Solomon the second time, ^das he had appeared unto him at Gibeon.

B. C. 1001.

^a Lev. 23. 31.
2 Chr. 7. 8.
9.

^b Num. 31. 8.
Josh. 13. 5.
Judg. 3. 3.
ch. 4. 21.
24.
2 Ki. 11. 25.
Amos 6. 14.

^c Gen. 15. 18.
Ex. 21. 31.
Num. 34. 5.

¹⁹ Or. thanked.

CHAP. 9.

^a ch. 6. 37.
ch. 7. 51.

² Chr. 7. 11.

^b ch. 7. 1.
2 Chr. 8. 1-6.
Ecc. 2. 4.

^c 2 Chr. 8. 6.
Ecc. 2. 10.
Ecc. 6. 9.

^d ch. 3. 5.

consequent tokens of the divine blessing and continued protection of a people devoted to the Lord.

61. Let your heart therefore be perfect [אֵלֶיךָ מִלֵּב]—be at peace with God; *i. e.*, consecrated, given to him. The solemn devotion was concluded by an appropriate exhortation to the people to maintain a sincere and steady obedience to the divine law.

62-64.—HIS SACRIFICE OF PEACE OFFERING.

62. the king, and all Israel . . . offered sacrifice before the Lord. This was a burnt offering with its accompaniments, and being the first laid on the altar of the temple, was, as in the analogous case of the tabernacle, consumed by miraculous fire from heaven (see on 2 Chr. vii. 12: cf. Josephus, 'Antiquities,' b. viii., ch. iv., sec. 4.) On remarkable occasions the heathens sacrificed hecatombs (a hundred), and even chiliombs (a thousand animals); but the public sacrifices offered by Solomon on this occasion surpassed all the other oblations on record, without taking into account those presented by private individuals, which doubtless amounted to a large additional number. The large proportion of the sacrifices were peace offerings, which afforded the people an opportunity of festive enjoyment. An objection has been raised against the number of oxen and sheep sacrificed on this occasion, as extravagant and far exceeding the limits of credibility. The objection, however, will appear to be of very little weight, when it is remembered that these sacrificial victims were not offered exclusively on one altar, nor on one day; for not only was the festival continued for a fortnight (see on v. 65), but to meet the exigencies of an extraordinary solemnity, Solomon did doubtless, on Divine permission asked and granted, 'hallow the middle of the court'—*i. e.*, caused additional altars to be erected in the court of the priests, and perhaps in some adjoining courts, for use on that special occasion only, when a single altar was inadequate to the requirements. Nor is there any difficulty in conceiving from what sources so vast a supply of animals for sacrifice was obtained; for, in addition to the piety of private individuals who,

as already noticed, embraced that opportunity of presenting peace offerings, some vassal princes may, like Mesha, king of Moab (2 Ki. iii. 4), have rendered their tribute to Solomon in oxen and sheep. 63. So the king and all the children of Israel dedicated the house of the Lord. The dedication was not a ceremony ordained by the law, but it was done in accordance with the sentiments of reverence naturally associated with edifices appropriated to Divine worship. 64. The same day did the king hallow the middle of the court—*i. e.*, the whole extent of the priests' court, the altar of burnt offerings, though large (2 Chr. iv. 1), being totally inadequate for the vast number of sacrifices that distinguished this occasion. It was only a temporary erection, to meet the demands of an extraordinary season, in aid of the established altar, and removed at the conclusion of the sacred festival.

65.—THE PEOPLE JOYFUL.

65. from the entering in of Hamath unto the river of Egypt—*i. e.*, from one extremity of the kingdom to the other, the people flocked from all quarters. seven days and seven days, even fourteen days. The first seven were occupied with the dedication, and the other seven devoted to the feast of tabernacles (2 Chr. vii. 9). The particular form of expression indicates that the fourteen days were not continuous, and that some interval occurred in consequence of the great day of atonement falling on the tenth of the seventh month (v. 2: cf. Lev. xxiii. 27), and the last day of the feast of tabernacles was on the twenty-third (2 Chr. vii. 10), when the people returned to their homes (*lit.*, within tents), with feelings of the greatest joy and gratitude "for all the goodness that the Lord had done for David His servant, and for Israel His people." (See further as to the temple and the dedication of it, 2 Chr. iii.-viii.)

CHAP. IX. 1-9.—GOD'S COVENANT IN A SECOND VISION WITH SOLOMON.

1. And it came to pass, when Solomon had finished. This first verse is connected with the eleventh, all that is contained between *vv.* 2-10 being parenthetical. 2. That (rather *for*) the Lord appeared. This appearance was, like the

3 And the LORD said unto him, 'I have heard thy prayer and thy supplication that thou hast made before me: I have hallowed this house which thou hast built, ^f to put my name there for ever; ^g and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually. And if thou wilt ^h walk before me, as David thy father walked, in integrity of heart, and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded thee, and wilt keep my statutes and my judgments; then I will establish the throne of thy kingdom upon Israel for ever, ⁱ as I promised to David thy father, saying, There shall not fail thee a man upon the throne of Israel. 4 *But* ^j if ye shall at all turn from following me, ye or your children, and will not keep my commandments and my statutes which I have set before you, but go and serve other gods, and worship them; then ^k will I cut off Israel out of the land which I have given them; and this house, which I have hallowed ^l for my name, will I cast out of my sight; ^m and 5 Israel shall be a proverb and a byword among all people: and ⁿ at this house, *which* is high, every one that passeth by it shall be astonished, and shall hiss; and they shall say, ^o Why hath the LORD done thus unto this 6 land, and to this house? And they shall answer, Because they forsook the LORD their God, who brought forth their fathers out of the land of Egypt, and have taken hold upon other gods, and have worshipped them, and served them; therefore hath the LORD brought upon them all this evil. 7 10 And it came to pass at the end of twenty years, when Solomon had built the two houses, the house of the LORD, and the king's house, 11 (*now* Hiram the King of Tyre had furnished Solomon with cedar trees and fir trees, and with gold, according to all his desire,) that then king 12 Solomon gave Hiram twenty cities ¹ in the land of Galilee. And Hiram came out from Tyre to see the cities which Solomon had given him; and

B. C. 992.
 * 2 Ki. 20. 5.
 Ps. 10. 17.
 Ps. 31. 17.
 f ch. 8. 29.
 g Deut. 11. 12.
 h Gen. 17. 1.
 Gen. 21. 40.
 Gen. 43. 15.
 ch. 2. 4.
 i 2 Ki. 20. 3.
 j 2 Sam. 7. 12.
 k ch. 2. 4.
 ch. 6. 12.
 ch. 8. 15.
 Ps. 132. 12.
 l 1 Chr. 22. 10.
 m 2 Sam. 7. 14.
 2 Chr. 7. 10.
 n Ps. 89. 30.
 o Deut. 4. 21.
 2 Ki. 17. 21.
 2 Ki. 25. 21.
 p Jer. 7. 1.
 q Deut. 23. 37.
 r Fa. 44. 14.
 s Deut. 10. 24.
 t 2 Chr. 7. 21.
 u Jer. 22. 8.
 v 1 Which were inhabited by Canaanites.
 w 2 Chr. 8. 2.

former one at Gibeon, most probably made in a supernatural vision, and on the night immediately following the dedication of the temple (2 Chr. vii. 12). The strain of it corresponds to this view, for it consists of direct answers to his solemn inaugural prayer: v. 3 is an answer to ch. viii. 29; v. 4, 5, are an answer to ch. viii. 25, 26; v. 6-9, to ch. viii. 33-45 (see also Deut. xxix. 22-24).

8. *this house, which is high*—"high," either in point of situation—for it was built on a hill, and therefore conspicuous to every beholder; or "high" in respect to privilege, honour, and renown; or this house 'of the Most High,' notwithstanding all its beauty and magnificence, shall be destroyed, and remain in such a state of ruin and degradation as to be a striking monument of the just judgment of God. The record of this second vision, in which were rehearsed the conditions of God's covenant with Solomon, and the consequences of breaking them, is inserted here as a proper introduction to the narrative about to be given of this king's commercial enterprises and ambitious desire for worldly glory. For this king, by encouraging an influx of foreign people, and a taste for foreign luxuries, rapidly corrupted his own mind, and those of his subjects, that 'they turned from following God, they and their children' (v. 6).

10-23.—THE MUTUAL PRESENTS OF SOLOMON AND HIRAM.

10. at the end of twenty years. Seven and a half years were spent in building the temple (ch. vi. 38), and twelve and a half or thirteen in the erection of his palace (ch. vii. 1; 2 Chr. viii. 1). This verse is only a recapitulation of the first, necessary to recover the thread of connection in the narrative. 11. Solomon gave Hiram twenty cities in the land of Galilee. According to Jo-

sephus ('Antiquities,' b. viii., ch. vi., sec. 3), they were situated on the north-west of it, adjacent to Tyre. Had they lain within the boundaries of the promised land, they could not have been alienated (Lev. xxv. 23). But they were not within the territory of Israel, nor occupied by Israelites (2 Chr. viii. 2), but were inhabited by Canaanite heathens (Judg. iv. 2-13; 2 Ki. xv. 29); and being on the border, and his own acquisition, Solomon was at liberty to dispose of them (*Selden*, 'De Jure Nat. et Gen.' lib. vi., cap. 16). They were probably given to Hiram, whose dominions were small, as a remuneration for his important services in furnishing workmen, materials, and an immense quantity of wrought gold (v. 14), for the temple and other buildings. The gold, however, as others think, may have been the amount of forfeits paid to Solomon by Hiram for not being able to answer the riddles and apophthegms with which, according to *Josephus*, in their private correspondence, the two sovereigns amused themselves (see *Josephus* as above)—Hiram having refused these cities, probably on account of their inland situation making them unsuitable to his maritime and commercial people.

[He called them the land of Cabul, קבול. *Gesenius* quotes *Hiller*, in 'Onomast.,' V. T., who takes the name as contracted for קבול, participle passive of קבל, as something exhaled, as nothing, and adds, that something like this was perhaps present to the mind of the sacred writer. The Septuagint renders it by ὄμιον, as if their Hebrew text had read קבול, border, coast. This is a much more feasible origin of the name than the former. *Josephus* ('Antiquities,' b. viii., ch. vi., sec. 3) says that Cabul, in the Phœnician language, signified *what does*

13 they ²pleased him not. And he said, What cities *are* these which thou hast given me, my brother? And he called them the land of ³Cabul
 14 unto this day. And Hiram sent to the king sixscore talents of gold.
 15 And this *is* the reason of ²the levy which king Solomon raised; for to build the house of the LORD, and his own house, and ²Millo, and the
 16 wall of Jerusalem, and ⁷Hazor, and ⁸Megiddo, and ¹Gezer. For Pharaoh king of Egypt had gone up and taken Gezer, and burnt it with fire, and
 17 slain the Canaanites that dwelt in the city, and given it for a present unto his daughter, Solomon's wife. And Solomon built Gezer, and
 18 ¹Beth-horon the nether, and ¹⁰Baalath, and Tadmor in the wilderness, in
 19 the land, and all the cities of store that Solomon had, and cities for his chariots, and cities for his horsemen, and ⁴that which Solomon desired to build in Jerusalem, and in Lebanon, and in all the land of his dominion.
 20 And all the people *that were* left of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites,
 21 Hivites, and Jebusites, which *were* not of the children of Israel, their children ¹¹that were left after them in the land, whom the children of Israel also were not able utterly to destroy, upon those did Solomon levy
 22 a tribute ²of bond-service unto this day. But of the children of Israel did Solomon ²make no bondmen: but they *were* men of war, and his servants, and his princes, and his captains, and rulers of his chariots, and

E. C. 992.
 2 were not right in his eyes.
 3 That is, displeasing, or, dirty.
 4 ch. 5. 13.
 5 2 Sam. 5. 9.
 6 Josh 19 31.
 7 Josh. 17. 11.
 8 Judg. 1. 29.
 9 Josh. 16. 10.
 10 Josh. 21. 22.
 11 Josh. 19. 44.
 12 the desire of Solomon which he desired.
 13 Judg. 1. 21.
 14 Judg. 3. 1.
 15 Gen. 9. 25.
 16 Ezra 2. 55.
 17 Neh. 7. 57.
 18 Neh. 11. 3.
 19 Lev. 25. 39.
 20 Jer. 24. 14.

not please]. Solomon satisfied his ally in some other way; and taking these cities into his own hands, he first repaired their shattered walls, then filled them with a colony of Hebrews (2 Chr. viii. 2). They were suited only to agriculturists: the soil was rich and loamy, and required field labour, to which the Tyrians were not inured. The refusal, on such a ground, of these Galilean cities did not impair the amicable relations that subsisted between Solomon and Hiram (vv. 15-26). The Septuagint (Vatican) omits the whole passage contained within these verses.

15. **this is the reason of the levy.** A levy refers both to men and money; and the necessity for Solomon making it, arose from the many gigantic works he undertook to erect. **Millo**—part of the fort of Jerusalem, on mount Zion (2 Sam. v. 9; 1 Chr. xi. 8); or a row of stone bastions around mount Zion, Millo being the great corner-tower of that fortified wall (ch. xi. 27; 2 Chr. xxxii. 5). **the wall of Jerusalem**—either repairing some breaches in it (ch. xi. 27), or extending it, so as to inclose mount Zion. **Hazor**—fortified on account of its importance as a town in the northern boundary of the country. **Megiddo**—now Lejjun—lying in the great caravan road between Egypt and Damascus—was the key to the north of Palestine by the western lowlands, and therefore fortified. **Gezer**—or Gazer [גזר], on the northern border of Benjamin, in the Shephelah, or maritime plain, between Beth-horon the nether and the Mediterranean; and though assigned as a Levitical city, it continued to be occupied by the Canaanites. It was the scene of many a severe contest between the Hebrews and the Philistines (2 Sam. v. 25; 1 Chr. xx. 4), till at last, having fallen by right of conquest to the king of Egypt, who for some cause attacked it, it was given by him as a dowry to his daughter, and fortified by Solomon. [The sacking of Gezer by the Egyptian monarch is rendered in the Alexandrine version of the Septuagint literally from the Hebrew original, as in our own. It is omitted in the Vatican here, but is narrated in the Septuagint addition to Josh. xvi. 10, where, however, it is represented as a stronghold of the Canaanites and Perizzites.] **17. Beth-horon the nether**—

situated on the way from Joppa to Jerusalem and Gibbon; it required, from so public a road, to be strongly garrisoned. **18. Baalath**—Baalbec, called also Aven, or On (Amos i. 5). But some think that Baalath was in the south of Palestine, near the Shephelah, or Philistine plain (cf. 2 Chr. viii. 5). **Tadmor**—probably from [תַּדְמוֹר] palm, a city of palms; called by the Greeks Palmyra, between Damascus and the Euphrates—was rebuilt and fortified, as a security against invasion from Northern Asia. It was anciently a superb city, ten miles in circumference. It was situated in a dreary desert, in the midst of barren, uninhabited sands. It became the capital of a great kingdom, the emporium of the Eastern world; and its merchants dealt with the Roman and western nations for the products and luxuries of India and Arabia. *John of Antioch* says that the structures here erected by Solomon must have been demolished by Nebuchadnezzar, who, in his march to the siege of Jerusalem, destroyed this city. It is now a mass of magnificent ruins. In accomplishing these and various other works which were carried on throughout the kingdom, especially in the north, where Rezon of Damascus, his enemy, might prove dangerous, he employed vast numbers of the Canaanites as galley-slaves (2 Chr. i. 18), treating them as prisoners of war, who were compelled to do the drudgery and hard labour, while the Israelites were only engaged in honourable employment. This policy of employing the descendants of the Canaanites as serfs to labour in gangs, was contrary to the spirit of the Mosaic legislation, and was evidently borrowed from Egypt. Representations of the lowest caste employed as labourers on the public works, as the Fellahs in modern Egypt, are abundant on the ancient monumental paintings. Those remains of the Amorites were afterwards called "Solomon's servants" (Ezra ii. 55-58), and are supposed by some to have submitted to Solomon, who, on their renouncing idolatry, followed the precedent of the Gibeonites in their treatment. But proof is wanting. Solomon's possession of Edom, though a small territory, gave him command of the Red Sea and the great caravan routes into the country and ports of Arabia, while his acquisition of the

23 his horsemen. These were the chief of the officers that were over Solomon's work, five hundred and fifty, which bare rule over the people that wrought in the work.

24 But Pharaoh's daughter came up out of the city of David unto her house which Solomon had built for her: then did he build Millo. And three times in a year did Solomon offer burnt offerings and peace offerings upon the altar which he built unto the LORD, and he burnt incense upon the altar that was before the LORD. So he finished the house.

26 And king Solomon made a navy of ships in Ezion-geber, which is beside Eloth, on the shore of the Red sea, in the land of Edom. And Hiram sent in the navy his servants, shipmen that had knowledge of the sea, with the servants of Solomon. And they came to Ophir, and fetched from thence gold, four hundred and twenty talents, and brought it to king Solomon.

10 AND when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon, concerning the name of the LORD, she came to prove him with hard questions. And she came to Jerusalem with a very great train, with camels that bare spices, and very much gold, and precious stones: and

B C 992.
 a ch. 3. 1.
 ch 7. 8.
 2 Chr 8. 11.
 b 2 Sam 5. 9.
 ch. 11. 27.
 2 Chr. 32. 5.
 5 upon it.
 c Num 33. 75.
 Deut 2. 8.
 ch. 22. 43.
 2 Chr 20. 36.
 6 lip.
 d ch. 5. 6. 7.
 ch. 10. 11.
 e Job 22. 24.
 Ps. 45. 9.
 Isa. 13. 12.
 CHAP. 10.
 a Matt 12. 42
 Luke 11. 31.
 b Jude. 4. 12.
 Matt 13. 11.

Paran mountains secured him the extensive overland commerce to Egypt and Phœnicia (*Drew's 'Scripture Lands,' p. 131.*)

23. These were the chief of the officers—(see on 2 Chr. viii. 10.)

24-28.—SOLOMON'S YEARLY SACRIFICES.

25. three times in a year—viz., at the pass-over, pentecost, and feast of tabernacles (2 Chr. viii. 13; xxxi. 3). did Solomon offer burnt offerings, and peace offerings . . . and he burnt incense upon the altar (עֹלֹתָ לִי, he caused to ascend; עֲתָרָה (Hiphil), and he burnt incense)—i. e., not personally, but through the official instrumentality of Azariah (ch. iv. 2; cf. 1 Chr. vi. 10), or of some of the other priests. He could not without the most daring presumption have encroached upon the peculiar province of the priesthood (cf. 2 Chr. xxvi. 16-23). The circumstances mentioned in these two verses form a proper conclusion to the record of his buildings, and show that his design in erecting those at Jerusalem was to remedy defects existing at the commencement of his reign (see on ch. iii. 1-4).

26. Ezion-geber, which is beside Eloth. These were neighbouring ports at the head of the eastern or Eleanitic branch of the Red Sea. Tyrian ship-carpenters and sailors were sent there for Solomon's vessels, (see on 2 Chr. viii.) "Ezion-geber"—i. e., the giant's backbone: so called from a reef of rocks at the entrance of the harbour. "Eloth"—Elim, or Elath; i. e., 'the trees': a grove of terebinths still exists at the head of the gulf. 28. Ophir—a general name, like the East or West Indies with us, for all the southern regions lying on the African, Arabian, or Indian seas, so far as at that time known. Some consider the name as specially applicable to Ceylon. gold, four hundred and twenty talents—(see on 2 Chr. viii. 18.) At 125 lbs. Troy, or 1,500 ounces to the talent, and £4 to the ounce, this would make £2,604,000.

CHAP. X. 1-13.—THE QUEEN OF SHEBA ADMIRES THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON.

1. the queen of Sheba. As to where her country was, some think it was the Sabean kingdom of Yemen, of which the capital was Saba (Mariaba, according to *Eratosthenes*; Sabatha, according to *Ptolemy*; Mareb and Saba, or Azab, according to the natives), in Arabia Felix; others,

that it was in African Ethiopia—i. e., Abyssinia—towards the south of the Red Sea. The opinions preponderate in favour of the former. This view harmonizes with the language of our Lord, as Yemen means 'south'; and this country, extending to the shores of the Indian Ocean, might in ancient times—i. e., in our Lord's age, when the boundaries of the known land southward were *Raptam*, or *Prassum*—be considered "the uttermost parts of the earth." [The principal reasons for concluding that the queen came from this district of Arabia may be summarized as follows:—First, the presents she brought to Solomon were products of that country, as stated by *Strabo*, *Pliny*, and others; secondly, the expression, βασιλισσα νότου, "queen of the south" (Matt. xii. 42) corresponds with the Hebrew Teman, the Arabic Yemen; thirdly, the phrase, εκ των περαιων της γης, in the same passage of Matthew, corroborates this view; fourth, the traditions of the Jewish as well as Christian Church, together with the opinions of Arabian writers, tend unitedly in the same direction. (See the subject discussed at large in *Forster's 'Arabia,'* and in *Bruce's 'Travels in Abyssinia.'*)] heard of the fame of Solomon—(doubtless by the Ophir fleet, concerning the name of the Lord—meaning either his great knowledge of God, or the extraordinary things which God had done for him. hard questions—enigmas, or riddles. The Orientals delight in this species of intellectual exercise, and test wisdom by the power and readiness to solve them. 2. a very great train, with camels. These animals could not have come from the shores of the Indian Ocean, both on account of the immense deserts that intervened and the hostile opposition of countless tribes. A long train of those beasts of burden forms the common way of travelling in Arabia; and the presents specified consist of the native produce of that country. Of course, a royal equipage would be larger and more imposing than an ordinary caravan. spices. Arabia surpassed every other country in the world for the richness of its spices. *Milton*, in alluding to these fragrant products, speaks of the breezes which waft far out to sea

'Sabeian odours from the spicy shore Of Araby the blest.'

Amongst these spices would be myrrh, a product of Arabia Felix, no less than of Abyssinia, being

when she was come to Solomon, she communed with him of all that was 3 in her heart. And Solomon told her all her ¹questions: there was not 4 any thing hid from the king, which he told her not. And when the queen of Sheba had seen all Solomon's wisdom, and the house that he

B C. 992.
 Pro. 1. 6.
 Isa. 60. 4.
 Col 2. 3.
 1 words.

the resinous gum of an odoriferous shrub, valued as a favourite perfume, and frequently given in ancient times as a present, on account of its rarity and usefulness; spikenard, an unguent extracted from a species of valerian, which grows on the high and arid pastures of India; the sweet cane, the aromatic calamus of India; cinnamon, procured from Ceylon; and cassia, another species of cinnamon, from the Malabar coast. All these highly prized spices, which were either the native produce of Arabia, or, being brought to the ports of that country by the Ophir merchantmen, were carried into every part of the land by the trading caravans, were brought to Solomon by the queen of Sheba, as presents, which she knew would be acceptable to that prince. 3. And Solomon told her all her questions [שאלות]—matters, subjects of conversation, including the [קשות] hard questions (v. 1); solved all her enigmas, riddles (in this sense the words are used, Judg. xiv. 12-14)—a species of occupation or favourite pastime, on which the greatest and wisest people of the East have in all ages delighted to exercise their genius and their wit. That the queen of Sheba's questions were neither of a learned nor philosophical cast, related neither to moral principles nor religious mysteries, but were nothing else than enigmas and riddles, is placed beyond a doubt by the testimony of *Josephus* ('Antiquities,' b. viii., ch. v., sec. 3), already referred to, who informs us that the wise monarch of Israel used to relieve his graver cares by corresponding about these agreeable trifles, both with king Hiram and another Tyrian of great celebrity for his activity, skill, and acuteness in such puzzling subjects, as also by the well-known fact that they form a favourite source of enjoyment with the higher circles in many countries of the East at the present day. The Talmud, among the wild and foolish fictions with which that collection abounds, relates many stories of Solomon, whom the blind admiration of his countrymen has made to play as romantic a part as their Arabian and Persian neighbours have assigned in their well-known tales, to the most renowned of the caliphs. Of a prince so greatly loved and admired as Solomon was by his contemporaries, both at home and abroad, it is natural to suppose that many anecdotes, illustrative of the brilliancy and acuteness of his mind, would be circulated in his day, and be fondly transmitted from father to son as memorials of a great monarch, in whose reign they could boast of having lived; but whether the stories ascribed to him in this strange miscellany refer to events which actually occurred, and which became afterwards a part of the traditional legends of the country, or whether they are pure inventions of the Rabbis, it is now impossible to determine. Out of this immense mass of stories and anecdotes the following is selected as bearing upon the illustration of this passage, and furnishing a sample of 'the hard questions with which the queen of Sheba proved' Solomon. The legend informs us that the queen having exhausted her whole collection of "questions," which she had studiously made of the most difficult kind, but which the quick and penetrating mind of Solomon easily unravelled, determined on making her last and greatest effort, by which she persuaded herself she would bring to a stand

the hitherto invincible powers of the monarch. She formed a nosegay of the rarest and most beautiful exotics, such as were growing in the pleasant gardens of the palace, and with the names and the hues of which she knew the royal student of nature to be well acquainted. In the construction of this artificial bouquet, she had exhausted all the resources of art to render it a perfect imitation of natural beauty, and, carefully concealing from all but her immediate attendants the secret of its origin, she arranged and brought it out in such a manner that it was impossible to judge by the eye whether it was a production of nature or of art. It remained only to choose a proper time, when the king might be taken by surprise, for the trial of her ingenious stratagem; and fixing therefore on the hour when Solomon was seated amid a circle of his courtiers at the gate of his palace, in the course of his daily administration of justice, she presented herself abruptly before him, and holding up her nosegay at such a distance that no scent, had there been any, could have been perceived, she challenged him to tell her whether it was natural or artificial. The king looked intently at the splendid bouquet, but seemed at a loss for a reply. The whole divan were thrown into confusion by the unexpected occurrence—the first time they had ever seen their king in perplexity—and waiting in silence, trembled for the honour of their prince, when, happily looking around in his distress from the open scaffolding that formed his tribunal, he espied a swarm of bees fluttering about some wild flowers, and censing the nosegay, without declaring his object, to be placed on the meadow, he soon beheld them, with the greatest satisfaction, refuse to alight on the queen's bouquet, thus giving the most decisive evidence that it was a work of art. His triumph was complete; the whole court rang with applause at the sagacity of the king; and the queen of Sheba, when she saw this fresh proof of the wisdom of Solomon, "had no more spirit in her." there was not any thing hid from the king, which he told her not—i. e., there were none of the questions she put to the king, nor of the subjects she consulted him about, which he did not understand, nor explain to the satisfaction of his royal visitor. 4. And when the queen of Sheba had seen all Solomon's wisdom [חכמת שלמה]—the wisdom of Solomon. Under this word the Hebrews comprehended a very large circle of mental endowments and useful qualities—not only speculative, but practical knowledge; and therefore the queen of Sheba's admiration must be considered as directed to the whole economy of his government; the comprehensive plans he formed for engaging the industry of his subjects at home, and for introducing rivers of wealth into his kingdom through the channels of foreign commerce; the order that reigned in the vast establishments of the palace and the temple; his exquisite skill in the fine arts, the literary works he composed displaying a perfect familiarity with the entire range of the natural science of his age; and the penetrating insight he possessed into the principles of human nature: all these this Arabian princess had opportunities of witnessing during her sojourn at the court of Jerusalem. and the house that he had built [ביתו], and the palace (κατ' ἐξοχὴν), as distinguished from the

5 had built, and the meat of his table, and the sitting of his servants, and the ²attendance of his ministers, and their apparel, and his ³cup-bearers, ⁴and his ascent by which he went up unto the house of the LORD; there

B. C. 1022.
² standing
³ Or, butlers.
⁴ 1 Chr 26.16.

temple, which is called *בֵּית הַיְהוָה*. 5. And the meat of his table—including the immense amount, variety, and luxuriousness of the daily provisions (cf. ch. iv. 22, 23), as well as the sumptuous splendour of the equipage at the royal table (v. 21). and the sitting of his servants *וְיָשְׁבוּ*—and the seat of his servants; i. e., the particular place assigned to each according to gradation; or the collective body of his servants (cf. Ps. i. 1, where the original word is used to denote a session or assembly), with the tout ensemble of the household economy, and particularly the orderly manner of the domestic arrangement in the servants' halls and at the various tables in the court. An oriental sovereign always possesses a vast number of servants; but whether we consider his large and luxurious table, the extent of his harem, the magnificent edifices he reared, and the spacious pleasure-grounds he maintained, the numerous stud in the king's mews (see *Josephus*, 'Antiquities,' b. viii., ch. vi., sec. 3), besides the long retinue of liveried lackeys that composed his official equipage, Solomon must have had an enormous number of domestics, natives and foreigners (see on their different names and conditions among the Hebrews, Gen. xiv. 14; xv. 3; xvii. 12, 23; Num. xxxi. 11, 26, 35; Dent. xx. 14; xxi. 10). and the attendance of his ministers *וְיָשְׁבוּ*—and the standing, the station, of his ministers, denoting probably not only the graduated position occupied by each at the public levees, but, in a wider sense, the posts held in the court and government, and their apparel. While that of Solomon himself was gorgeous, his royal robes being usually of very rich stuffs, white (*Josephus*, 'Antiquities,' b. viii., ch. vii., sec. 3), the dress of his attendants also was distinguished for its elaborateness and splendour. In particular, in his daily progresses to his gardens and pleasure-grounds, he was accompanied by a numerous retinue of riders, young men in the flower of their age, eminent for their tall and handsome figure, their long luxuriant hair hanging over their shoulders, profusely sprinkled with gold dust, while their persons were attired in costly garments of Tyrian purple, with the additional accoutrements of armour and bow, and his cup-bearers *וְיָשְׁבוּ*. Our translators, following the Septuagint [which has *τους αἰνοχόους αὐτοῦ*], have considered that butlers are meant. The cup-bearer certainly was an office of great importance and influence in the palace of ancient Oriental sovereigns (Neh. i. 11), and might be entitled to the distinction of a separate notice. [*Keil*, however, reads, *וְיָשְׁבוּ*; denoting turned work. In this sense it occurs in ch. vi. 23, 28; Exod. xxv. 18; while it is used, Gen. xl. 21, to denote the care of drinking vessels; so that he understands it, with the Chaldee version, as referring to the furnishing and contents of the wine cellar.] and his ascent by which he went up unto the house of the Lord *וַיַּעֲלֵהוּ*. The Septuagint renders this clause, *καὶ τὴν ὀλοκαύτωσιν αὐτοῦ ἣν ἀνέφερον ἐν οἴκῳ κυρίου*, and the holocaust (burnt offering) which he offered in the house of the Lord]. The Chaldee, Syriac, and Arabic versions give a similar translation, and so also does *Luther* in his German Bible. Under the burnt offering, as the principal, the other

sacrifices are understood to be comprehended; and, in his construction of the temple, and the order of the sacred service, which doubtless would be objects of interest to the queen of Sheba, she would be accompanied by Solomon, who would furnish all necessary information as to the nature, reason, or symbolical import of the various offerings. This translation, however, though strenuously maintained by eminent writers as giving the true meaning of the passage, is not generally acquiesced in; and the view most favoured by modern scholars is, that it contains a reference to the famous viaduct which Solomon made from his palace in the city of David to the temple (2 Chr. ix. 4). *Mr. Williams* ('Holy City') is of opinion that this approach was formed by an earthen mound, and identifies it with the street extending from the bazaars to the western gate of the Haram—the usual way of descent to the Place of Wailing. But if this "ascent" was only an elevated bank of earth, which was formed with labour and expense, to fill up the ravine between the two hills, she must have been very inexperienced indeed when she was overwhelmed with astonishment at the sight of a construction so common. It was not, however, a mound or causeway, but a viaduct, spanned by arches, and described elsewhere as a "covert for the sabbath, and the king's entry without" (2 Ki. xvi. 18)—i. e., his private entrance into the temple, which formed an object of such unbounded admiration to the Queen of Sheba (cf. 1 Chr. xxvi. 16). To *Dr. Robinson*, the celebrated American traveller, the Christian world is indebted, not only for the discovery of it, but for directing attention to the purpose of the erection. Having observed some of the huge stones jutting out from the western walls, he imagined at first that this mural dislocation had been produced by the shock of an earthquake, or some violent commotion. But on further examination, he found that the stones appeared to have belonged to an arch, and at length was forced to conclude that this arch must have formed part of the BRIDGE, which, according to *Josephus*, led from this part of the temple to the Xystus on Zion. 'The traces of this arch are too distinct and definite to be mistaken. Its southern side is 39 English feet distant from the south-west corner of the area, and the arch itself measures 51 feet along the wall. Three courses of its stones still remain, of which one is 5 feet 4 inches thick, and the other not much less. One of the stones is 20½ feet long, another 24½ feet, and the rest in like proportion. The part of the curve or arc which remains is of course but a fragment; but of this fragment the chord measures 12 feet 6 inches, the sine 11 feet 10 inches, and the cosine 3 feet 10 inches. The distance from this point across the valley of the Tyropœon to the precipitous natural rock of Zion we measured, and found it to be 350 feet, or about 116 yards. This gives the proximate length of the ancient bridge (*Josephus*, 'Antiquities,' b. xiv., ch. iv., sec. 2; 'Jewish Wars,' b. i., ch. 7, sec. 2; ii., 16, 3; vi., 6, 3; vi., 8, 1). Captain Wilson, who is employed by the Palestine Exploration Society, has discovered one of the arches of this bridge in a good state of preservation. The span of this arch is between forty and fifty feet, composed of large stones, like those seen at the Jewish Wailing Place. As to the immense stones used in the arch, the fire with which the Chaldeans

6 was no more spirit in her. And she said to the king, It was a true
 4 report that I heard in mine own land of thy 5 acts, and of thy wisdom.
 7 Howbeit I believed not the words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen
 it; and, behold, the half was not told me: 6 thy wisdom and prosperity
 8 exceedeth the fame which I heard. Happy 6 are thy men, happy are
 these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and that hear
 9 thy wisdom. Blessed 7 be the LORD thy God, which delighted in thee, to
 set thee on the throne of Israel: because the LORD loved Israel for ever,
 10 therefore 9 made he thee king, 8 to do judgment and justice. And she
 gave the king an hundred and twenty talents of gold, and of spices very
 great store, and precious stones: there came no more such abundance of
 spices as these which the queen of Sheba gave to king Solomon.
 11 And 1 the navy also of Hiram, that brought gold from 2 Ophir, brought
 12 in from Ophir great plenty of 7 almug trees, and precious stones. And
 k the king made of the almug trees 8 pillars for the house of the LORD, and
 for the king's house, harps also and psalteries for singers: there came no
 13 such almug trees, nor were seen unto this day. And king Solomon gave
 unto the queen of Sheba all her desire, whatsoever she asked, besides that
 which Solomon gave her 9 of his royal bounty: so she turned, and went
 to her own country, she and her servants.
 14 Now the weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year was six
 15 hundred threescore and six talents of gold, besides that he had of the
 merchant-men, and of the traffic of the spice-merchants, and l of all the

B. C. 992.

4 word.
 5 Or,
 sayings.
 6 thou hast
 added wis-
 dom and
 goodness
 to the
 fame.
 7 Pro. 8. 34.
 8 ch. 5. 7.
 9 Dan. 2. 21.
 10 Pro. 8. 15.
 11 ch. 9. 27.
 12 Job 22. 21.
 13 algum
 trees.
 14 2 Chr. 9. 10.
 15 2 Chr. 9. 11.
 16 a prop. or,
 rails.
 17 according
 to the
 hand of
 king
 Solomon.
 18 Ps. 72. 10.
 19 Is. 21. 13.
 20 Gal. 4. 25.

destroyed the first temple would not affect these foundations; nor is it probable that a feeble colony of returning exiles could have accomplished works like these. There is therefore little room for hesitation in referring them back to the days of Solomon' ('Biblical Researches,' i., pp. 425-428; *Drew's* 'Scripture Lands,' p. 161, note 30; 'Hand-book of Syria and Palestine,' p. 120; 'Tent and Khan,' p. 275). there was no more spirit in her—(cf. Dan. x. 17.) 6. It was a true report, &c. The proofs she obtained of Solomon's wisdom, not from his conversation only, but also his works; the splendour of his palace, the economy of his kitchen and table, the order of his court, the gradations and gorgeous costume of his servants—above all, the arched viaduct that led from his palace to the temple (2 Ki. xvi. 18), and the remains of which have been recently discovered—overwhelmed her with astonishment. 9. Blessed be the Lord thy God—(see on ch. v. 7.) It is quite possible, as Jewish writers say, that this queen was converted, through Solomon's influence, to the worship of the true God. But there is no record of her making any gift or offering in the temple. 10. she gave the king an hundred and twenty talents of gold—\$720,000. These and other presents she brought were not as tribute, but tokens of amity (cf. 2 Chr. ix. 23, 24).

11. almug trees—or algum. Parenthetically, along with the valuable presents of the queen of Sheba, is mentioned a foreign wood, which was brought in the Ophir ships. It is thought by some to be the sandal-wood, the produce of a low shrub, resembling the privet, remarkable for the fragrance of the central parts of the stem near the root, and brought from some district of India, where it is still very abundant; by others, supposed to be the Deodar (*Cedrus deodara*), a species of fragrant fir, much used in India for sacred and important works. Solomon used it as well-fitted by its red colour to be ornamental for stairs in his temple and palace (2 Chr. ix. 11), but chiefly for musical instruments. 'Sandal-wood is found indigenous

on the coast of Malabar only; and one of its numerous names there and in Sanscrit is *Val-gulka*,—clearly the name which Jewish and Phœnician merchants corrupted into *algum*, and which in Hebrew was still further changed in *almug*' (*Max Müller*, 'Lectures on the Science of Language,' pp. 189-191). 13. all her desire, whatsoever she asked, besides—i. e., Solomon not only gave his illustrious guest all the insight and information she wanted, but, according to the Oriental fashion, which is to ask or specify certain objects which it would be agreeable to obtain, gave her ample remuneration for the presents she had brought—i. e., besides his presents in return for hers, made a free donation of whatever she liked.

14-29.—HIS RICHES.

14. Now the weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year—666 talents, equal to £3,996,000. The sources whence this was derived are not mentioned; nor was it the full amount of his revenue; for this was "besides that he had of the merchant-men, and of the traffic of the spice-merchants, and of all the kings of Arabia, and of the governors of the country." The great encouragement he gave to commerce was the means of enriching his royal exchequer. By the fortifications which he erected in various parts of his kingdom, and particularly at such places as Thapsacus, one of the passages of the Euphrates, and at Tadmor, in the Syrian desert, he gave complete security to the caravan trade from the depredations of the Arab marauders; and it was reasonable that, in return for this protection, he should exact a certain toll or duty for the importation of foreign goods. A considerable revenue, too, would arise from the use of the store cities and khans he built; and it is not improbable that those cities were emporia where the caravan merchants unloaded their bales of spices and other commodities, and sold them to the king's factors, who, according to the modern practice in the East, retailed them in the Western markets at a profit. 'The revenue derived from the tributary kings, and from the governors of

16 kings of Arabia, and of the ¹⁰governors of the country. And king Solomon made two hundred targets of beaten gold: six hundred shekels of gold went to one target. And he made ^mthree hundred shields of beaten gold; three pound of gold went to one shield: and the king put them in the house ⁿof the forest of Lebanon.

18 Moreover ^othe king made a great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with 19 the best gold. The throne had six steps, and the top of the throne was round ¹¹behind: and there were ¹²stays on either side on the place of the 20 seat, and two lions stood beside the stays. And twelve lions stood there on the one side and on the other upon the six steps: there was not ¹³the 21 like made in any kingdom. And all king Solomon's drinking vessels were of gold, and all the vessels of the house of the forest of Lebanon were of pure gold; ¹⁴none were of silver: it was nothing accounted of in the days 22 of Solomon. For the king had at sea a navy ²of Tharshish with the navy of Hiram: once in three years came the navy of Tharshish, bringing gold, and silver, ¹⁵ivory, and apes, and peacocks.

B. C. 992.
 10 Or, captains.
^m ch. 11. 25.
ⁿ ch 7. 2.
^o 2 Chr. 9. 17.
¹¹ on the hinder part thereof.
¹² bands.
¹³ so.
¹⁴ Or, there was no silver in them
^p Gen 10 4.
^{ch} 22. 45.
¹⁵ Or, elephants' teeth.

the country,' must have consisted in the tribute which all inferior magistrates periodically bring to their sovereigns in the East, in the shape of presents of the produce of their respective provinces. **governors**—מְשָׁרְתִים. The Septuagint renders it by σατραπών. Is this a foreign word, having a Semitic status constructus, and the plural pachoth? The word pechah is remarkable from its early reception into Hebrew, having become a title of some "governors" in Solomon's outlying dominions. For in that they are mentioned both here and 2 Chr. ix. 14, in union with the kings of "Arabia," as persons who supplied a yearly quantity of gold in addition to his regular revenue, and this in connection with that derived from the merchants, it is in itself probable that "the pachoth of the land" were governors set over the outlying country beyond Judea proper, (cf. ch. xx. 4; 2 Ki. xviii. 24-34; Esth. viii. 9; ix. 3; Ezra v. 3; vi. 6; viii. 36; Neh. xi. 7, 9; &c.) It seems to me most probable that Solomon adopted the title as it already existed in the Syrian territories; for it is not said that he placed *pechahs*, but that they paid him gold. Thus the name "rajah," is continued in our Indian dominions. If pechah is connected with pashâh, the history of the word would be curious' (Note by Max Müller—Pusey, 'On Daniel,' p. 566, 567). **16. two hundred targets . . . six hundred shekels.** These defensive arms were anciently made of wood, and covered with leather: Solomon's were covered with fine gold. 600 shekels were used in the gilding of each target; 200 targets had 300 shields, having three pounds of gold in one shield. The targets were circular, perhaps with an *umbo* or convex protuberance in the centre, designed to be fastened on the person for the protection of the breast. The shields, which were only half the weight of the targets, were made probably in the form of upright bucklers, borne by an armour-bearer (cf. 'Nineveh and Babylon,' p. 194). They were intended for the state armoury of the palace (see on ch. xiv. 26). They were ranged on the walls of the armoury (Song iv. 4), upon pins fixed in the walls for the purpose (cf. Isa. xxii. 24), as in the Assyrian temples.

18. a great throne of ivory. It seems to have been made, not of solid ivory, but veneered. It was in the form of an arm-chair with a carved back. The ascent to it was by six steps, on each of which stood lions, in place of a railing; while a lion, probably of gilt metal, stood at each side, which, we may suppose from the analogy of other Oriental thrones, supported a canopy (Sir Thomas

Roe's 'Voyages,' p. 456, where he gives an account of the throne of the great Mogul, bearing a resemblance to Solomon's magnificent seat of majesty, but much inferior: see also Rawlinson's 'Herodotus,' ii., p. 178, note, p. 179). A golden footstool is mentioned (2 Chr. xi. 18) as attached to this throne, whose magnificence is described as unrivalled. **21. all king Solomon's drinking vessels were of gold, &c.** The magnificence of Eastern monarchs was generally indicated by a profuse display of gold and silver vessels in their palaces. All these products may still be procured in great abundance in Ceylon, which Bochart considered to be Ophir, to which Solomon's fleet traded. **22. at sea—on the Mediterranean. a navy of Tharshish—Tartessus,** between the mouths of the Bœtis, now Guadalquivir, in the south of Spain [Septuagint, Vatican, *Θαρσῖς*; Alexandrine, *Θαρσῖς*], where gold, and especially silver, was got anciently in so great abundance that it "was nothing accounted of in the days of Solomon." But Tharshish came to be a general term for the west of Europe, (Ps. lxxii. 10; Jon. i.) Solomon's fleet, "with the navy of Hiran"—*i. e.*, manned with Phœnician mariners, sailed from the port of Ezion-geber; but whether, doubling the Cape, they steered by the western coast of Africa, northward to Tartessus, in Spain, or there might be a place of that name in India, is unknown. 'There may have been,' as Henderson remarks, 'both a Spanish and an Indian Tharshish, just as the name India came to be transferred from the east to the distant west.' **once in three years—i. e.**, third year. Without the mariner's compass, they had to coast along the shore, and make their voyage by monsoons. The ivory, apes, and peacocks might have been purchased, on the outward or homeward voyage, on the coast of Sofala, in South Africa, and some portion of the Indian peninsula, where those animals were to be found. **ivory** [עֵבֶרֶת, plural] (cf. 2 Chr. ix. 21)—known to the ancients as an Indian product. Thus Virgil, 'India mittit ebur; molles sua thura Sabæi.' [This word, according to Gesenius, is compounded of עָבַר, tooth—generally used in the Old Testament for ivory—and עָבַר, contracted for עֵבֶרֶת, from the Sanscrit *ibha-s*, elephant. Keil derives the Hebrew word from the Coptic *eboy*, elephant, with the article *n*. Other derivations have been suggested. The Septuagint, Vatican, has *λίθων θορυβῶν καὶ πελεκητῶν*, turned and polished stones (v. 11). The Alexandrine renders by *οδοντῶν ελεφαντιῶν*, elephants' teeth.]

23 So king Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth for riches and for
 24 wisdom. And all the earth ¹⁶sought to Solomon, to hear his wisdom,
 25 which God had put in his heart. And ²they brought every man his
 present, vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and garments, and armour,
 and spices, horses, and mules, a rate year by year.
 26 And Solomon ⁷gathered together chariots and horsemen: and he had a
 thousand and four hundred chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen, whom
 he bestowed in the cities for chariots, and with the king at Jerusalem.
 27 And ²the king ¹⁷made silver to be in Jerusalem as stones, and cedars
 made he to be as the sycamore trees that are in the vale, for abundance.
 28 ¹⁸And Solomon had horses brought out of Egypt, and ¹liven yarn: the
 29 king's merchants received the linen yarn at a price. And a chariot came
 up and went out of Egypt for six hundred *shekels* of silver, and an horse
 for an hundred and fifty: and ¹⁹so for all the kings of the Hittites, and
 for the kings of Syria, did they bring them out ¹⁹by their means.
 11 BUT king Solomon loved ²⁰many strange women, ¹together with the
 daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites,
 2 Zidonians, and Hittites; of the nations concerning which the LORD said
 unto the children of Israel, ²¹Ye shall not go in to them, neither shall they

B. C. : 81.
 16 sou:ht
 the face of.
 17 1's 6'. 29.
 18 Deut. 17. 16.
 19 2 Chr. 1. 15.
 17 gave
 18 And the
 going forth
 of the
 horses
 which
 were
 Solomon's.
 19 Eze. 27. 7.
 20 Josh. 1. 4.
 21 by their
 hand.

CHAP. 11.
 a Gen. 6. 2.
 Ezra 9. 12.
 1 Or. beside.
 b Ex. 31. 16.
 Deut. 7. 3.

and apes [אפֿים]. The Hebrew *koph* bears a considerable resemblance to the Singhalese *kapi*, rendered by *Clough*, in his valuable 'Dictionary,' 'an ape or monkey;' Septuagint, Alexandrine, *πιδυκωσι*, apes]. and peacocks [פֿיפֿים], plural (cf. 2 Chr. ix. 21). 'The word "sikki" rendered by the same lexicographer, a "peacock," also bears some similarity to the Hebrew *tuk'em*. In Malabar the word "togu," which (as well as *kapi* and *sikki*) is derived from the Sanscrit, is said to mean peacocks; and this comes nearer the Hebrew (*Hardy's* 'Notices of the Holy Land,' p. 3). [Septuagint, Alexandrine, *τράωνων*]. 'These names for apes and peacocks are foreign words in Hebrew, as much as *gutta percha* and *tobacco* are in English; and as those animals are natives of India, their names make it certain that this country was Ophir' (*Max Müller*). They were particularized probably as being the rarest articles on board, and received as great and interesting curiosities (previously unknown in Western Asia) into that large and noble collection of animals which Solomon, in his fondness for natural history, had made (ch. iv. 33).
 24. all the earth sought to Solomon, &c.—*i. e.*, in a loose sense, the sovereignties of the neighbouring kingdoms, or the countries of Western Asia.
 25. they brought every man his present—*i. e.*, to him as their feudal superior. No doubt, the making of presents is in the East an established custom of social life. Not only when going into the presence of a superior is it usual to pay such a compliment, but even in familiar visits amongst inferior people the presentation of some gift—even a flower or fruit—some token of regard, is expected; and the visitor who should omit or neglect the observance of this mark of civility would incur the suspicion of intending to affront or defraud the person on whom he waited. But the presents described in this verse as brought to Solomon by foreign princes, were of a totally different character from the conventional tokens of civil intercourse. They were made as an acknowledgment of dependence and subjection—in fact, a kind of homage or tribute to Solomon; and that we are to understand the presents spoken of in this verse as brought with such a view, is evident from the fact that they were contributed "a rate year by year," as in Assyria ('Nineveh and Babylon,' p. 635). 26. (See on 2 Chr. i. 14-17).

CHAP. XI. 1-8.—SOLOMON'S WIVES AND CON-
 CUBINES IN HIS OLD AGE.

1. But king Solomon loved many strange women [נָשִׁים זָרִים], foreign women; Septuagint, Vatican, *ἡν φιλογυνους*; Alexandrine, *φιλογυναιος ην*. Solomon's extraordinary gift of wisdom was not sufficient to preserve him from falling into grievous and fatal errors. A fairer promise of true greatness, a more beautiful picture of juvenile piety, never was seen, than that which he exhibited at the commencement of his reign. No sadder, more humiliating, or awful spectacle can be imagined than the besotted apostasy of his old age; and to him may be applied the words of Paul (Gal. iii. 3), of John (Rev. iii. 17), and of Isaiah (xiv. 21). A love of the world, a ceaseless round of pleasure, had insensibly corrupted his heart, and produced, for a while at least, a state of mental darkness. The grace of God deserted him; and the son of the pious David—the religiously trained child of Bath-sheba (Prov. xxxi. 1-3) and pupil of Nathan—instead of showing the stability of sound principle and mature experience, became at last an old and foolish king (Eccl. iv. 13). His fall is traced to his love of "many strange women." Polygamy was tolerated among the ancient Hebrews; and although in most countries of the East the generality of men, from convenience and economy, confine themselves to one woman, yet a number of wives is reckoned an indication of wealth and importance, just as a numerous stud of horses and a grand equipage are amongst us. The sovereign of course wishes to have a more numerous harem than any of his subjects; and the female establishments of many Oriental princes have, both in ancient and modern times, equalled or exceeded that of Solomon's. It is probable, therefore, that in conformity with Oriental notions, he resorted to it as a piece of state magnificence. But in him it was unparadonable, as it was a direct and outrageous violation of the divine law (Deut. xvii. 17), and the very result which that statute was ordained to prevent was realized in him. His marriage with the daughter of Pharaoh is not censured either here or elsewhere (see on ch. iii. 1). It was only his love for many strange women of that collective body of Canaanites with whom the Israelites of all classes had been interdicted

come in unto you: for surely they will turn away your heart after their 3 gods. Solomon clave unto these in love. And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines: and his wives turned 4 away his heart. For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, *that* his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not 5 perfect with the LORD his God, as *was* the heart of David his father. For Solomon went after ^aAshtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, and after 6 Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. And Solomon did evil in the sight of the LORD, and ²went not fully after the LORD, as *did* David his 7 father. Then ^cdid Solomon build an high place for ^fChemosh, the abomination of Moab, in ^gthe hill that *is* before Jerusalem, and for 8 Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon. And likewise did

B. C. 934.

^c Deut. 7. 4.
Deut. 17. 17.
Neh. 13. 26.
27.
^d Judg. 2. 13.
Judg. 10. 6.
1 Sam. 7. 3.
4.
Jer. 2. 10.
² fulfilled
not after.
Num 14 21.
^e Num. 33.52.
^f Num. 21.29.
^g 2 Ki. 23. 13.

from intermarrying (Exod. xxxiv. 15, 16; Deut. vii. 1-3; Ezra ix. 1, 2; x. 3; Neh. xiii. 23); for women, though in the East considered inferiors, exert often a silent but powerfully seductive influence over their husbands in the harems, as elsewhere; and so it was exemplified in Solomon. **2. Solomon clave unto these in love** [פָּרַט]—was attached to them, devoted to them, hung upon them in love, as a husband to a wife (Gen. ii. 24; xxxiv. 3), subjects to their king (2 Sam. xx. 2, and people to their God (Deut. x. 20; xi. 22; Ps. lxxiii. 9) [Septuagint, *eis autous ekollēthē* Σαλωμών του ἀγαπήσαι, Solomon was glued (fastened) to them (the idols in love)]. **3. wives, princesses.** They were probably, according to an existing custom, the daughters of tributary chiefs, given as hostages for the good conduct of their fathers. **concubines**—were legitimate, but lower or secondary wives. These the chief or first wife regards without the smallest jealousy or regret, as they look up to her with feelings of respectful submission. Solomon's wives became so numerous not all at once, but gradually, as even at an early period his taste for Oriental show seems to have led to the establishment of a considerable harem (Song vi. 8). **4. when Solomon was old.** He could not have been more than fifty. But his love of splendour was intense; and a long course of voluptuous indulgence had so far weakened the energy of his will, that, in opposition, it must be supposed, to his better judgment, he succumbed to the domination of the senses. **his wives turned away his heart after other gods.** Some, considering the lapse of Solomon into idolatry as a thing incredible, regard him as merely humouring his wives in the practice of their superstition, and, in countenancing their respective rites by his presence, as giving only an outward homage, a sensible worship, in which neither his understanding nor his heart were engaged, but from his fondness for a sensuous ritual, dazzled and took strong hold of his imagination. The apology only makes matters worse, as it implies an adding of hypocrisy and contempt of God to an open breach of His law. There seems no possibility of explaining the language of the sacred historian, but as intimating that Solomon became an actual and open idolater—[to go “after other gods” (v. 5) is the usual formula for lapsing into idolatry (Deut. viii. 19; xi. 28; xiii. 3; Judg. ii. 12; Jer. xxxv. 15)]—worshipping images of wood or stone in sight of the very temple which in early life he had erected to the true God. Hence that part of Olivet was called the high place of Tophet (Jer. vii. 30-34); and the hill is still known as the mount of Offence, or the mount of Corruption (2 Ki. xxiii. 13). **5. Ashtoreth**—plural, Ashtaroth (Astarte), a female divinity worshipped by the Sidonians (v. 53; 2 Ki. xxiii. 13) [Septuagint,

τη Ασταρτη (cf Gen. xiv. 5), the moon]. **Milcom** (v. 33; 2 Ki. xxiii. 13)—Molech, (see *Mover's* ‘Die Religion und die Gottheiten der Phönizier,’ p. 12, &c.) But though Milcom is commonly considered synonymous with Molech, and both were idolized by the Ammonites, there was a difference between them, not only in name, but in their place of worship (the former in a temple built on a mountain east of Jerusalem, the latter in the valley of Hinnom), and in their rites, Molech being infamous for the immolation of children; but the rites of Milcom are unknown. Milcom, or Malcam, their king (Jer. xlix. i. 3; Zeph. i. 3; Amos i. 15), comes from the same root as Molech. **7. Then did Solomon build an high place for Chemosh** [Septuagint, *Χαμὸς*]. Hewas the tutelary divinity, the national idol of the Moabites (Num. xxi. 29; Jer. xlviii. 7, 13, 46); and though he is once called the god of the Ammonites (Judg. xi. 24), that designation arose *entirely* from a community of feeling between two nations having the same origin, for Chemosh was an idol distinct from Milcom. He built altars for these three; but although he is described, v. 8, as doing likewise “for all his strange wives,” there is no evidence that they had idols differing from these. The daughter of Pharaoh must be considered an exception; for neither here nor elsewhere is mention made of a temple to Ammon or Osiris. Amongst the very numerous notices of the Edomites and the Hittites which are contained in the historical books of the Old Testament, there is no allusion or hint as to the religion or worship of either (2 Ki. xxiii. 13; 2 Chr. xxv. 20); and the probability is, that they adopted the ritual of one of these three great idols, whose worship, particularly the Zidonian, was, through the civilization and commercial intercourse of the people of Zidon with other nations, extensively prevalent. *Corbair* has suggested (‘Journal of Sacred Literature,’ October, 1852) that the two names in this verse refer to the same idol, Chemosh (vanquisher, subduer) being the proper appellative, and Molech an epithet, signifying the *royal god*, and identical with Baal (Jer. xix. 5; xxxii. 35; Ezek. xx. 23-31: cf. Lev. xviii. 21; xx. 1-8). **in the hill that is before Jerusalem.** This hill appears, from Zech. xiv. 4, to be the mount of Olives. ‘This position is not thus indicated in relation to the Jerusalem that now is, or afterwards was, but as it then existed, confined mainly to mount Zion. Bearing this in mind, there is no difficulty in correctly locating the scene of these abominable transactions on the summit immediately east of Siloam and the lower part of Zion; but travellers, unmindful of the local mutations of the city, and locating it on the east, or before the present city, have greatly misplaced it. The portion of mount Olivet thus designated is nearly isolated, being merely con-

he for all his strange wives, which burnt incense, and sacrificed unto their gods.

9 And the LORD was ^hangry with Solomon, because his heart was turned
10 from the LORD God of Israel, ⁱwhich had appeared unto him twice, and
^jhad commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after
11 other gods: but he kept not that which the LORD commanded. Where-
fore the LORD said unto Solomon, Forasmuch as this ^kis done of thee, and
thou hast not kept my covenant, and my statutes, which I have
commanded thee, ^lI will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give
12 it to thy servant. Notwithstanding in thy days I will not do it for David
13 thy father's sake: but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son. Howbeit
^mI will not rend away all the kingdom; but will give ⁿone tribe to thy
son ^ofor David my servant's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake, ^pwhich I
have chosen.

B. C. 984.

^h Deut. 7. 3.
Ps. 90. 7.
ⁱ ch. 3. 5.
ch. 9. 2.
^j ch. 6. 12.
ch. 9. 6.
^k is with
thee.
^l ch. 12. 15.
2 Ki. 17. 15.
^m 2 Sam. 7. 15.
Ps. 89. 37.
ⁿ ch. 12. 20.
^o Ex. 32. 13.
2 Ki. 13. 23.
^p Deut. 12. 11.
2 Ki. 21. 4.

nected to the remainder by the isthmus over which the road to Bethany passes. It rises very precipitously, and to a considerable height above the Kedron and the valley on the east, which nearly inclose it. The picturesque sepulchral village of Siloam, where, "it is said," Solomon kept his strange wives, occupies a portion of its north-western face, opposite the "Virgin's Fount;" and many other sepulchres are found in its cliffs around. It is the southernmost or right-hand portion of mount Olivet (see on 2 Ki. xxiii. 13) (*Barclay's* 'City of the Great King,' p. 65; *Rosenmüller's* 'Geography,' i. p. 7; *Porter's* 'Handbook,' p. 100). This rock has in modern times been designated, from Solomon's idolatrous worship, 'the mount of Offence.' *Robinson* ('Biblical Researches,' i. p. 405) says this name, *mons Offensionis*, seems to have arisen A. D. 1283. It was an aggravation of the idolatrous conduct of Solomon that the temples of these idols were erected in sight of the temple of Jehovah, and that as the pool of Siloam was situated at the mouth of the Tyropeon—opposite to, and just a few yards from, the mount of Offence—the priests officiating in both temples would draw the water necessary for their respective lustrations from the same source (see *Porter* and *Rawlinson* as above, and *Drew's* 'Scripture Lands,' p. 157). 8. burnt incense, and sacrificed unto their gods. The first was considered a higher act of homage, and is often used as synonymous with worship (2 Ki. xxii. 17; xxiii. 5). Thus the wisdom of the uxorious monarch fell before the irresistible power of love. There is a difference between the religion of the heart and that of the head; and while David his father, amid his many great sins, never let his faith be extinguished, but, on repentance, returned with all the ardour of a first love to God as the chosen portion of his soul, Solomon cast off all homage to Jehovah as the covenanted God of Israel. It is impossible to believe that so acute and reflecting a mind as his could settle down into atheism. But into infidelity he did certainly fall; and whether, having indulged in philosophizing views of religion, he became a votary of nature-worship—a Pantheist—conceiving it was a matter of indifference in what mode or by what rites the Deity was worshipped, for under whatever name,

'Jehovah, Jove, or Lord,'

the same object of faith was present to the minds of the intelligent; or whether, as has been already observed, he was deluded, through the vitiating influence of sensuality, into absolute idolatry, it is certain that he renounced the faith of his fathers; or if he still adhered to it in external observance, he set before his subjects an attempt

at the impossible union of the worship of idols with that of Him whose first command to Israel was, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." Solomon's religious perversion, and the cause that produced it, are graphically described by *Milton* in these beautiful lines—

'Ashtoreth, whom the Phœnicians called
Astarte, Queen of Heaven, with crescent horns;
To whose bright image nightly by the moon,
Sidonian virgins paid their vows and songs,
In Zion not unsung, where stood at length
Her temple on th' offensive mountain, built
By that uxorious king, whose heart, though large,
Reguled by fair idolatresses, fell
To idols foul.'—'PARADISE LOST,' b. i.

9. 13.—GOD THREATENS HIM.

9. the Lord was angry with Solomon. The Divine appearance, first at Gibeon, and then at Jerusalem, after the dedication of the temple, with the warnings given him on both occasions, had left Solomon inexcusable; and it was proper and necessary that on one who had been so signally favoured with the gifts of heaven, but who had grossly abused them, a terrible judgment should fall. The Divine sentence was announced to him probably by Abijah; but there was mercy mingled with judgment, in the circumstance that it should not be inflicted on Solomon personally, and that a remnant of the kingdom should be spared—'for David's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake, which had been chosen' to put God's name there; not from a partial bias in favour of either, but that the Divine promise might stand, (2 Sam. vii.) 13. I will give one tribe to thy son—i. e., the large and populous tribe of Judah, including the small tribe of Benjamin, which was contiguous, and, in fact, divided with it the possession of Jerusalem. *Josephus* ('Antiquities,' b. viii., ch. vii., sec. 5) expressly mentions 'two tribes.' There were left to Rehoboam the tribes of Judah, Benjamin, and Levi (2 Chr. xi. 12, 13), and multitudes of Israelites, who, after the schism of the kingdom, established their residence within the territory of Judah, to enjoy the privileges of the true religion (ch. xii. 17). These are all reckoned as one tribe. Respecting Solomon's multiplication of wives, it may be observed that the sin was his own. 'His heart was turned away after other gods;' but the apostasy was personal, not national. The people at large were not involved in its guilt, and therefore did not forfeit the tenure of the land of Canaan. But Solomon was punished; as the kingdom was taken from his family—not wholly, indeed (a small remnant being reserved, from regard to David, and to Jerusalem, the place which Jehovah had chosen), nor in his lifetime, although the latter

14 And the LORD ^pstirred up an adversary unto Solomon, Hadad the
 15 Edomite: he *was* of the king's seed in Edom. For ^qit came to pass, when
 David was in Edom, and Joab the captain of the host was gone up to
 16 bury the slain, ^rafter he had smitten every male in Edom, (for six months
 did Joab remain there with all Israel, until he had cut off every male in
 17 Edom,) that Hadad fled, he and certain Edomites of his father's servants
 18 with him, to go into Egypt; Hadad *being* yet a little child. And they
 arose out of Midian, and came to Paran: and they took men with them
 out of Paran, and they came to Egypt, unto Pharaoh king of Egypt; which
 19 gave him an house, and appointed him victuals, and gave him land. And
 Hadad found great favour in the sight of Pharaoh, so that he gave him
 20 to wife the sister of his own wife, the sister of Tahpenes the queen. And
 the sister of Tahpenes bare him Genubath his son, whom Tahpenes weaned
 in Pharaoh's house: and Genubath was in Pharaoh's household among
 21 the sons of Pharaoh. And ^swhen Hadad heard in Egypt that David slept
 with his fathers, and that Joab the captain of the host was dead, Hadad
 said to Pharaoh, ^tLet me depart, that I may go to mine own country.
 22 Then Pharaoh said unto him, But what hast thou lacked with me, that,
 behold, thou seekest to go to thine own country? And he answered,
^uNothing: howbeit let me go in any wise.

B. C. 931.
^p Deut. 31. 16.
 17.
 Deut. 32. 39,
 41.
 1 Chr. 5. 26.
 Isa. 10. 5,
 26.
 Isa. 13. 17.
 Nah. 1. 2.
 Hos. 9. 12.
^q 2 Sam. 8. 14.
 1 Chr. 15. 12,
 13.
 Ps. 103. 10.
^r Gen. 25. 23.
 Gen. 27. 40.
 Num. 24. 19.
 Deut. 10. 13.
 1's co.
 title.
^s 1 Ki. 2. 10,
 31.
^t Send me
 away.
^u Not.

period of his reign was disturbed by foreign adversaries in the remote parts of his kingdom-empire.

14.40.—SOLOMON'S ADVERSARIES.
14. The Lord stirred up an adversary . . . Hadad the Edomite [הַדָּדִי, or אֲדוֹמִי (v. 17); Septuagint, Ἀδὰδ (the dynasty of the Hadads continued till the reign of David, the last sovereign being probably the Hadad, not Hadar, mentioned Gen. xxxvi. 39, and also in 1 Chr. i. 50-51; and the grandfather of the prince who is mentioned here)]—"stirred up," i. e., permitted him, through the impulse of his own ambition or revenge, to attack Israel. During the war of extermination which Joab carried on in Edom (2 Sam. viii. 13), this Hadad, of the royal family [הַמִּלְכִּי, מֶלֶךְ; Septuagint, παιδαριονμικρόν], a mere boy when rescued from the sword of the ruthless conqueror, was carried into Egypt, hospitably entertained, and became allied with the house of the Egyptian king. **15.** when David was in Edom [Septuagint, ἐν τῷ ἔδαμῳ]—when David had laid waste Edom. and Joab the captain of the host was gone up to bury the slain. It appears from the record (2 Sam. viii. 13) that David in person gained a signal victory over the Edomites in the valley of Salt (cf. Ps. lx. 6-12; lxxviii. 7-13). Beyond the bare announcement of the fact, however, no information is given; and we should have been left in complete ignorance of every circumstance connected with that campaign, but for a few incidental details introduced into this passage. Whatever was the cause of provocation given by the Edomites—whether, as appears probable from the relation in 2 Sam. viii., that people had taken advantage of David's absence in northern Syria, to invade his kingdom, or from some other cause of offence—he marched against them with a great army (cf. 1 Chr. xviii. 12), and having overtaken them "in the valley of Salt" (the north of the Arabah) he took summary vengeance upon them: the slaughter was immense. It was assigned to Joab, after David's return to his capital, to carry out the victory. Accordingly he proceeded to Edom, and remained for six months in that country, pursuing a war of extermination against the adult male population. There is an obscurity about the statement of Joab's going up to bury

the slain,—whether, as *Hengstenberg, Keil, &c.* think, it refers to the Israelites who fell in the valley of Salt, and whose bodies had lain without the rites of sepulture till his arrival; or, as *Stanley* suggests, it applies to the Edomite males, whom he interred in the rocky caverns of Petra. But the revenge was dreadful; and so great was the terror inspired by the energetic and sanguinary proceedings in Edom, that no attempt to disturb the Hebrew conquerors of their acquisitions in that country was made for a long course of time. **18.** they arose out of Midian. [*Themius*, in his 'Commentary,' suggests that instead of מִדְיָן, there should be substituted נֶגֶב, in the Negeb of Palestine, which he supposes might be the temporary residence of the Edomite royal family; and the Septuagint has ἐκ τῆς πύδνεως Μαδίαμ.] But there is no reason to suspect the genuineness of the Hebrew text, which gives an intelligible account of the young prince's flight, first amongst some of the nomadic tribes of that Midian which lay east of Edom (Num. xxii. 4, 7; xxv. 15-31), its capital, Midian, being situated on the Arnon, or more probably of the Sinaitic Midian (see on Exod. ii. 15), whence, finding a safe opportunity, he was conveyed, under the care of a friendly escort, westward to the town of Pharan, in the wilderness of that name (et-Tih), and sought a permanent asylum in Egypt. The reigning monarch belonged to the dynasty of the military pontiffs, and was predecessor of Solomon's father-in-law (*Uhlenmunn*, 'Egypt. Alt.,' b. iii., ch. ii., sec. 9; *Lepsius*, 'Kritik der Quellen,' p. 499; *Browne's* 'Ordo Sæclorum,' sec. 513; *Nolan's* 'Egyptian Chronology Analyzed'). In after-years the thought of his native land and of his lost kingdom taking a strong hold of his mind, Hadad, on learning the death of David and Joab, renounced the ease, possessions, and glory of his Egyptian residence, to return to Edom, and attempt the recovery of his ancestral throne. **22.** Then Pharaoh said unto him, But what hast thou lacked with me, &c.? The king of Egypt endeavoured in vain to dissuade him, but at length yielded to Hadad's importunities. But whether he assisted him with troops to prosecute his claims as Pretender, we are not informed; nor is any account given in the sacred history of the result of his enterprise.

23 And God stirred him up another adversary, Rezon the son of Eliadah, which fled from his lord Hadadezer king of Zobah. And he gathered men unto him, and became captain over a band, when David slew them of Zobah: and they went to Damascus, and dwelt therein, and reigned in Damascus. And he was an adversary to Israel all the days of Solomon, besides the mischief that Hadad did: and he abhorred Israel, and reigned over Syria.

26 And Jeroboam the son of Nebat, an Ephrathite of Zereda, Solomon's servant, whose mother's name was Zeruah, a widow woman, even he lifted up his hand against the king. And this was the cause that he breached the city of David his father. And the man Jeroboam was a mighty man of valour: and Solomon seeing the young man that he was industrious, he made him ruler over all the charge of the house of Joseph.

B. C. 914.
 2 Sam 8 3,
 2 Sam 10 9,
 2 Sam. 15,
 18,
 1 Chr. 18 3,
 2 Sam. 10 9,
 13,
 2 Chr. 15 2,
 ch. 12 2,
 ch. 13 1,
 2 Chr. 13 6,
 2 Sam. 10,
 21,
 ch. 9 21,
 closed.
 did work.
 Pro 22 29,
 burden.

But the Septuagint inserts a clause to the effect that he succeeded in his attempt [αὐτῆ ἡ κακία ἣν ἐποίησεν Ἀδερ: καὶ ἐβαρύνθησεν Ἰσραὴλ, καὶ ἐβασίλευσεν ἐν γῆ Ἐδῶμ—This was the evil (mischief) which Hadar (Hadad) produced. His movements caused much annoyance to the Hebrew government, and he reigned in (established himself on the throne of) Edom]. This statement, however, is not only unwarranted by the Hebrew text in the passage under review, but it is contrary to historical fact, Edom remaining tributary to Judah even in the time of Jehoshaphat (ch. xxii. 47).

23. God stirred . . . up another adversary, Rezon the son of Eliadah, &c. This man, who had probably been general of Hadadezer, and on the defeat of that great king (2 Sam. viii. 3-8) had successfully withdrawn a large force, went into the wilderness, led a predatory life, like Jephthah, David, and others, on the borders of the Syrian and Arabian deserts, and having acquired great power through the aid of the marauding party that followed him, at length became king in Damascus, threw off the yoke, and was 'the adversary of Israel all the days of Solomon.' According to the tenor of the context, the concluding clause of v. 25 must refer to this chief, and be considered as describing the full extent of the kingdom which he had acquired. *Josephus* ('Antiquities,' b. viii., ch. vii., sec. 6), apparently following the version of the LXX., gives a different account. According to him, Hadad, finding all his attempts to recover his hereditary kingdom defeated by the numerous and powerful garrisons which the Hebrews had planted throughout the Edomite territory, turned his views northward, and joining with Rezon, a leader of banditti, found in the unprotected state of Syria, a country open to the incursions of a bold and powerful invader. He became king of that extensive region, giving a roving commission to Rezon in the outlying district of Syria, and he was the first Hadad, his successors taking the official title of Benhadad from him, the illustrious founder of the powerful kingdom of Damascus Syria. These hostile neighbours, who had been long kept in check by the traditional fame of David's victories, took courage, and breaking out towards the latter end of Solomon's reign, must have not only disturbed his revenue, by stopping his lucrative traffic with Tadmor and the Euphrates. [The following is the text of the Septuagint, from which *Josephus* drew his account:—Καὶ ἤγειρε κύριος Σατάν τῷ Σαλωμών, τὸν Ἄδερ τὸν Ἰδουμαίου, καὶ τὸν Εσφάμ

ἰὺν Ἐλιαδάδ τὸν ἐν Ραμεθὰ Ἀδαδέξερ βασιλέα Σουβὰ κύριον αὐτοῦ, καὶ συνηθροίσθησαν ἐπ' αὐτὸν ἄνδρες, καὶ ἦν ἄρχων συστρέματος, καὶ προκατελάβετο τὴν Δαμασκὴν καὶ ἦσαν Σατάν τῷ Ἰσραὴλ πάσας τὰς ἡμέρας Σαλωμών, καὶ Ἄδερ ὁ Ἰδουμαῖος ἐκ τοῦ σπέρματος τῆς βασιλείας ἐν Ἰδουμαίᾳ—And the Lord raised up an adversary to Solomon, Adar the Idumean, and Esrom, son of Eliadah (who fled from) the Syrian, Hadadezer, king of Zobah, his master. They collected a body of men against him (Solomon), and he (Hadad) was leader of the tumultuary band, and seized upon Damascus, and they were adversaries to Israel all the days of Solomon. And Adar the Idumean was of the royal family of Edom.] This was in various respects a severe blow to Solomon; for 'the revolt of the Damascenes in the north must have been followed not only by the removal of his garrisons from that city, but by the evacuation of those desert fortresses which he had built for the security of his north-eastern territories. Nor were these the only results of that revolt. There was an immediate reduction of his revenues from this source, in consequence of the establishment of the new power at Damascus; and now the wealthy graziers of the Golan and Bashan plains were no longer protected from invasion. Their estates, their flocks, their encampments, were continually liable to loss and damage' (*Drew's* 'Scripture Lands,' p. 163).

26. And Jeroboam the son of Nebat, an Ephrathite of Zereda [עֲרֵדָה, Jarobeam (whose people is many)]—"son of Nebat," identical, according to Jewish tradition, with Shimei (see on 2 Sam. xvi. 5); "an Ephrathite"—i. e., belonging to the territory of Ephraim; "of Zereda" (cooling) (2 Chr. iv. 17: cf. Judg. v. 22), a town near Scythopolis [Septuagint, ἐκ τῆς Σαυράδ], whose mother's name was Zeruah [זְרוּחָה, leprous], a widow woman. On the assumption that Nebat=Shimei, she was reduced to a state of widowhood by the execution of her husband, near the commencement of Solomon's reign (see on ch. ii. 46). 28. And the man Jeroboam was a mighty man of valour [יָבֵר, יָבֵר]—mighty, in power, as of Nimrod (Gen. x. 8), in wealth, as of Boaz, Kish, and other Israelites (Ruth ii. 1; 1 Sam. ix. 1; 2 Ki. xv. 20). But in this passage it is used metaphorically of strong mental capability, active, enterprising [Septuagint, ἀνὴρ ἐργων]. and Solomon seeing the young man that he was industrious [עָבֵד, עָבֵד]—that he did the king's business (cf. Dan. viii. 27). he made him ruler [מָלַךְ]—set him over. all the charge.

29 And it came to pass at that time when Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem, that the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite found him in the way; and he had clad himself with a new garment; and they two were alone in the field: and Ahijah caught the new garment that was on him, and rent it in twelve pieces: and he said to Jeroboam, Take thee ten pieces; for thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, Behold, I will rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and will give ten tribes to thee: (but he shall have one tribe for my servant David's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake, the city which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel:) because that they have forsaken me, and have worshipped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, Chemosh the god of the Moabites, and Milcom the god of the children of Ammon, and have not walked in my ways, to do that which is right in mine eyes, and to keep my statutes and my judgments, as did David his father. Howbeit I will not take the whole kingdom out of his hand: but I will make him prince all the days of his life for David my servant's sake, whom I chose, because he kept my commandments and my statutes: but I will take the kingdom out of his son's

B. C. 984.
 Josh. 18. 1.
 ch. 12. 15.
 ch. 14. 2.
 2 Chr. 9. 20.
 1 Sam. 15
 27. 28.
 1 Sam. 21. 5.
 ch. 12. 1, 10-20.
 ch. 3. 14.
 ch. 6. 12, 13.
 1 Chr. 53. 9.
 2 Chr. 15. 2.
 Jer. 2. 13.
 Hos. 4. 17
 a Judg. 2. 13.
 1 Sam. 7. 3.
 Num. 21. 29.
 Jer. 43. 7.
 13.
 f Acts 7. 43.

[אֲחִיָּהּ, all the burden; Septuagint, τας αρσεις, all the loads, burdens]. In short, Jeroboam was a young man of talent and energy, who, having been appointed by Solomon superintendent of the public works projected around Jerusalem, had risen into public notice; and on being informed by a very significant act of the prophet Ahijah of the royal destiny which by Divine appointment awaited him, his mind took a new turn. He became an internal enemy, of a still more formidable character than either Hadad or Rezon.

29. the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite [אֲחִיָּהּ שִׁילֹנִי] (see on 2 Sam. xv. 12)—i. e., a native or inhabitant of Shilo (Seilû) [Septuagint, Σελοῦ; Josephus, 'Antiquities,' b. v., ch. i., secs. 19, 20, Σιλουῦ; but 'Antiquities,' b. viii., ch. vii., sec. 7, Σιλω (cf. ch. xiv. 2, 4). The Septuagint has Ἀχιά ὁ Σηλωνίτης (see on Josh. xviii. 1-10; Judg. xxi. 19, 21).] He was successor to Nathan and Gad. A building still stands in Seilû which goes by the name of en-Neby Ahijah, the prophet Ahijah (*Thrupp*, 'Ancient Jerusalem,' p. 404). His ministrations were carried on amidst the tribes on the central highlands of Ephraim, among the oldest and most influential families in the country, and in the tribe which was the most important, both in respect of its large interest in the prosperity of the state and of its ancestral recollections. Moreover, one of the holy places was possessed by them. Shiloh, with a sacred antiquity now gathering around it, continually reminded them of what was forgotten amid the pomp of the southern city. There accordingly an expression of the gathering discontent of the better spirit of the community was first made public; and it was very naturally first heard there, since "the burden of Joseph," imposed according to the fertility and productiveness of the soil, would, in that garden district of the country, be most irksome and oppressive' (*Drew's* 'Scripture Lands,' p. 162). and he had clad himself [אָבַד]—having wrapped himself. with a new garment [אָבַד] by transposition for אָבַד, the wide outer mantle, or cloak (Gen. ix. 23; Deut. xxii. 17). The meaning is, 'Ahijah the Shilonite, the prophet, went and took a fit station in the way, and in order that he might not be known, he wrapped himself up, so as closely to conceal himself, in a new garment, a surtout, which he afterwards tore in twelve pieces.

30. And Ahijah caught the new garment that was on him, and rent it in twelve pieces. This is the first symbolical action recorded of a prophet. From the rude and imperfect state of language in early times, men would insensibly acquire the habit of communicating ideas by an intermixture of gestures and words; and this practice, called 'the voice of the sign' (Exod. iv. 8) was continued in a more advanced condition of social life, when any new or important intelligence was to be communicated, as well fitted to strike the attention, to engage the imagination, and to impress the memory. Hence it was resorted to by Ahijah on his interview with Jeroboam, (cf. Jer. xxvii. 2, &c.) Notwithstanding this privacy, the story, and the prediction connected with it, probably reached the king's ear, and Jeroboam became a marked man. His aspiring ambition, impatient for the death of Solomon, led him to form plots and conspiracies, in consequence of which he was compelled to flee to Egypt. Though chosen of God, he could not wait the course of God's providence, and therefore incurred the penalty of death by his criminal rebellion. The heavy exactions and compulsory labour (v. 28) which Solomon latterly imposed upon his subjects, when his foreign resources began to fail, had prepared the greater part of the kingdom for a revolt under so popular a demagogue as Jeroboam. But there were other causes which combined to disturb the close of Solomon's reign, and to unsettle his throne. Everything human and earthly, governments as well as humbler associations, has a destined course to run. The kingdom of Israel reached its culminating point under David and Solomon,—of vigour and conquest under the former, and of wealth and splendour under the latter. But the fabric of Solomon's grandeur had not the elements of stability; and being corrupt in its internal state, as well as wholly tactitious in its external relations with the world, it was ere long dismembered, broken into fragments, and like a splendid vision, passed away. The severity of his despotic rule, rivalling the magnificence of the ancient Oriental autocrats, and oppressing his people by grudging exactions to maintain his numerous harem, as well as outraging the feelings of the better classes by his woeful idolatries, trampling upon the national constitution, and altering the character and destiny of Israel by his commercial and unrestricted intercourse with other nations; above all, having failed to consolidate his wide-spread empire by the bond of the true religion, his government neither enjoyed the blessing of God, nor secured the attachment

36 hand, and will give it unto thee, *even* ten tribes. And unto his son will I give one tribe, that ⁹ David my servant may have a ⁹ light always before me in Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen me to put my name there.

37 And I will take thee, and thou shalt reign according to all that thy soul

38 desireth, and shalt be king over Israel. And it shall be, if thou wilt hearken unto all that I command thee, and wilt walk in my ways, and do *that is* right in my sight, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as David my servant did, that I ^h will be with thee, and ⁱ build thee a

39 sure house, as I built for David, and will give Israel unto thee: and I will for this afflict the seed of David, but not for ever.

40 Solomon sought therefore to kill Jeroboam: and Jeroboam arose, and fled into Egypt, unto Shishak king of Egypt, and was in Egypt until the death of Solomon.

41 And ^j the rest of the ¹⁰ acts of Solomon, and all that he did, and his

42 wisdom, *are* they not written in the book of the acts of Solomon? And ^k the ¹¹ time that Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel *was* forty

43 years. And ^l Solomon slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David his father: and ^m Rehoboam his son reigned in his stead.

12 AND ⁿ Rehoboam went to Shechem: for all Israel were come to Shechem to make him king.

2 And it came to pass, when ^b Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who was yet ^c in Egypt, heard *of it*, (for he was fled from the presence of king Solomon, and Jeroboam dwelt in Egypt,) that they sent and called him. And Jeroboam and all the congregation of Israel came, and spake unto

4 Rehoboam, saying, Thy father made our ^a yoke grievous: now therefore make thou the grievous service of thy father, and his heavy yoke which he

5 put upon us, lighter, and we will serve thee. And he said unto them,

B. C. 981.
 ch. 15. 4.
 2 Ki. 8. 19.
 Ps 132. 17.
 Amos 9. 11.
 12.
 Luke 1. 69.
 70, 73, 79.
 Acts 15. 13.
⁹ lamp, or, candle.
 2 Sam. 21.
 17.
 2 Chr. 21. 7.
^h D ut. 31. 8
 Josh. 1. 5.
ⁱ 2 Sam. 7. 11,
 27.
^j 2 Chr 9. 29.
¹⁰ Or, words,
 or, things.
^k 2 Chr. 9. 33.
¹¹ days.
^l 2 Chr 9. 31.
^m Matt. 1. 7,
 called
 Rehoboam.
 CHAP. 12.
^a 2 Chr 10. 1.
^b ch. 11. 23.
^c ch. 11. 40.
^d 1 Sam. 8. 11-15.
 ch. 4. 7, 22.
 ch. 9. 15.

of the people, and so it declined. Solomon's great sagacity, enlarged by the experience of a long reign, enabled him to foresee the outburst of impending calamities; and the close of his life was embittered by anxious forebodings. His reign realized the prophetic description by Samuel of what the future king in Israel would be and do.

36. that David my servant may have a light [״]

—a lamp; *i. e.*, posterity (ch. xv. 4; 2 Sam. xiv. 7); *lit.*, that there may be a light to David my servant for ever; *i. e.*, that his dynasty may be preserved in unbroken continuity. The main idea pervading the context is, that a disruption of the kingdom would take place, in consequence of the misgovernment of so untheocratic a king as Solomon; that he and his successors would be visited with adversity, in a milder or severer form, according to their transgressions; but that although the largest portion of Israel would revolt from the son of Solomon, God would not allow the throne to be wholly and finally taken from the family of David, by giving it to another family. 39. I will for this afflict the seed of David, but not for ever. This affliction refers principally to the Babylonish captivity, from which few Israelites, except those of the house of Judah, returned. The house of David was in successive centuries reduced to a low and obscure condition; but the kingdom was restored to them in the person of the Messiah.

40. Shishak—or Shishonk, according to the Egyptian monuments, who harboured and encouraged the rebellious refugee, was of a different dynasty from the father-in-law of Solomon. The dynasty of the military pontiffs had just terminated, and was succeeded by the twenty-second dynasty, of which Shishak was the founder.

43. Rehoboam his son reigned in his stead. Jehovah, who was the head of the theocracy, had

(2 Sam. vii.) guaranteed, by a solemn promise to David, the regal succession to his dynasty; and in virtue of this divine arrangement Rehoboam was the legitimate heir to the throne. His accession accordingly took place in Jerusalem, on the demise of his father.

CHAP. XII. 1-5.—REFUSING THE OLD MEN'S COUNSEL.

1. Rehoboam went to Shechem [שֵׁכֶם], enlarger of the people; Septuagint, Ποβόαμ]. He was the eldest, if not the only, son of Solomon, and had been doubtless designated by his father heir to the throne, as Solomon had been by David. The incident here related took place after the funeral obsequies of the late king, and the period for public mourning had passed. When "all Israel came to make him king"—*i. e.*, the public representatives of all Israel (cf. 1 Sam. viii. 4, 7, 10, 19, 21; x. 17, 19; xi. 14; xii. 1; 2 Sam. iii. 21; v. 1, 3; xix. 43, 44; xxi. 1, &c.)—it was not to exercise their old right of election (1 Sam. x. 19-21); for, after God's promise of the perpetual sovereignty to David's posterity, their duty was submission to the authority of the rightful heir; but their object was, when making him king, to renew the conditions and stipulations to which their constitutional kings were subject (1 Sam. x. 25), and to the omission of rehearsing which, under the peculiar circumstances in which Solomon was made king, they were disposed to ascribe the absolutism of his government. Shechem [Septuagint, Σικμα]—an ancient, venerable, and central town—was the place of convocation; and it is evident, if not from the appointment of that place, at least from the tenor of their language, and the concerted presence of Jeroboam, that the people were determined on revolt.

4. now therefore make thou the grievous service of thy father, and his heavy yoke . . . lighter.

- Depart yet for three days, then come again to me. And the people departed.
- 6 And king Rehoboam ^econsulted with the old men, that stood before Solomon his father while he yet lived, and said, How do ye advise that I may answer this people? And they spake unto him, saying, ^fIf thou wilt be a servant unto this people this day, and wilt serve them, and answer them, and speak good words to them, then they will be thy servants for ever.
- 7 But he forsook the counsel of the old men, which they had given him, and consulted with the young men that were grown up with him, and which stood before him: and he said unto them, What counsel give ye that we may answer this people, who have spoken to me, saying, Make the yoke which thy father did put upon us lighter? And the young men that were grown up with him spake unto him, saying, Thus shalt thou speak unto this people that spake unto thee, saying, Thy father made our yoke heavy, but make thou ^git lighter unto us; thus shalt thou say unto them, My ^hlittle *finger* shall be thicker than my father's loins. And now whereas my father did lade you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke: my father hath chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.
- 8 So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam the third day, as the king had appointed, saying, Come to me again the third day. And the king answered the people ⁱroughly, and forsook the old men's counsel that they gave him; and spake to them after the counsel of the young men, saying, My father made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke: my father *also* chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.
- 9 Wherefore the king hearkened not unto the people; for ^kthe cause was from the LORD, that he might perform his saying, which the LORD ^lspake by Ahijah the Shilonite unto Jeroboam the son of Nebat.

R. C 975.

2 Sam. 16.
50.
2 Sam 17.5.
Job 12. 12.
Job 32. 7.
Pro. 27. 10.
Eccl. 10. 4.
Jer. 42. 2-5.
Jer. 43. 2.
2 Chr. 10. 7.
Pro 15. 1.
Mark :0 43.
44.
Phil. 2. 7.
11.
9 ch. 3. 7.
ch 14 21.
2 Chr 10.10,
11.
2 Chr 22. 4.
Ps. 7. 16.
1's 140 11.
Pro. 18. 6,7-
Pro 10 6,
11, 14.
Jsa. 47. 6.
1 hardly.
h Deut. 9. 30.
Judg 14. 4.
ch 22 23.
2 Chr :0:15.
2 Chr. 23. 7.
Ps 5. 10.
Amos 3 6.
Acts 2. 23.
Acts 4. 28.
i ch. 11. 11.

There are strong reasons for believing that the exactions of Solomon from his own people were heavy and severe, not only in regard to their contributions in produce (ch. iv. 27), but to the compulsory levies of the able-bodied, married as well as unmarried, that were drafted periodically to work on the mountains, or in the subterranean quarries, at the public buildings and diversified undertakings, which fully justified the complaint made to his son. It was the voice of 'all Israel;' but considering the remarkable fertility of Shechem and the whole surrounding region, the industrious inhabitants of that central district must have felt the government imposts as peculiarly burdensome. In that view, their language and demeanour in the statement of their grievances, and the demand for a diminution of the public burdens, is wonderfully moderate, demonstrating the presence and influence of those superior classes who were compelled, for the enjoyment of its religious advantages, to migrate to the kingdom of Judah (cf. *Michaelis* 'Commentary on the Laws of Moses,' i., p. 284-287). The splendour of Solomon's court and the magnitude of his undertakings being such that neither the tribute of dependent states, nor the presents of foreign princes, nor the profits of his commercial enterprises, were adequate to carry them on, he had been obliged, for obtaining the necessary revenue, to begin a system of heavy taxation. The people looked only to the burdens, not to the benefits they derived from Solomon's peaceful and prosperous reign; and the evils from which they demanded deliverance were civil oppressions, not idolatry, to which they appear to have been indifferent, or approved of it. **8. he said . . . De-**

part yet for three days. It was prudent to take the people's demand into calm and deliberate consideration. Whether, had the advice of the sage and experienced counsellors been adopted, any good result would have followed, it is impossible to say. It would at least have removed all pretext for the separation. But he preferred the counsel of his young companions (not in age, for they were all about forty-one, but in experience), who recommended prompt and decisive measures to quell the malcontents.

10. My little finger shall be thicker than my father's loins—lit., my smallness [and hence the Septuagint translates, *ἡ μικρότης μου*]. *Gesenius* and most of the commentators prefer "little finger." 'It seems to have been a proverbial phrase, denoting, I have greater power than my father.' **11. whips . . . scorpions.** The latter, as contrasted with the former, are supposed to mean thongs thickly set with hard knots and sharp iron points, used in the castigation of slaves; sometimes in after-times inflicted on Christian martyrs [Septuagint, *ακορνιθίαι*]. Scourging was performed by prostrating the victim on the ground at full length; while his limbs were kept down by force, a person with a whip lashed him on the bare back. The whip having several lashes, accords with the account of the Jews, that theirs had three thongs, thirteen strokes of which gave thirty-nine lashes. It is thought by some that this was what was meant by "scorpions," inflicted usually on slaves: and if so, the taunt of Rehoboam implied that he would be a despot, and treat his subjects as serfs.

15. the cause was from the Lord. That was the overruling cause. Rehoboam's weakness (Eccl. ii. 18, 19) and inexperience in public affairs **has**

- 16 So when all Israel saw that the king hearkened not unto them, the people answered the king, saying, ^jWhat portion have we in David? neither *have we* inheritance in the son of Jesse: to your tents, O Israel: now see to thine own house, David. So Israel departed unto their tents.
- 17 But ^kas for the children of Israel which dwelt in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them.
- 18 Then king Rehoboam sent Adoram, who *was* over the tribute; and all Israel stoned him with stones, that he died. Therefore king Rehoboam
- 19 ^mmade speed to get him up to his chariot, to flee to Jerusalem. So ⁿIsrael ^orebelled against the house of David unto this day.
- 20 And it came to pass, when all Israel heard that Jeroboam was come again, that they sent and called him unto the congregation, and made him king over all Israel: there was none that followed the house of David but the tribe of Judah ^ponly.
- 21 And when ^qRehoboam was come to Jerusalem, he assembled all the house of Judah, with the tribe of Benjamin, an hundred and fourscore thousand chosen men, which were warriors, to fight against the house of Israel, to bring the kingdom again to Rehoboam the son of Solomon.
- 22 But ^rthe word of God came unto Shemaiah the man of God, saying,
- 23 Speak unto Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, king of Judah, and unto all the house of Judah and Benjamin, and to the remnant of the people,
- 24 saying, Thus saith the LORD, Ye shall not go up, nor fight against your

B. C. 975.
^j 2 Sam 20 1.
^k 2 Chr 10. 16.
 ch. 11. 13,
 33.
^l 2 Chr. 10 17.
 2 Chr. 11. 15-
 17.
^m 2 Sam. 20.
 21.
 ch. 4. 6.
 ch. 5. 14.
ⁿ 2 Chr. 10 18.
^o 2 strength-
 ened him-
 self.
^p 1 Sam. 10.
 19.
^q 2 Kl. 17. 21.
^r 2 Chr 10 19.
 2 Chr. 11. 5,
 7, 17.
 Isa 7. 17.
^s Or, fell
 away.
 Heb. 6. 6.
^t ch. 11. 13.
^u 2 Chr. 11. 1.
^v 2 Chr 11. 2.

given rise to the probable conjecture, that like many other princes in the East, he had been kept secluded in the harem till the period of his accession (Eccl. iv. 14), his father being either afraid of his aspiring to the sovereignty, like the two sons of David, or, which is more probable, afraid of prematurely exposing his imbecility. The king's haughty and violent answer to "the people" (v. 13)—*i. e.*, the representatives of the people—a people already filled with a spirit of discontent and exasperation—indicated so great an incapacity to appreciate the gravity of the crisis, so utter a want of common-sense, as to create a belief that he was struck with judicial blindness. It was received with mingled scorn and derision. The prospective connection between the tribes of Israel and their youthful monarch ended before it had well been formed. The revolt was accomplished, and yet so quietly that Rehoboam remained in Shechem, fancying himself the sovereign of a united kingdom, until his chief tax-gatherer, who had been most imprudently sent to treat with the people, had been stoned to death. This opened his eyes, and he fled for security to Jerusalem. In such a fearful commotion of the political elements, it required a mind of no common prudence and energy to steer the helm on the agitated billows, and Rehoboam was not the pilot to weather the storm.

20-33.—JEROBOAM MADE KING OVER THEM.

20. when all Israel heard that Jeroboam was come again. This verse closes the parenthetical narrative begun at v. 2, and vv. 21-24 resume the history from v. 1. they sent and called him unto the congregation (קָרָא וְשָׁלְחָה) — the assembly of representatives. and made him king over all Israel. There was no consultation of Jehovah in this national emergency, and Jeroboam was a stranger to the character or qualities of a ruler "raised up" by the Divine Head and King of Israel. The people, denationalized by the vitiating influences of Solomon's court, alienated by the centralizing policy which had drawn the chief wealth and produce into the capital, and reduced themselves to the condition of serfs, or feudal vil-

lains, who were compelled to labour for the pleasure and aggrandizement of one man, were open to the agitation of a designing demagogue, like Jeroboam, who addressed their passions, and, comparing their actual condition to that of the servile caste in Egypt, from which he had newly arrived, stirred them up to secret discontent in the king's lifetime, and to open revolt at his death. Had he possessed the spirit of a true Israelite, he would have seen that the sure way of preserving the Hebrews from sinking into the oppressed and degraded state of the helots in Egypt, was to keep them from the ignorance and superstitions of that country. But Jeroboam did not know the importance of restoring amongst the people a more devoted allegiance to their covenant God; and, looking upon religion merely as an engine of state, as a powerful instrument which could be used in the furtherance of his contemplated policy, he gave no promise of being a constitutional king under the theocracy. The elevation of this man to the throne, with the disruption of the tribal unity which was involved in it, was permitted in the Divine anger to take place as a judicial punishment of the nation's complicity in the innovations and the sins of Solomon; and yet, under the overruling providence of God, it was effected by the natural operation of human passions and human agency. "All Israel" must henceforth be understood in a restricted sense, as the title arrogantly assumed by the northern kingdom. It was often called 'Ephraim,' from its principal tribe, whose ambition was the moving cause of the secession, and whose great population and wealth, together with its central position, naturally placed it at the head of the associated tribes.

21. when Rehoboam was come to Jerusalem, he assembled all the house of Judah. Rehoboam determined to assert his authority by leading a large force into the disaffected provinces. But the revolt of the ten tribes was completed when the prophet Shemaiah ordered, in the Lord's name, an abandonment of any hostile measures against the revolutionists. This seasonable and gracious interposition was designed to prevent the

brethren the children of Israel: return every man to his house; for this thing is ^afrom me. They hearkened therefore to the word of the LORD, and returned to depart, according to the word of the LORD.

- 25 Then Jeroboam built ^rShechem in mount Ephraim, and dwelt therein; 26 and went out from thence, and built ^sPenuel. And Jeroboam said in his 27 heart, Now shall the kingdom return to the house of David: if this people ^ugo up to do sacrifice in the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, then shall the heart of this people turn again unto their lord, *even* unto Rehoboam king of Judah, and they shall kill me, and go again to Rehoboam king of 28 Judah. Whereupon the king took counsel, and made ^vtwo calves of gold, and said unto them, It is too much for you: to go up to Jerusalem: ^wbehold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of 29 Egypt. And he set the one in ^xBeth-el, and the other put he in ^yDan. 30 And this thing became: ^za sin: for the people went to *worship* before the 31 one, *even* unto Dan. And he made an ^ahouse of high places, and ^bmade priests of the lowest of the people, which were not of the sons of Levi.

B. C. 975.

^a Fro. 16. 9.
^r Gen. 12. 6.
^s Judg. 9. 45.
^t Judg. 8. 17.
^u Rom. 8. 7.
^v Deut. 12. 5.
^w 2 Ki. 10. 29.
^x 2 Ki. 17. 16.
^y Ez. 32. 4.
^z Gen. 23. 19.
^a Hos. 4. 15.
^b Judg. 18. 21.
^c ch. 13. 31.
^d 2 Ki. 17. 21.
^e ch. 13. 12.
^f Num. 3. 10.
^g ch. 13. 13.
^h 2 Ki. 17. 32.
ⁱ 2 Chr. 11. 14.
^j Eze. 44. 7.

miseries of civil war, in attempting to undo a schism which had originated in the Divine decree, and been pre-intimated by His commissioned prophet (ch. xi. 31-29). The army, overawed by the Divine prohibition, dispersed, and the king was obliged to submit.

25. Jeroboam built Shechem—destroyed by Abimelech (Judg. ix. 1-49). It was rebuilt, and perhaps fortified by Jeroboam, as a royal residence. built Penuel—a ruined city with a tower (Judg. viii. 9), east of Jordan, on the north bank of the Jabbok. It was an object of importance to restore this fortress, as it lay on the caravan road from Gilead to Damascus and Palmyra, and secure his frontier on that quarter. 26. Jeroboam said in his heart. Having received the kingdom from God, he should have relied on the Divine protection. But he did not. With a view to withdraw the people from the temple, and destroy the sacred associations connected with Jerusalem, he made serious and unwarranted innovations on the religious observances of the country, on pretext of saving the people the trouble and expense of a distant journey. First, He erected two golden calves [בָּנִיָּי (see on Exod. xxxii. 4, 8); Septuagint, δαμάλεις χουρᾶς]—the young bulls Apis and Mnevis, as symbols, in the Egyptian fashion, of the true God. Monceau says Jeroboam made them the nearest, according to his fancy, to the figures of the cherubim. The one was placed at Dan [considered a sacred place from the time of Micah (Judg. xvii.); and to this day the worship of the calf enters into the sacred rites of the Druse saints in that neighbourhood (Newbold, 'Journal of Asiatic Society,' vol. xvi., p. 27)], in the northern part of his kingdom; the other at Beth-el [also venerable for its hallowed associations (Gen. xxviii.), and recommended from its proximity to the passes which, both on the west and east, led into the central mountain chain of the country (see Michaelis, 'Commentary on the Laws of Moses,' b. v., article 245; Hengstenberg's 'Christology'—Preliminary Observations on Hosea)], the southern extremity, in sight of Jerusalem, and in which place he probably thought God was as likely to manifest Himself as at Jerusalem (Gen. xxxii.; 2 Ki. ii. 2). The latter place, called afterwards Beth-aven, was the most frequented; for the words, v. 30, should be rendered, 'the people, even to Dan, went to worship before the one' (Jer. xlviii. 13; Amos iv. 4, 5; Hos. v. 8; x. 8). This innovation was a sin; for though Jeroboam did not give any formal intimation of his purpose to renounce the

worship of Jehovah, it was setting up the worship of God by symbols and images, and departing from the place which he had chosen to put His name there. Secondly, He changed the feast of tabernacles from the fifteenth of the seventh to the fifteenth of the eighth month. The ostensible reason might be, that the ingathering, or harvest, was later in the northern parts of the kingdom; but the real reason was to eradicate the old associations with this, the most welcome and joyous festival of the year. 31. he made an house of high places [בָּיִת בְּמִצְרֵי]—a chapel, or fane of heights; *i. e.*, on a hill (cf. ch. xiii. 32; 2 Ki. xvii. 29), for worshipping Jehovah, including the appointment of priests to officiate in the celebration of the rites which were performed in those sanctuaries. Some of these, if not all of them, were tents or tabernacles, decorated with embroidered curtains (2 Ki. xxiii. 7). made priests of the lowest of the people [בְּנֵי־מִצְרַיִם]—from the extremities of the people; *i. e.*, out of all the people, the Levites refusing to act (cf. Num. xxii. 41 with Jer. li. 31). Jeroboam assumed to himself the functions of the high priest, at least at the great festival, probably from seeing the king of Egypt conjoin the royal and sacred offices, and deeming the offices of the high priest too great to be vested in a subject. This was the *gravamen* of his offence, which consisted, not like Ahab's at a later period, in changing the object of worship, but in altering the circumstances. These two acts of Jeroboam—the establishment of a place of worship separate from the place which God had chosen (in Jerusalem) to put His name there, and his appointment of priests who were not Levites—were a violation of the express command of God, (see on Deut. xii.) In short, Jeroboam, instead of putting, like David, implicit confidence in the Divine promise, which guaranteed him the possession of his throne (ch. xi. 38) on condition of his ruling as a theocratic king, endeavoured to strengthen his position by measures of worldly policy. Without either impugning the authority or discrediting the rites of the established worship (for he acknowledged the divine origin and obligation of the law, v. 28, 32), he deviated from its prescription as to the place of worship, as well as the persons who performed it (for he expelled the priests and Levites: see on 2 Chr. xi. 14), regarding these as matters of minor importance, and admitting of being modified, for the sake of convenience, in the altered circumstances of the kingdom. Josephus ('Antiquities,'

32 And Jeroboam ordained a feast in the eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the month, like unto ^cthe feast that *is* in Judah, and he ⁴offered upon the altar. So did he in Beth-el, ⁵sacrificing unto the calves that he had made: ^dand he placed in Beth-el the priests of the high places which he

33 had made. So he ⁶offered upon the altar which he had made in Beth-el the fifteenth day of the eighth month, *even* in the month which he had ^edevised of his own heart; and ordained a feast unto the children of Israel: and he offered upon the altar, ⁷and burnt ^fincense.

13 AND, behold, there ^acame a man of God out of Judah by the word of the LORD unto Beth-el: ^band Jeroboam stood by the altar ¹to burn incense.

2 And he cried against the altar in the word of the LORD, and said, O altar, altar! thus saith the LORD, Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, ^cJosiah by name; and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall be burnt

3 upon thee. And he gave ^da sign the same day, saying, This *is* the sign which the LORD hath spoken; Behold, the altar shall be rent, and the ashes that *are* upon it shall be poured out.

4 And it came to pass, when king Jeroboam heard the saying of the man of God, which had cried against the altar in Beth-el, that he ^eput forth his hand from the altar, saying, Lay hold on him. And his hand, which he put forth against him, dried ^fup, so that he could not pull it in again

5 to him. The altar also was rent, and the ashes poured out from the altar, according to the sign which the man of God had given by the word of the

6 LORD. And the king answered and said unto the man of God, ^gEntreat now the face of the LORD thy God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored me again. And the man of God ^hbesought ²the LORD, and the king's hand was restored him again, and became as *it was* before.

7 And the king said unto the man of God, Come home with me, and refresh

8 thyself, and ⁱI will give thee a reward. And the man of God said unto the king, ^jIf thou wilt give me half thine house, I will not go in with thee,

B. C. 975.
^o Lev. 23. 33.
^p Or, went up to the altar, etc.
^q Or, to sacrifice.
^r Amos 7. 13.
^s Or, went up to the altar, etc.
^t Num 15. 39.
^u To burn incense.
^v ch 13 1.

 CHAP. 13.
^w 2 Ki. 23. 17.
^x ch. 12. 32.
^y 1 Or, to offer.
^z 2 Ki. 23. 15.
^{aa} Isa. 7. 14.
^{ab} Isa 38 7.
^{ac} Jer. 20. 2.
^{ad} Acts 12. 1.
^{ae} Acts 13. 9.
^{af} 2 Cor. 10. 6.
^{ag} Ex. 8. 8.
^{ah} Ex. 9. 23.
^{ai} Ex. 10 17.
^{aj} Num 21. 7.
^{ak} Matt 5. 41.
^{al} Rom 12. 6.
^{am} 2 the face of the LORD.
^{an} 1 Sam. 9. 7.
^{ao} Num 22. 19.
^{ap} Num. 24. 13.

b. viii., ch. viii., sec. 4) represents him as recommending the proposed innovations to the assembled representatives of Israel in an artful speech to the following effect:—'I suppose, my countrymen, you know this, that every place has God in it; nor is there any one determined place in which He is, but He everywhere hears and sees those that worship: on which account I do not think it for you to go so long a journey to Jerusalem, which is an enemy's city, to worship Him. It was a man that built the temple. I have made two golden heifers, dedicated to the same God—the one of them I have consecrated in the city Beth-el, and the other in Dan, to the end that those of you who dwell nearest those cities may go to them and worship there; and I will ordain for you certain priests and Levites from among yourselves, that you may have no want of the tribe of Levi, nor of the sons of Aaron; but let him amongst you that is desirous of being a priest bring to God a bullock and a ram, which, it is said, Aaron, the first priest, brought also.' By this *coup d'état* he changed the form, the season, and other circumstances of the national worship.

CHAP. XIII. 1-5.—JEROBOAM'S HAND WITHERS.

1. there came a man of God out of Judah. Who this prophet was cannot be ascertained. He came by Divine authority. It could not be either Iddo or Ahijah, for both were alive after the events here related. Jeroboam stood by the altar to burn incense. It was at one of the annual festivals. The king, to give interest to the new ritual, was himself the officiating priest.

The altar and its accompaniments would of course exhibit all the splendour of a new and gorgeously decorated temple. But the prophet foretold its utter destruction. 2. he cried against the altar—which is put for the whole system of worship organized in Israel. Behold, a child shall be born. . . . Josiah by name—(see on 2 Ki. xxiii. 15.) This is one of the most remarkable prophecies recorded in the Scriptures; and in its clearness, circumstantial minuteness, and exact prediction of an event that took place 360 years after it, stands in striking contrast to the obscure and ambiguous oracles of the heathen. Being publicly uttered, it must have been well known to the people; and every Jew who lived at the accomplishment of the event must have been convinced of the truth of a religion connected with such a prophecy as this. A present sign was given of the remote event predicted, in a visible fissure being miraculously made on the altar. Incensed at the man's license of speech, Jeroboam stretched out his hand, and ordered his attendants to seize the bold intruder: that moment the king's arm became stiff and motionless, and the altar split asunder, so that the fire and ashes fell on the floor. Overawed by the effects of his impiety, Jeroboam besought the prophet's prayer. His request was acceded to, and the hand was restored to its healthy state.

7. the king said . . . Come home with me, and refresh thyself. Jeroboam was artful, and invited the prophet to the royal table, not to do him honour, or show his gratitude for the restoration of his hand, but to win, by his courtesy and liberal hospitality, a person whom he could not

9 neither will I eat bread nor drink water in this place: for so was it charged me by the word of the LORD, saying, ⁶ Eat no bread, nor drink water, nor

10 turn again by the same way that thou camest. So he went another way, and returned not by the way that he came to Beth-el.

11 Now there dwelt an old prophet in Beth-el; and his ³ sons came and told him all the works that the man of God had done that day in Beth-el: the words which he had spoken unto the king, them they told also to their

12 father. And their father said unto them, What way went he? For his sons had seen what way the man of God went which came from Judah.

13 And he said unto his sons, Saddle me the ass. So they saddled him the

14 ass: and he rode thereon, and went after the man of God, and found him sitting under an oak: and he said unto him, *Art* thou the man of God

15 that camest from Judah? And he said, *I am*. Then he said unto him,

16 Come home with me, and eat bread. And he said, I may not return with thee, nor go in with thee; neither will I eat bread nor drink water with

17 thee in this place: for ⁴ it was said to me ¹ by the word of the LORD, Thou shalt eat no bread nor drink water there, nor turn again to go by the way

18 that thou camest. He ^m said unto him, *I am* a prophet also as thou *art*; and ⁿ an angel spake unto me by the word of the LORD, saying, Bring him back with thee into thine house, that he may eat bread and drink water.

19 *But* he lied unto him. So ^o he went back with him, and did eat bread in his house, and drank water.

20 And it came to pass, as they sat at the table, that the ^p word of the

21 LORD came unto the prophet that brought him back: and he cried unto the man of God that came from Judah, saying, Thus saith the LORD, Forasmuch as thou hast disobeyed the mouth of the LORD, and hast not

B. C. 975
⁶ Num 16 29.
 Deut. 13. 13-18.
 Ps. 141. 4.
 Rom 16. 17.
¹ 1 Cor. 5. 11.
 Eph. 5. 11.
² 2 John 11.
 Rev. 13. 4.
³ son.
⁴ a word
 was
⁵ Gen. 3 1 3
 Num. 22. 13.
 19.
 c1. 20. 35.
 Matt 4. 0.
 Matt 16. 21.
 1 Thes. 4. 15.
^m Jer. 5 12.
 Matt. 7. 15.
ⁿ 1 John 4. 1.
^o Num. 22. 35.
^p Judg 6. 1. 1.
 12.
 Judg 13. 3.
 Gal. 1. 8.
^o Gen. 3. 6.
 Gal. 2. 18.
² 2 Pet. 2 13, 19.
^p Num 23. 5.
 John 11. 51.

crush by his power. But the prophet informed him of a Divine injunction, expressly prohibiting him from all social intercourse with any in the place, as well as from returning the same way. The prohibition not to eat or drink in Beth-el was because all the people had become apostates from the true religion; and had he done so, he could not have prophesied against the place, after having eaten with the people, without violating all the existing laws of hospitality (see on Josh. ix. 14). The reason of his not being allowed to return the same way was, lest he should be recognized by any whom he had seen in going, and be detained by them to discuss the nature and results of his mission, or be ill-treated by any of the inhabitants for his denunciations against their altar.

11. Now there dwelt an old prophet in Beth-el. If this was a true prophet, he was a bad man, and in effecting the malevolent design he had in view, an emissary of Satan. God's true prophets were holy men (2 Pet. i. 21). But it appears that the prophetic gift, or at least occasional communications of that gift, were imparted to some who did not possess that character—of which Balaam presents a notable example. This seems to have been the case with this old prophet. He deceived the prophet of Judah with a lie, uttered in the name of God. He may have been employed to announce communications from heaven; but his heart was not perfect toward God. He was unfaithful: he dwelt in a city of idolaters, and did not testify against their sin. He could not therefore be enlisted by Jehovah in the solemn service of reproofing Israel. 14. went after the man of God, and found him sitting under an oak [Septuagint, *ὕπὸ ὄρου*; but the Syriac, Arabic, and Vulgate versions render, 'under a terebinth']. 18. an angel spake unto me by the word of the Lord. This circuitous mode of speaking, instead of simply say-

ing, 'the Lord spake to me,' was adopted to hide an equivocation, to conceal a double meaning—an inferior sense given to the word angel—to offer a *seemingly superior* authority to persuade the prophet, while really the authority was secretly known to the speaker to be *inferior*. The "angel," *i. e.*, the messenger, was his own sons, who were worshippers, perhaps priests, at Beth-el; and as this man was governed by self-interest, and wished to curry favour with the king, whose purpose to adhere to his religious polity, he feared, might be shaken by the portents that had occurred, his hastening after the prophet of Judah, the deception he practised, and the urgent invitation by which, on the ground of a falsehood, he prevailed on the too facile man of God to accompany him back to his house in Beth-el, were to create an impression in the king's mind that he was an impostor, who acted in opposition to his own statement.

21. he cried unto the man of God that came from Judah—rather, 'it cried;,' *i. e.*, the word of the Lord. What a sad contrast between his present and his former conduct! When first introduced to our notice, he presents a spectacle worthy of admiration. He appears in the schismatic chapel at Beth-el, a fearless messenger of God—a faithful and uncompromising bearer of terrible denunciations—yet he stood undaunted in the midst of a multitude, and the frowns nor the flatteries of a king, neither the pleasures of a luxurious table nor the prospect of comfortable lodging after the fatigues of a long journey, could tempt him to swerve from the path of commanded duty. But now we see him who had refused to be cajoled by a king readily yielding with weak credulity to the ill-disguised falsehood of an equal, and, in the enjoyment of congenial society, forgetting his character and his mission. What a sad fall! Forasmuch as thou hast disobeyed the

22 kept the commandment which the LORD thy God commanded thee, but camest back, and hast eaten bread and drunk water in the place of the which the LORD did say to thee, Eat no bread, and drink no water; thy

23 carcase shall not come unto the sepulchre of thy fathers. And it came to pass, after he had eaten bread, and after he had drunk, that he saddled

24 for him the ass, *to wit*, for the prophet whom he had brought back. And when he was gone, ^aa lion met him by the way, and slew him: and his carcase *was* cast in the way, and the ass stood by it, the lion also stood

25 by the carcase. And, behold, men passed by, and saw the carcase cast in the way, and the lion standing by the carcase: and they came and told

26 *it* in the city where the old prophet dwelt. And when the prophet that brought him back from the way heard *thereof*, he said, It *is* the man of God, who was disobedient unto the word of the LORD; therefore the LORD hath delivered him unto the lion, which hath ⁵torn him, and slain him,

27 according to the word of the LORD which he spake unto him. And he spake to his sons, saying, Saddle me the ass. And they saddled *him*.

28 And he went and found his carcase cast in the way, and the ass and the lion standing by the carcase: the lion had ^rnot eaten the carcase, nor

29 ⁶torn the ass. And the prophet took up the carcase of the man of God, and laid it upon the ass, and brought it back: and the old prophet came

30 to the city, to mourn and to bury him. And he laid his carcase in his own grave: and they mourned over him, *saying*, Alas, ^smy brother!

31 And it came to pass, after he had buried him, that he spake to his sons, saying, When I am dead, then bury me in the sepulchre wherein the man

32 of God *is* buried; lay ^tmy bones beside his bones: for ^uthe saying which he cried by the word of the LORD against the altar in Beth-el, and against all the ^vhouses of the high places which *are* in the cities of ^wSamaria, shall surely come to pass.

33 After ^xthis thing Jeroboam returned not from his evil way, but ⁷made again of the lowest of the people priests of the high places: whosoever would, he ⁸consecrated him, and he became *one* of the priests of the high

31 places. And ^ythis thing became sin unto the house of Jeroboam, even ^zto cut *it* off, and to destroy *it* from off the face of the earth.

14. AT that time Abijah the son of Jeroboam fell sick. And Jeroboam

2 said to his wife, Arise, I pray thee, and disguise thyself, that thou be not known to be the wife of Jeroboam, and get thee to Shiloh: behold, there *is* Abijah the prophet, which told me

B. C. 975.

^q 2 Sam. 6. 7.
ch. 20. 36.
2 Ki. 2. 21.
Eze. 24. 24.
1 Et. 4. 17.
⁵ broken.
^r Lev. 10. 2, 4, 5.
ch. 17. 4, 6.
Job 38. 11.
Jer. 5. 22, 23.
Dan. 6. 22.
⁶ broken.
⁹ Jer. 22. 18.
Acts 8. 2.
^t Ruth 1. 17.
Ps. 26. 9.
Ecc. 8. 10.
^u 2 Ki. 23. 16, 19.
^v Lev. 26. 30.
Hos. 12. 11.
^w ch. 16. 24.
John 4. 5.
Ac's 8. 1, 14.
^x ch. 12. 31, 32.
2 Chr. 13. 9.
Jer. 3. 8.
⁷ returned and made.
Ex. 25. 41.
Judg. 17. 12.
2 Chr. 11. 14, 15.
⁸ filled his hand
Judg. 17. 12.
^y ch. 12. 50.
^z ch. 14. 10.
ch. 15. 29, 30.
2 Ki. 17. 20-23.
CHAP. 14.
^a ch. 11. 31.

mouth of the Lord . . . 22. thy carcase shall not come unto the sepulchre of thy fathers. Here is an instance of his possessing the prophetic spirit, in that, addressing in the name of the Lord the man of God whom he brought back, he foretold the fate which was to follow as the punishment of his disobedience.

23-32.—THE DISOBEDIENT PROPHET SLAIN BY A LION.

24. a lion met him by the way, and slew him. There was a wood near Beth-el infested with lions (2 Ki. ii. 24). This sad catastrophe was a severe but necessary judgment of God, to attest the truth of the message with which the prophet had been charged. The whole circumstances of this tragic occurrence—the undevoured carcase, the untouched ass, the passengers unmolested by the lion, though standing there—were calculated to produce an irresistible impression that the hand of God was in it. 31. bury me in the sepulchre wherein the man of God is buried. His motive in making this request was either that his remains might not be disturbed when the predicted events took place (see on 2 Ki. xxiii. 18), or he had some superstitious hope of being benefited at the re-

surrection by being in the same grave with a man of God.

33. Jeroboam . . . made again of the lowest of the people priests—(see on ch. xii. 31.) whosoever would, he consecrated [קָדַשׁ אֶת־יָדָיו]—he filled his hand; *i. e.*, invested him with the priestly office [Septuagint, ἐπλήρωσεν τὴν χεῖρα αὐτοῦ].

CHAP. XIV. 1-20.—ABIJAH DENOUNCES GOD'S JUDGMENTS AGAINST JEROBOAM.

1. At that time—a phrase used often loosely and indefinitely in sacred history. This domestic incident in the family of Jeroboam probably occurred towards the end of his reign. His son Abijah was of age, and considered by the people the heir to the throne. 2. Jeroboam said to his wife, Arise . . . disguise thyself. His natural and intense anxiety as a parent is here seen, blended with the deep and artful policy of an apostate king. The reason of his extreme caution was an unwillingness to acknowledge that he looked for information as to the future, not to any of the prophets of Beth-el, but to an independent prophet of the true God; a fear that this step, if publicly known, might endanger the stability of

- 3 people. And ^btake ¹with thee ten loaves, and ²cracknels, and a ³cruse of honey, and go to him: he shall tell thee what shall become of the child.
- 4 And Jeroboam's wife did so, and arose, and ^cwent to Shiloh, and came to the house of Ahijah. But Ahijah could not see; for his eyes ⁴were set
- 5 by reason of his age. And ^dthe LORD said unto Ahijah, Behold, the wife of Jeroboam cometh to ask a thing of thee for her son; for he *is* sick: thus and thus shalt thou say unto her; for-it shall be, when she cometh in, that she shall feign herself to be another woman.
- 6 And it was so, when Ahijah heard the sound of her feet, as she came in at the door, that he said, Come in, thou wife of Jeroboam; why feignest thou thyself to be another? for I *am* sent to thee with ^eheavy tidings.
- 7 Go, tell Jeroboam, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, ^fForasmuch as I exalted thee from among the people, and made thee prince over my people
- 8 Israel, and ^grent the kingdom away from the house of David, and gave it thee; and yet thou hast not been as my servant David, who ^hkept my commandments, and who followed me with all his heart, to do *that* only
- 9 which was right in mine eyes; but hast done evil above all that were before thee: ⁱfor thou hast gone and made thee other gods, and molten images, to provoke me to anger, and ^jhast cast me behind thy back; therefore, behold, ^kI will bring evil upon the house of Jeroboam, and ^lwill cut off from Jeroboam him that pisseth against the wall, ^mand him that is shut up and left in Israel, and will take away the remnant of the house
- 11 of Jeroboam, as a man taketh away dung, till it be all gone. Him ⁿthat dieth of Jeroboam in the city shall the dogs eat; and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat: for the LORD hath spoken *it*.
- 12 Arise thou therefore, get thee to thine own house; and when thy feet
- 13 enter into the city, the child shall die. And all Israel shall mourn for

B C. 9. 6.

b 1 Sam. 9. 7

8.

ch. 13. 7.

2 Ki. 4. 42.

2 Ki. 5. 5-

15.

2 Ki. 8. 7, 9.

1 in thine

hand.

2 Or. cakes.

3 Or. bottle.

c Josh. 1. 1.

1 Sam. 4. 3.

ch. 11. 29.

Jer. 7. 12,

14.

4 stood

for his

hoariness

d Pro. 21. 30.

5 hard.

e 2 Sam. 12. 7.

ch. 16. 2.

f ch. 11. 30.

31.

g ch. 15. 5.

h 2 Chr. 11. 15.

i Neh. 9. 26.

1 s. 50. 17.

Eze. 23. 35.

j ch. 15. 29.

k ch. 21. 21.

l 2 Ki. 9. 8.

m Deut. 52. 3.

n ch. 21. 24.

his whole political system; and a strong impression that Ahijah, who was greatly offended with him, would, if consulted openly by himself, either insult or refuse to receive him. For these reasons he selected his wife as in every view the most proper for such a secret and confidential errand, but recommended her to assume the garb and manner of a peasant woman. Strange infatuation! to suppose that the God who could reveal futurity could not penetrate a flimsy disguise. 3. ten loaves, and cracknels, and a cruse of honey. This was a present in unison with the peasant character she assumed. Cracknels [כִּרְכִּי] are a kind of sweet seed-cake or biscuit, which crumbled easily (cf. Josh. ix. 5, 12). [Septuagint, *κελλήρια*, a cruse of honey: *βυβλίς*, a bottle; from a root signifying to pour out, and expressive of the gurgling sound made in emptying; Septuagint, *σταμνον*, a pitcher or jar. The Septuagint also, along with the Syriac version, adds, *σταφιδας*, dried grapes.] Harmer is of opinion, founded on an account by D'Arrieux of a present made to him by the mother and sister of an Arab emir, consisting of viands very similar to the present described in this passage, that it was not so mean a donation as we are apt to suppose. The prophet was blind; but having received divine premonition of the pretended countrywoman's coming, he addressed her the moment she appeared, as the queen, apprised her of the calamities which, in consequence of the ingratitude of Jeroboam, his apostasy, and outrageous misgovernment of Israel, impended over their house, as well as over the nation which too readily followed his idolatrous innovations.

8. hast not been as my servant David—who, though he fell into grievous sins, repented, and always maintained the pure worship of God, as enjoined by the law. David lived under the ancient

(dispensation, when, it must be always remembered, the breach of the commandments, in their full and spiritual meaning, was no breach of the Sinai covenant, since heart sins were neither punished by death nor expiated by sacrifice; and since provision was made even for defects in outward obedience, sacrifices being appointed for all offences that were not committed presumptuously and with a high hand (Num. xv. 22-31). The precept, therefore, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," considered in connection with the Sinai covenant, only requires such a regard to the Deity as that obedience be given to the letter of His commandments. It does not in this view demand sinless perfection, but such an obedience as fallen creatures have actually yielded;—David, for instance, who is said 'to have kept God's commandments, followed him with all his heart, and did that only which was right in his eyes' (cf. 2 Ki. xxiii. 25: see *Erskine*, 'On the Nature of the Sinai Covenant'). 10. I will bring evil upon the house of Jeroboam. Strong expressions are here used to indicate the utter extirpation of his house. "Him that is shut up and left in Israel," means those who were concealed with the greatest privacy, as the heirs of royalty often are where polygamy prevails; the other phrase, from the loose garments of the East having led to a different practice from what prevails in the West, cannot refer to men: it must signify either a very young boy, or rather, perhaps, a dog—so entire would be the destruction of Jeroboam's house, that none, not even a dog, belonging to it should escape. This peculiar phrase occurs only in regard to the threatened extermination of a family (1 Sam. xxv. 22-34. See the manner of extermination, ch. xvi. 4; xxi. 24). 12. the child shall die. The death and general lamentation felt throughout the country at the loss of

him, and bury him; for he only of Jeroboam shall come to the grave, because in him there ^{is} found *some* good thing toward the LORD God of Israel in the house of Jeroboam. Moreover ^{the} LORD shall raise him up a king over Israel, who shall cut off the house of Jeroboam that day: but what? even now. For the LORD shall smite Israel, as a reed is shaken in the water, and he shall root ^{up} Israel out of this ^{good} land, which he gave to their fathers, and shall scatter them ^{beyond} the river, ^{because} they have made their groves, provoking the LORD to anger. And ^{he} shall give Israel up because of the sins of Jeroboam, ^{who} did sin, and who made Israel to sin.

17 And Jeroboam's wife arose, and departed, and came to ^{Tirzah}: and when she came to the threshold of the door, the child died; and they buried him; and all Israel mourned for him, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by the hand of his servant Ahijah the prophet.

19 And the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, how he ^{warred}, and how he reigned, behold, they *are* written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel. And the days which Jeroboam reigned *were* two and twenty years: and he ^{slept} with his fathers; and Nadab his son reigned in his stead.

21 And Rehoboam the son of Solomon reigned in Judah. Rehoboam *was* ^{forty} and one years old when he began to reign; and he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city ^{which} the LORD did choose out of all the tribes of Israel, to put his name there. And his mother's name *was* Naamah an Ammonitess. And ^{Judah} did evil in the sight of the LORD, and they ^{provoked} him to jealousy with their sins which they had committed, above all that their fathers had done. For they also built them ^{high} places, and ^{images}, ^{and} groves, on every high hill, and ^{under} every green tree. And ^{there} were also sodomites in the land: *and* they did according to all the abominations of the nations which the LORD cast out before the children of Israel.

B. C. 926.
 2 Chr 12 12.
 2 Chr. 12 3.
 o ch 15. 27.
 2 Ki. 17. 6.
 Ps. 52. 5.
 Amos 2 9.
 Zeph. 2 4.
 Lev. 26. 33-34.
 Josh. 23. 15.
 2 Ki. 15. 29.
 Ex. 31. 13.
 Deut. 12. 3.
 Isa. 13 21.
 ch 13. 10.
 ch. 13. 4.
 ch. 15 30.
 34.
 ch. 16 6.
 Song 6. 4.
 2 Chr 13. 2.
 lay down.
 Job 3: 9.
 Eccl. 4. 13.
 ch 11 36.
 2 Chr 14. 1.
 Deut. 32.21.
 Isa. 65. 2-5.
 1 Cor 10. 12
 Deut 12. 2.
 Eze. 16. 21.
 Or, standing images, or, statues.
 2 Ki 17. 9.
 Isa 57. 5.
 Gen. 19. 5.
 Deut. 21. 17.

the prince were also predicted. The reason of the profound regret shown at his death arose, according to Jewish writers, from his being decidedly opposed to the erection of the golden calves, and using his influence with his father to allow his subjects the free privilege of going to worship in Jerusalem. 13. and bury him—the only one of Jeroboam's family who should receive the rites of sepulture (Deut. xxviii. 6). 14. the Lord shall raise him up a king . . . but what? even now—viz., Baasha (ch. xv. 27): he was already raised—he was in being, though not in power.

17. Tirzah—the residence of an ancient king of Canaan; a place of pre-eminent beauty (Song vi. 4), and probably of great salubrity also, three hours' travelling east of Samaria; chosen, when Israel became a separate kingdom, by the first monarch, in whose reign 'it was to Shechem what Windsor is to London' (Porter's 'Handbook,' p. 348), and used during three short reigns (about forty years) as a residence of the royal house (Josh. xii. 24; ch. xv. 17-21). The fertile plains and wooded hills in that part of the territory of Ephraim gave an opening to the formation of parks and pleasure-grounds similar to those which were the 'paradises' of Assyrian and Persian monarchs (Stanley, 'Sinai and Palestine,' p. 240). Its site is occupied by the large village of Tüllazah, next to Thebez (Tubás), district of Hâritheh, north of Nâbulus (Robinson's 'Biblical Researches,' iii., p. 158; also Second Appendix). As soon as the queen reached the gate of the palace, she received the intelligence that her son was dying, according to the prophet's prediction.

19. the rest of the acts of Jeroboam. None of the threatenings denounced against this family produced any change in his policy or government.

21-24.—REHOBAM'S WICKED REIGN.

21. reigned in Judah—the southern kingdom. Rehoboam was forty and one years old—(see on 2 Chr. xiii. 7.) Its particular designation as "the city which the Lord did choose out of all the tribes of Israel, to put his name there," seems given here, both as a reflection on the apostasy of the ten tribes, and as a proof of the aggravated wickedness of introducing idolatry and its attendant vices there. his mother's name was Naamah an Ammonitess [נַחֲמָה, pleasant; תְּיַמְנִי, the Ammonitess; Septuagint, ἡ Ἀμμωνίτις]. Her heathen extraction, and her influence as queen-mother, are stated to account for Rehoboam's tendency to depart from the true religion. Led by the warning of the prophet (ch. xii. 23), as well as by the large immigration of Israelites into his kingdom (ch. xii. 17; 2 Chr. xi. 16), he continued for the first three years of his reign a faithful patron of true religion (2 Chr. xi. 17). But afterwards he began and carried on a general apostasy; idolatry became the prevailing form of worship, and the religious state of the kingdom in his reign is described by the high places [מִזְבְּחִים; Septuagint, ὑψηλά (cf. 2 Ki. xvii. 9, 10)], the idolatrous statues [מַצֵּבֹת, pillars, idol-images (2 Ki. iii. 2; x. 26; xviii. 4; xxiii. 14); Septuagint, στήλαι]. 23. groves [עֵצֵי אֲשֵׁרָה]—Asherah, wooden or stone images of a symbolical tree, representing the host of heaven (cf. 2 Ki. xxi. 7; xxiii. 6, 15:

25 And ^fit came to pass, in the fifth year of king Rehoboam, *that* Shishak
 26 king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem: and ^ghe took away the
 treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house;
 he even took away all: and he took away all the shields of gold which
 27 ^hSolomon had made. And king Rehoboam made in their stead brasen
 shields, and committed *them* unto the hands of the chief of the ⁱguard,
 28 which kept the door of the king's house. And it was *so*, when the king
 went into the house of the LORD, that the guard bare them, and brought
 them back into the guard chamber.
 29 Now the rest of the acts of Rehoboam, and all that he did, *are* they
 30 not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah? And
 31 there was ^jwar between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all *their* days. And
 Rehoboam slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the
 city of David. And his mother's name *was* Naamah an Ammonitess: and
 Abijam his son reigned in his stead.
15 NOW in the eighteenth year of king Jeroboam the son of Nebat
 2 reigned Abijam over Judah. Three years reigned he in Jerusalem: and
 3 his mother's name *was* ^kMaachah, the daughter of ^lAbishalom. And he
 walked in all the sins of his father, which he had done before him: and
 his ^mheart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as the heart of David
 4 his father. Nevertheless ⁿfor David's sake did the LORD his God give

B. C. 972.
 / ch. 11. 40.
 ° ch. 7. 51.
 2 Chr. 12. 9.
 A ch. 10. 17.
 2 Chr. 9. 15.
 16.
 Fro. 23. 6.
 Eccl. 2. 19.
 19.
 8 runners.
 ° ch. 12. 24.
 ch. 15. 6.
 CHAP. 15.
 a 2 Chr. 13. 2.
 Michaiah
 the daugh-
 ter of
 Uriel.
 b 2 Chr 11.21.
 Absalom.
 c ch. 11. 4.
 Ps. 119. 80.
 d 2 Chr. 21. 7.
 Isa 37. 33.
 Jer. 33. 20.
 Rom. 11.28.

see 'The Palaces of Nineveh and Persia,' p. 301); according to *Gesenius*, relieve figures of Astarte, and impure rites, that with unchecked license were observed in them. The description is suited to the character of the Canaanitish worship.

25-31.—SHISHAK SPOILS JERUSALEM.
 25. Shishak king of Egypt came up. He was the instrument in the hand of Providence for punishing the national defection. He was the first member of the twenty-second dynasty, (see on 2 Chr. xii.)—the Sh-sh-k of the Egyptian monuments. He was the Sesonchis of the Greek lists. [The Septuagint calls him Σουσακιμ.] Champollion discovered in one of the palaces at Thebes the Egyptian name of this king in a cartouche or hieroglyphic oval, and a figure representing a prisoner, with his hands bound behind his back, with an unmistakably Jewish physiognomy, and with this inscription in the oval—*Judah Melek kah*, 'king of the country of Judah' (*Champollion*, 'Tab.,' 76; *Gliddon's* 'Ancient Egypt,' p. 9; 'Egyptian Court' (Crystal Palace), p. 38; *Brown's* 'Ordo Sacerdotum,' sec. 513; *Osborn's* 'Mon. Hist.,' ii., pp. 99, 599). The names of Shishak and his successors of this dynasty are frequently found amongst the monumental ruins of Bubastis, in the east of the Delta, which they made their capital (*Wilkinson's* 'Ancient Egyptians,' ii., pp. 428, 429). 26. he took away the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king's house. 'The spoliation made seems to have extended to more things than the articles enumerated here. Although the cost of the targets and shields would be somewhere about £239,000, it is said, "he took all,"—probably meaning all that was required to pay his expenses—not all that was in the house,' (*Napier*, 'Ancient Workers in Metal,' p. 114; see on 2 Chr. xii.).

29. rest of the acts of Rehoboam . . . written in . . . the Chronicles—not the book so called, and comprehended in the sacred canon, but the national archives of Judah. 30. there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam. The former was prohibited from entering on an aggressive war; but as the two kingdoms kept up a jealous rivalry, he might be forced into vigilant measures of defence, and frequent skirmishes would take

place on the borders. 31. And his mother's name was Naamah an Ammonitess. This is a repetition of what was previously said (see on v. 21). [The Septuagint omits this here; but in ch. xii. 24 of that version, which corresponds to this verse of the Hebrew text, it is added, *Naawān*, Συνατηρ Ἄνα υἱοῦ Ναῶν βασιλέως υἱοῦ Ἀμμών, daughter of Ana (Hanun), the son of Nahash, king of the Ammonites.]

CHAP. XV. 1-8.—ABIJAM'S WICKED REIGN OVER JUDAH.

1. Abijam. His name was at first Abijah (2 Chr. xii. 16), 'Jah,' the name of God, according to an ancient fashion, being conjoined with it. But afterward, when he was found 'walking in all the sins of his father,' that honourable addition was withdrawn, and his name in sacred history changed into Abijam (*Lightfoot*). 2. Three years reigned he—(cf. v. 1 with v. 9.) Parts of years are counted in Scripture as whole years. The reign began in Jeroboam's eighteenth year, continued till the nineteenth, and ended in the course of the twentieth. his mother's name was Maachah—or Michaiah (2 Chr. xiii. 2), probably altered from the one to the other on her becoming queen, as was very common under a change of circumstances. She is called the daughter of Abishalom, or Absalom (2 Chr. xi. 21), or Uriel (2 Chr. xiii. 2). Hence, it has been thought probable that Tamar, the daughter of Absalom (2 Sam. xiv. 27; xviii. 18), had been married to Uriel, and that Maachah was their daughter.

3. heart was not perfect with the Lord [כָּרַף]—at peace, in harmony with, as the heart of David—(cf. ch. xi. 4; xiv. 22.) He was not positively bad at first, for it appears (v. 15) that he had done something to restore the pillaged treasures of the temple. This phrase contains a comparative reference to David's heart. His doing that which was right in the eyes of the Lord (v. 5) is frequently used in speaking of the kings of Judah, and means only that they did or did not do that which, in the general course and tendency of their government, was acceptable to God. It furnishes no evidence as to the lawfulness or piety of one specific act. 4. for David's sake did

him a ¹ lamp in Jerusalem, to set up his son after him, and to establish
 5 Jerusalem: because David ⁶ did *that which was* right in the eyes of the
 LORD, and turned not aside from any *thing* that he commanded him
 all the days of his life, save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite.
 6 And there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all the days of
 his life.
 7 Now ⁷ the rest of the acts of Abijam, and all that he did, *are* they not
 written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah? And there
 8 was war between Abijam and Jeroboam. And ⁸ Abijam slept with his
 fathers; and they buried him in the city of David: and Asa his son
 reigned in his stead.
 9 And in the twentieth year of Jeroboam king of Israel reigned Asa over
 10 Judah. And forty and one years reigned he in Jerusalem. And his
 11 ² mother's name was Maachah, the daughter of Abishalom. And ² Asa
 did *that which was* right in the eyes of the LORD, as *did* David his father.
 12 And ¹ he took away the sodomites out of the land, and removed all the idols
 13 that his fathers had made. And also ¹ Maachah his mother, even her he
 removed from *being* queen, because she had made an idol in a grove;
 14 and Asa ³ destroyed her idol, and ⁴ burnt *it* by the brook Kidron. But

B. C. 938
 1 Or, caudle.
 * ch. 14. 8.
 2 Ki. 22. 2.
 Luke 1. 6.
 2 Chr. 13. 2.
 2, 21.
 2 Chr. 14. 1.
 2 That is,
 grand-
 mother's,
 ver. 2
 3 Chr. 14. 2.
 2 Chr. 15. 17.
 2 Chr. 16. 7-
 10.
 4 ch. 14. 24.
 ch. 22. 46.
 5 Deut. 13. 6.
 Deut. 33. 9.
 2 Chr. 15. 16.
 Matt. 10. 37.
 Luke 14. 26.
 6 cut off.
 7 Ex. 32. 10.

the Lord . . . give him a lamp. "A lamp" in one's house is an Oriental phrase for continuance of family name and prosperity. Abijam was not rejected, only in consequence of the Divine promise to David (see on ch. xi. 13-36). 5. *save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite.* This clause is not in the Septuagint. Admitting its genuineness, it must not be interpreted too strictly; for David committed other breaches of the law, which were severely punished, (2 Sam. xxiv.) But his outrage against Uriah is mentioned as his greatest sin. 6. And there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all the days of his life. Several MSS. have, 'between Abijam and Jeroboam.' This seems to be the correct reading in this connection.

9. in the twentieth year of Jeroboam . . . reigned Asa over Judah. This appears at variance with the statement in *vs.* 1 and 2, that Abijam became king of Judah in the eighteenth year of Jeroboam, and that he reigned three years in Jerusalem. But Abijam's reign may not have begun in the eighteenth year of Jeroboam; and if his death took place in the twentieth, the duration of his reign would, according to the Hebrew mode of computation, be three years. 10. his mother's name was Maachah. She was properly his grandmother; and she is here called "the king's mother," from the post of dignity which, at the beginning of his reign, she possessed. 11. Asa did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord. As a constitutional monarch, he acted like the pious David, labouring to abolish the traces and polluting practices of idolatry, and in pursuance of his impartial conduct, he did not spare delinquents even of the highest rank. 12. And he took away the sodomites out of the land [מְגִדְּוֹתַיִם]—male prostitutes, priests, or men-servants in the temple of Ashtaroth (Astarte), who went about as mendicants, generally dressed like females. and removed all the idols that his fathers had made [בְּנֵי־לֵלִיָּם]—trunks, logs; *i. e.* idols. 13. also Maachah his mother . . . her he removed from being queen (cf. 2 Chr. xv. 16 with 2 Ki. x. 13; xxiv. 12) [מִמְּלִכְוֹתָא, king's mother, a title of dignity; Septuagint, τοῦ μὴ εἶναι ἡγομένης, from being leader (see on ch. ii. 19: cf. Dan. v. 10: Baron du Tott, vol.

ii., p. 64; Bruce's 'Travels,' ii., p. 531)]. The Sultana, or queen-dowager, was not necessarily the king's natural mother (see ch. ii. 19), nor was Maachah, for she was Abijah's mother, and the beloved wife of Rehoboam. Her title, and the privileges connected with that honour and dignity, which gave her precedence among the ladies of the royal family, and great influence in the kingdom, were taken away. She was degraded for her idolatry. because she had made an idol in a grove [בְּגֵרָה], terror, an idol inspiring terror; בְּגֵרָה, not "in a grove," but for Ashtaroth (Astarte)]—a very obscene figure; and the grove was devoted to the grossest licentiousness. His plans of religious reformation, however, were not completely carried through, 'the high places were not removed' (see on ch. iii. 2). The suppression of this private worship on natural or artificial hills, though a forbidden service after the temple had been declared the exclusive place of worship, the most pious king's laws were not able to accomplish. The difficulty lay in the strength of the popular attachment to these places of worship. The Vulgate translates the verse thus: 'Also he removed Maachah his mother, that she might be no longer high priestess in the rites of Priapus (the Baal-peor of the Canaanites); he destroyed the grove she had consecrated, and broke the most filthy idol, and burnt it at the brook Kidron,' (see also Jerome, 'On Hosea,' ch. ix. 10: cf. Horace, 'Sat.,' b. i., ch. viii.) בְּנֵי־לֵלִיָּם, in the torrent Kidron; Septuagint, ἐν τῷ χειμαρρῷ τῶν Κέδρων, in the winter stream (cf. Josephus, 'Antiquities,' b. viii., ch. i., sec. 5.) Dr. Barclay ('City of the Great King,' p. 302) contends that the term "Kidron," which occurs eleven times in the Scriptures, and always with the prefix "brook," except once, implies that there it was a perennial current (cf. 1 Sam. xxx. 9, 10; 2 Chr. xxxii. 4; Ezek. xlvi. 45-47; Zech. xiv. 8), and that 'it is not at all improbable that the Kidron may yet be gliding along, far below the present surface-rubbish of the earth, for the murmuring of a stream may be distinctly heard in the valley, about two miles below the city, apparently quite deep.' On the other hand, Dr. Robinson ('Biblical Researches,' i., pp. 342, 396) says, 'that it is everywhere only a water-course (wady), between high hills; and the "brook"

- ¹the high places were not removed; nevertheless Asa's heart was perfect with the LORD all his days. And he brought in the ⁴things which his father had dedicated, and the things which himself had dedicated, into the house of the LORD, silver, and gold, and vessels.
- 16 And there was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their 17 days. And ^mBaasha king of Israel went up against Judah, and built ⁿRamah, ^othat he might not suffer any to go out or come in to Asa king of Judah.
- 18 Then Asa took all the silver and the gold *that were* left in the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house, and delivered them into the hand of his servants: and king Asa sent them to ^pBen-hadad, the son of Tabrimon, the son of Hezion, king of Syria, that 19 dwelt at ^qDamascus, saying, *There is* a league between me and thee, and between my father and thy father: behold, I have sent unto thee a present of silver and gold; come and break thy league with Baasha king 20 of Israel, that he may ^rdepart from me. So Ben-hadad hearkened unto king Asa, and sent the captains of the host which he had against the cities of Israel, and smote ^sIjon, and ^tDan, and ^uAbel-beth-maachah, and 21 all Cinneroth, with all the land of Naphtali. And it came to pass, when

B. C. 957.
¹ ch. 22. 43.
 2 Ki 12. 3.
 2 Ki. 14. 4.
 2 Chr. 17. 17.
⁴ holy.
^m 2 Chr 16. 1.
ⁿ Josh 18. 75.
 1 Sam. 15. 34.
^o ch 12. 7.
 2 (Chr. 11. 13-17).
^p ch. 20. 1-5.
 33. 34.
 2 Ki. 8. 7-15.
 2 Chr 13. 2.
^q Gen. 14. 15.
 ch. 11. 23.
^r go up
 2 Ki. 15. 19.
^s Judg. 13. 9.
 2 Sam. 10. 14.

Kidron now never flows, and probably never flowed, along its bottom, except in the season of rain (see also the same opinion expressed, *Stewart's 'Tent and Khan,'* pp. 257, 316). There is an apparent discrepancy between this and the parallel passage, 2 Chr. xiv. 3. Some have supposed that there were two kinds of "high places," the one infamous for idolatry, and the other, which retained their primitive character as places of pure worship; the former were destroyed, while the latter were allowed to remain. But this hypothesis is clearly insufficient to account for their presumed difference of treatment; for not only idolatry, but all private places of worship and sacrifice were prohibited, after the erection of the national sanctuary in "the place which God had chosen to put his name there." But "high places" were used in patriarchal times, and in the frequently long intervals of the ark's disappearance; so that many who continued faithful to the worship of Jehovah were, from sacred associations or traditional predilection, devotedly fond of these private chapels and altars, and eluded all the most vigilant measures which the reforming kings adopted to search them out for demolition. They were therefore tolerated by Asa, as well as by Jehoshaphat (ch. xxii. 43; 2 Chr. xxxiii. 17), both of whom interdicted and punished all direct idolatry. 15. he brought in the things which his father had dedicated. Probably the spoils which Abijam had taken from the vanquished army of Jeroboam (see on 2 Chr. xiii. 16). and the things which himself had dedicated—after his own victory over the Cushites (2 Chr. xiv. 12).

16. there was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days. Asa enjoyed a ten years' peace after Jeroboam's defeat by Abijam, and this interval was wisely and energetically spent in making internal reforms, as well as increasing the means of national defence (2 Chr. xiv. 1-7). In the fifteenth year of his reign, however, the king of Israel commenced hostilities against him, and invaded his kingdom. 17. built Ramah—i. e., fortified it (cf. v. 22); erected a strong fortress at Ramah (of Benjamin, er-Râm), which was near Gibeah, toward Beth-el (Beitin), on the east of the Nâbulus road (*Robinson's 'Biblical Researches,'* ii., pp. 315-317; 'Hand-book of Syria,' pp. 326, 346), and only six Roman miles from Jerusalem. Afraid lest his subjects

might quit his kingdom, and return to the worship of their fathers, he wished to cut off all intercourse between the two nations. Ramah stood on an eminence, overhanging a narrow ravine which separated Israel from Judah, and therefore he took up a hostile position in that place.

18. Then Asa took all the silver and the gold that were left in the . . . house of the Lord. Asa's religious character is now seen to decline. He trusted not in the Lord (2 Chr. xvi. 7). In this emergency Asa solicited the powerful aid of the king of Damascus-Syria; and to bribe him to break off his alliance with Baasha, he transmitted to him the treasure lying in the temple and palace. The Syrian mercenaries were gained. Instances are to be found, both in the ancient and modern history of the East, of the violation of treaties equally sudden and unscrupulous, through the presentation of some tempting bribe. Ben-hadad poured an army into the northern provinces of Israel, and having captured some cities in Galilee, on the borders of Syria, compelled Baasha to withdraw from Ramah back within his own territories. Ben-hadad—(see on ch. xi. 24). 20. Ijon. *Dr. Robinson*, who was the first to identify the site of this place, describes it thus ('Biblical Researches,' iii., p. 346)—'West of Wady et-Teim, between it and the Litâny, lies the fine region of Merj 'Ayûn, separated from the Teim by a range of hills. It is an oval, or almost circular basin, about an hour in diameter—a beautiful, fertile, well-watered plain, surrounded by hills, which in some parts are high, but mostly arable. On the north they retain this character quite to the brow of the descent towards the Litâny. Towards the south, Merj 'Ayûn communicates with the plain of the Hûleh by a narrow entrance, through which flows a stream. Merj 'Ayûn forms a district within the government of Belâd Beshârah—a large province occupying the mountains between the Hûleh and the plain of Tyre, and having for its capital the castle of Tibrân.' Dan—(see on Josh. xix. 47; Judg. xviii. 29.) Abel-beth-maachah (see on 2 Sam. xx. 14-19)—called Abel-maim, 2 Chr. xvi. 4, and by *Josephus* ('Antiquities,' b. viii., ch. xii. sec. 4), Abellare. all Cinneroth—elsewhere Chinneroth, a northern district of Palestine, which probably took its name from its contiguity to the lake. It lay north of Tiberias, and was known in later

Baasha heard thereof; that he left off building of Ramah, and dwelt in
 22 Tirzah. Then ^uking Asa made a proclamation throughout all Judah; none was ^bexempted: and they took away the stones of Ramah, and the timber thereof, wherewith Baasha had builded; and king Asa built with them Geba ^vof Benjamin, and ^wMizpah.
 23 The rest of all the acts of Asa, and all his might, and all that he did, and the cities which he built, *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah? Nevertheless in the time of ^xhis old
 24 age he was diseased in his feet. And Asa slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father: ^yand ^zJehoshaphat his son reigned in his stead.
 25 And Nadab the son of Jeroboam ⁷began to reign over Israel in the second year of Asa king of Judah, and reigned over Israel two years.
 26 And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the way of his father, and in ^ahis sin wherewith he made Israel to sin.
 27 And ^bBaasha the son of Ahijah, of the house of Issachar, conspired against him: and Baasha smote him at ^cGibbethon, which belonged to
 28 the Philistines; for Nadab and all Israel laid siege to Gibbethon; even in the third year of Asa king of Judah did Baasha ^dslay him, and reigned
 29 in his stead. And it came to pass, when he reigned, *that* he smote all the house of Jeroboam; he left not to Jeroboam any that breathed, until he had ^edestroyed him, according unto the saying of the LORD, which he spake by his servant Ahijah the Shilonite: because of the sins of Jeroboam which he sinned, and which he made Israel sin, by his provocation
 31 wherewith he provoked the LORD God of Israel to anger. Now the rest of the acts of Nadab, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the
 32 book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel? And there was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days.
 33 In the third year of Asa king of Judah began Baasha the son of
 34 Ahijah to reign over all Israel in Tirzah, twenty and four years. And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, and walked in ^fthe way of Jeroboam, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin.
 16 THEN the word of the LORD came to Jehu ^athe son of Hanani against
 2 Baasha, saying, Forasmuch ^bas I exalted thee out of the dust, and made thee prince over my people Israel; and ^cthou hast walked in the way of Jeroboam, and hast made my people Israel to sin, to provoke me to anger
 3 with their sins; behold, I will take away the posterity of Baasha, and the

B. C. 951.
^a 2 Chr. 16. 6.
^b free.
 Ex. 1 17.
 1 Sam. 8. 16.
^c Josh. 21. 7.
 Josh. 15. 26
 1 Sam. 7. 5.
 Jer. 40. 6.
 10.
^d 2 Chr. 16. 12.
 Ps. 50. 10.
 Eccl. 12. 1.
^e 2 Chr. 17. 1.
 Matt. 1. 8.
^f Matt. 1. 8.
 called
 Josaphat.
^g reigned.
^h ch. 12. 20.
ⁱ ch. 11. 14
^j Josh. 19. 14.
 Josh. 21. 23.
 ch. 16. 15.
^k Deut. 3. 35.
^l ch. 14. 10.
 14.
 Job 18. 13-21.
 Ps. 21. 10.
 Ps. 37. 23.
 Isa. 14. 20.
^m ch. 12. 28.
 29.
ⁿ ch. 13. 33.
 ch. 14. 16.
 CHAP. 16.
^o 2 Chr. 19. 2.
 2 Chr. 20. 34.
^p ch. 14. 7.
 1 Sam. 2. 8.
 1 Sam. 15.
 17.
 Ps. 75. 6. 7.
 Jer. 27. 5.
 Dan. 2. 21.
 Dan. 4. 17.
^q ch. 15. 34.

times as 'the plain of Gennesareth,' or, as designated by *Josephus*, 'the country of Gennesar,' with all the land of Naphtali. . . 22. Then king Asa made a proclamation. The fortifications which Baasha had erected at Ramah were demolished, and with the materials were built other defences, where Asa thought they were needed; at Geba (now Jeba), and Mizpah (now Neby Samwil), about two hours' travelling north of Jerusalem.
 23. diseased in his feet—(see on 2 Chr. xvi. 10-12, where an additional proof is given of his religious degeneracy.)
 25-34.—NADAB'S WICKED REIGN.
 25. Nadab the son of Jeroboam began to reign. No record is given of him, except his close adherence to the bad policy of his father.
 27. Baasha smote him at Gibbethon. This town, within the tribe of Dan, was given to the Levites (Josh. xix. 44). It lay on the Philistine borders, and having been seized by that people, Nadab laid siege to recover it. 29. when he reigned. . . he smote all the house of Jeroboam. It was according to a barbarous practice, too common in the East, for a usurper to extirpate all

rival candidates for the throne; but it was an accomplishment of Ahijah's prophecy concerning Jeroboam (ch. xiv. 10, 11). 32. there was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days. This repetition of what was stated, v. 16, must have originated in the error of a transcriber. It is not found in the Septuagint version.
 CHAP. XVI. 1-8.—Jehu's PROPHECY AGAINST BAAHA.
 1. Then the word of the Lord came to Jehu. This is the only incident recorded in the life of this prophet. His father was also a prophet (2 Chr. xvi. 7). 2. Forasmuch as I exalted thee. The doom he pronounced on Baasha was exactly the same as denounced against Jeroboam and his posterity. Though he had waded through slaughter to his throne, he owed his elevation to the appointment or permission of Him "by whom kings reign." over my people Israel. With all their errors and lapses into idolatry, they were not wholly abandoned by God. He still showed His interest in them, by sending prophets and working miracles in their favour, and possessed a multitude of faithful worshippers in the kingdom of Israel.

- posterity of his house; and will make thy house like ^athe house of 4 Jeroboam the son of Nebat. Him ^ethat dieth of Baasha in the city shall the dogs eat; and him that dieth of his in the fields shall the fowls of the air eat.
- 5 Now the rest of the acts of Baasha, and what he did, and his might, ^fare they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel?
- 6 So Baasha slept with his fathers, and was buried in ^gTirzah: and Elah his son reigned in his stead.
- 7 And also by the hand of the prophet Jehu the son of Hanani came the word of the LORD against Baasha, and against his house, even for all the evil that he did in the sight of the LORD, in provoking him to anger with the ^hwork of his hands, in being like the house of Jeroboam; and because ⁱhe killed him.
- 8 In the twenty and sixth year of Asa king of Judah began Elah the son 9 of Baasha to reign over Israel in Tirzah, two years. And ^jhis servant Zimri, captain of half *his* chariots, conspired against him, as he was in Tirzah, ^kdrinking himself drunk in the house of Arza, ^lsteward of *his* 10 house in Tirzah. And Zimri went in and smote him, and killed him, in the twenty and seventh year of Asa king of Judah, and reigned in his stead.
- 11 And it came to pass, when he began to reign, as soon as he sat on his throne, *that* he slew all the house of Baasha: he left him ^mnot one that 12 pisseth against a wall, ⁿneither of his kinsfolks, nor of his friends. Thus did Zimri destroy all the house of Baasha, according to the word of the 13 LORD, which he spake against Baasha ^oby Jehu the prophet, for ^pall the sins of Baasha, and the sins of Elah his son, by which they sinned, and by which they made Israel to sin, in provoking the LORD God of Israel to anger with ^qtheir vanities.
- 14 Now the rest of the acts of Elah, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel?
- 15 In the twenty and seventh year of Asa king of Judah did Zimri reign ^rseven days in Tirzah. And the people *were* encamped ^sagainst 16 Gibbethon, which *belonged* to the Philistines. And the people *that were* encamped heard say, Zimri hath conspired, and hath also slain the king: wherefore all Israel made Omri, the captain of the host, king over Israel 17 that day in the camp. And Omri went up from Gibbethon, and all Israel 18 with him, and they besieged Tirzah. And it came to pass, when Zimri saw that the city was taken, that he went into the palace of the king's

B. C. 90.

^a ch. 14. 10

ch. 15. 29.

^b ch. 14. 11.^c 2 Chr. 16. 1.^d ch. 14. 11.

ch. 15. 21.

^e Ps. 115. 4.

Isa. 2. 8.

Isa. 44. 9.

^f ch. 15. 27.

2 Ki. 10. 10.

31.

Hos. 1. 4.

^g 2 Ki. 9. 31.

2 Ki. 12. 20.

2 Ki. 15. 10.

27. 10.

^h 2 Sam. 17.

18. 24.

Job 31. 3.

Pro. 10. 1.

Isa. 1. 27.

Jer. 5. 23.

Dan. 5. 1-4.

30.

ⁱ which

was over.

^j 1 Sam. 25.

22.

^k Or, both

his kins-

men and

his

friends.

^l by the

hand of.

Isa. 40. 8.

1 Pet. 1-25.

^m Isa. 3. 16.ⁿ Deut. 32. 21.

1 Sam. 12.

21.

2 Ki. 17. 15.

Isa. 41. 29.

Jon. 2. 8.

1 Cor. 8. 4.

^o Job. 10. 5.

Ps. 37. 35.

^p ch. 15. 27.

7. also by the hand of the prophet Jehu. This is not another prophecy, but merely an addition by the sacred historian, explanatory of the death of Baasha and the extinction of his family. The doom pronounced against Jeroboam, ch. xiv. 9, did not entitle him to take the execution of the sentence into his own hands; but from his following the same calf-worship, he had evidently plotted the conspiracy and murder of that king, in furtherance of his own ambitious designs, and hence, in his own assassination, he met the just reward of his deeds. The similitude to Jeroboam extends to their deaths as well as their lives, the reign of their sons, and the ruin of their families.

8. began Elah the son of Baasha to reign—(cf. ch. xv. 33.) From this it will appear that Baasha died in the twenty-third year of his reign (see on ch. xv. 2); and Elah, who was a prince of dissolute habits, reigned not fully two years.

9-12.—ZIMRI'S CONSPIRACY.

9. Zimri . . . conspired against him. During a quarrel in the house of his chamberlain, Zimri slew him, and having seized the sovereignty, en-

deavoured to consolidate his throne by the massacre of all the royal race.

15.—ZIMRI'S SEVEN DAYS' REIGN.

The news of his conspiracy soon spread; and the army having proclaimed their general, Omri, king, that officer immediately raised the siege at Gibbethon, and marched directly against the capital, in which the usurper had established himself. Zimri soon saw that he was not in circumstances to hold out against the whole forces of the kingdom; so, shutting himself up in the palace, he set it on fire, and, like Sardanapalus, chose to perish himself, and reduce all to ruins, rather than that the palace and royal treasures should fall into the hands of his successful rival. The seven days' reign may refer either to the brief duration of his royal authority, or the period in which he enjoyed unmolested tranquillity in the palace.

18. the palace of the king's house [בֵּית הַמֶּלֶךְ]—the fortress of the king's house; not the harem, as *J. D. Michaelis, Ewald*, and others suppose, but the central, which was the highest and strongest, part, the citadel, of the building (Prov. xviii. 19). [The Septuagint has *εις ἄτρον*,

- 19 house, and burnt the king's house over him with fire, ⁹and died, for his sins which he sinned in doing evil ^rin the sight of the LORD, ^sin walking in the way of Jeroboam, and in his sin which he did, to make Israel to sin.
- 20 Now the rest of the acts of Zimri, and his treason that he wrought, *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel?
- 21 Then were the people of Israel divided into 'two parts: half of the people followed Tibni the son of Ginath, to make him king; and half
- 22 followed Omri. But the people that followed Omri prevailed against the people that followed Tibni the son of Ginath: so Tibni died, and Omri reigned.
- 23 In the thirty and first year of Asa king of Judah began Omri to reign
- 24 over Israel, twelve years: six years reigned he in Tirzah. And he bought the hill Samaria of Shemer for two talents of silver, and built on the hill, and called the "name of the city which he built, after the name of Shemer,
- 25 owner of the hill, 'Samaria. But ^vOmri wrought evil in the eyes of the
- 26 LORD, and did worse than all that *were* before him. For he walked in all the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin, to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger with their ^wvanities.
- 27 Now the rest of the acts of Omri which he did, and his might that he showed, *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of
- 28 Israel? So Omri slept with his fathers, and was buried in Samaria: and Ahab his son reigned in his stead.
- 29 And in the thirty and eighth year of Asa king of Judah began Ahab the son of Omri to reign over Israel: and Ahab the son of Omri reigned

B C. 9.9
⁹ Judg 9. 54.
^r ch 15. 30.
^s Ps 9. 16.
 Ps. 53,9,11.
^v ch. 12. 28.
 ch. 15. 26.
 ch 15. 25,
 29.
 Pro 28. 2.
 Isa. 9. 1^s.
 Isa 19. 2.
 Matt. 12. 25.
 1 Cor. 1. 12,
 13.
 Eph. 4. 5, 8.
^w ch. 13. 32.
 ch. 20. 1.
 ch. 22. 27.
 2 Ki. 17. 1.
 John 4. 4.
⁺ Shomeron.
 ch. 13. 32.
 2 Ki. 17. 24.
 John 4. 4.
^{*} ch. 14. 9.
 Mic 6. 16.
^o Ps. 31. 6.
 Jer. 8. 19.
 Jer 10. 3, 8.
 Jer. 14. 22.
 Jer. 16. 19
 Jer. 18. 15.
 Acts 11. 15.
 Rom 1. 21.

into a cave.] 19. For his sins which he sinned. This violent end was a just retribution for his crimes. 'His walking in the ways of Jeroboam' might have been manifested either by the previous course of his life, or by his decrees published on his ascension, when he made a strong effort to gain popularity by announcing his continued support of the calf-worship.

21. Then were the people . . . divided into two parts—i. e., the people principally, it may be presumed, of Tirzah, who supported Tibni, while Omri had the army on his side. The factions that ensued occasioned a four years' duration (cf. v. 15 with v. 23) of anarchy or civil war. Whatever might be the public opinion of Omri's merits, a large body of the people disapproved of the mode of his election, and declared for Tibni. The army, however, as usual in such circumstances (and they had the will of Providence favouring them), prevailed over all opposition, and Omri became undisputed possessor of the throne. 22. Tibni died. The Hebrew does not enable us to determine whether his death was violent or natural. [The Septuagint adds a clause which implies that Tibni was reinforced by the influential aid of a brother—καὶ ἀπέθανε Θαβνὶ καὶ Ἰωράμ ὁ ἀδελφὸς αὐτοῦ ἐν τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ, Tibni and his brother Joram died at that time.]

23-28.—OMRI BUILDS SAMARIA.
 23. In the thirty and first year of Asa . . . began Omri to reign [עָמְרִי; i. e., perhaps, עָמְרִי, servant of Jehovah; Septuagint, 'Αμβρι]. The twelve years of his rule are computed from the beginning of his reign, which was in the twenty-seventh year of Asa's royalty. He held a contest for supremacy four years with Tibni; and then, at the dates stated in this verse, entered on a sole and peaceful reign of eight years. 24. he bought the hill Samaria of Shemer [הָרַר שַׁמְרִית]

the mountain Shomeron (watch-post); Chaldee, שַׁמְרִית, whence came the Greek Samaria; Septuagint, τὸ ὄρος τὸ Σεμερών]. The palace of Tirzah being in ruins, Omri, in selecting the site of his royal residence, was naturally influenced by considerations both of pleasure and advantage. In the centre of a wide amphitheatre of mountains, about six miles from Shechem, rises an oblong hill, with steep yet accessible sides and a long flat top, extending east and west, and rising 500 or 600 feet above the valley. What Omri in all probability built as a mere palatial residence became the capital of the kingdom, instead of Shechem. It was as though Versailles had taken the place of Paris, or Windsor of London. The choice of Omri was admirable, in selecting a position which combined, in a union not elsewhere—certainly not in Jerusalem—found in Palestine, strength, beauty, and fertility (Josephus, 'Antiquities,' b. xv., ch. viii., sec. 5; 'Jewish Wars,' b. i., ch. xxii., sec. 2; Robinson's 'Biblical Researches,' iii., pp. 138-149; Stanley, 'Sinai and Palestine,' pp. 240-242). It was called by Herod, in honour of Augustus, Sebaste, the Greek translation of *Augusta*, now Sebustieh. two talents of silver—£684. Shemer had probably made it a condition of the sale, that the name should be retained. But as city and palace were built there by Omri, it was in accordance with Eastern custom to call it after the founder. The Assyrians did so; and on a tablet dug out of the ruins of Nineveh an inscription was found relating to Samaria, which is called Beth-khūmri—the house of Omri (Layard, 'Nineveh and Babylon,' p. 613; see on 2 Ki. xvii. 5). 25. But Omri wrought evil. The character of Omri's reign, and his death, are described in the stereotyped form used towards all the successors of Jeroboam, in respect both to policy as well as time,

30 over Israel in Samaria twenty and two years. And Ahab the son of Omri
 31 did evil in the sight of the LORD above all that were before him. And it
 came to pass, ⁵as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins
 of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, ²that he took to wife Jezebel, the daughter
 of Ethbaal, king of the ³Zidonians, ²and went and served Baal, and
 32 worshipped him. And he reared up an altar for Baal in the ^ahouse of
 33 Baal, which he had built in Samaria. And ^bAhab made a grove; and
 Ahab did ^cmore to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger than all the
 kings of Israel that were before him.
 34 In his days did Hiel the Beth-elite build Jericho: he laid the founda-
 tion thereof in Abiram his first-born, and set up the gates thereof in his
 youngest son Segub, according ^dto the word of the LORD, which he spake
 by Joshua the son of Nun.
 17 AND ¹Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said
 unto Ahab, ²As the LORD God of Israel liveth, before ^bwhom I stand,
^cthere shall not be dew nor rain ^dthese years, but according to my word.

B. C. 119.
 5 was it a
 light
 thing etc.
 2 Deut. 7. 3.
 3 Judg. 1. 7.
 4 ch. 21. 25.
 5 2 Ki. 10. 21.
 6 Ex. 34. 13.
 7 ch. 21. 25.
 8 Num. 15. 70.
 CHAP. 17.
 1 Elijah.
 Luke 1. 17.
 Luke 4. 25.
 Elias.
 2 Ki. 3. 14.
 3 Deut. 10. 8.
 4 Jas. 5. 17.
 5 Luke 4. 25.

30. Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the Lord above all that were before him. The worship of God by symbols had hitherto been the offensive form of apostasy in Israel; but now gross idolatry is openly patronized by the court. This was done through the influence of the bigoted and blood-thirsty Jezebel, Ahab's queen. She was "the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Zidonians." He was priest of Ashtaroth, or Astarte, who, having murdered Philetes, king of Tyre, ascended the throne of that kingdom, being the eighth king since Hiram. Jezebel was the worthy daughter of this regicide and idol priest; and, on her marriage with Ahab, never rested till she had got all the forms of her native Tyrian worship introduced into her adopted country. The name of this furious idolatress and wicked woman is used as the type of a corrupt influence and mischievous teaching (Rev. ii. 24). 32. reared up an altar for Baal—i. e., the sun, worshipped under various images. Ahab set up one (2 Ki. iii. 2), probably as the Tyrian Hercules, in the temple in Samaria. No human sacrifices were offered; the fire was kept constantly burning; the priests officiated barefoot; dancing and kissing the image (ch. xix. 18) were among the principal rites.

34.—JOSHUA'S CURSE FULFILLED UPON HIEL, THE BUILDER OF JERICHO.

34. In his days did Hiel the Beth-elite build Jericho—(see on Josh. vi. 26.) The curse took effect on the family of this reckless man; but whether his eldest son died at the time of laying the foundation, and the youngest at the completion of the work; or whether he lost all his sons in rapid succession, till, at the end of the undertaking, he found himself childless, the poetical form of the ban does not enable us to determine. Some modern commentators think there is no reference either to the natural or violent deaths of Hiel's sons; that he began in presence of his eldest son; but some unexpected difficulties, losses, or obstacles, delayed the completion till his old age, when the gates were set up in the presence of his youngest son. But the curse was fulfilled more than 500 years after it was uttered; and from Jericho being inhabited after Joshua's time (Judg. iii. 13; 2 Sam. x. 5), it has been supposed that the act against which the curse was directed was an attempt at the restoration of the walls—the very walls which had been miraculously cast down. It seems to have lain within the territory of Israel; and the unresisted act of Hiel affords a painful evidence how far the people of Israel

had lost all knowledge of, or respect for, the word of God.

CHAP. XVII. 1-7.—ELIJAH, PROPHECYING AGAINST AHAB, IS SENT TO CHERITH.

1. Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead [עֲלִיָּהוּ הַתִּישְׁבִּי מִגִּלְעָד]. The third word may be rendered either from the present Hebrew text, as in the authorized version, or, by a slight change of punctuation, Elijah the Tishbite, from Tisbi of Gilead: so also the Septuagint renders, Ἠλιὸν ὁ ποροφίτης ὁ ἐκ Θεσβῶν τῆς Γαλααδῶ. The site of this place has not yet been discovered; but if the latter meaning of the words be adopted, it conclusively settles two points—1. That Thisbe was not in Naphtali, as has been supposed (Reland, 'Palæstina,' p. 1035), but in Gilead; and that Elijah was not a resident merely, by a foreigner by birth, as Keil maintains ('Commentary,' in loco); an Ishmaelite (many of that race being on the confines of Gilead), as Michaelis suggests; but a native Gileadite. Josephus ('Antiquities,' b. viii., ch. xiii., sec. 2) describes him as a native of Thesbon, a district in the Gilead country.' This prophet is introduced as abruptly as Melchizedek—his birth, parents, and call to the prophetic office being alike unrecorded. The commencement of his recorded ministry was at a great public crisis in the national history of Israel, when measures had been adopted by the court of Samaria which threatened to extinguish the very existence of true religion in the land. Jeroboam and his immediate successors had introduced an unhappy innovation in religion, by not only changing the central place of worship and the appointed time of the festivals, but by patronizing the use of Egyptian symbols. Still they adhered to the worship of Jehovah in connection with images. Ahab effected a far worse revolution by the introduction of the heathen or Phœnician idols, Baal and Ashtaroth, and building sanctuaries to them. Through the seductive influence of the court, the people of Israel, previously prone to idolatry, followed the pernicious precedent, and the worship of Jehovah was at a low ebb in the kingdom of Israel. In this state of affairs Elijah appeared, said unto Ahab. The prophet appears to have been warning this apostate king how fatal both to himself and people would be the reckless course he was pursuing; and the failure of Elijah's efforts to make an impression on the obstinate heart of Ahab is shown by the penal prediction uttered at parting. before whom I stand—i. e., whom I

2, And the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, Get thee hence, and 3 turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that is before 4 Jordan. And it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have 5 commanded the ravens to feed thee there. So he went and did according

B C 9 0.

6 Num. 20. 8.

Job 34. 29.

Ps. 37. 3.

Isa 33. 15.

serve (Deut. xviii. 5). there shall not be dew nor rain these years. Not absolutely; but the dew and the rain should not fall in the usual and necessary quantities. This was a calamity incident to the land of Israel, and applied for the punishment of sin (cf. 1 Ki. viii. 33; Deut. xi. 17; xxviii. 23). Such a suspension of moisture was sufficient to answer the corrective purposes of God, whilst an absolute drought must have converted the whole country into an uninhabitable waste. The duration of this drought is stated by the Apostle James (v. 17), to have been three years and six months. but according to my word. Not uttered in spite, vengeance, or caprice, but as the minister of God. The impending calamity was in answer to his earnest prayer, and a chastisement intended for the spiritual revival of Israel. Miracles and prophecies are the two grand evidences of a Divine revelation. And in particular, the commission of a true prophet was attested by the occurrence of extraordinary events in the future, conformably to his announcement. Drought was the threatened punishment of national idolatry (Deut. xi. 16, 17; xxviii. 23); and Elijah now made a particular application of the Divine denunciation.

2. the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, 3. Get thee hence, &c. At first the king may have spurned the prediction as the utterance of a vain enthusiast; but when he found the drought last, and increase in severity, he sought Elijah, who, as it was necessary that he should be far removed from either the violence or the importunities of the king, was divinely directed to repair to a distant and unknown retreat. and turn thee eastward [מִן־הַיַּרְדֵּן]; not מִן־הַיַּרְדֵּן, due east, but only in an easterly direction from the point of departure—in all probability Samaria—inclining either north or south (cf. ch. vii. 39; Num. xxxiv. 3, 15); Septuagint, κατὰ ἀνατολάς. and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan [בְּנַחַל], in a torrent-bed, or water-course (wady); Septuagint, ἐν τῷ χειμαρρῷ Χορθάς; חֲרִית, the name of a torrent (signifying a cutting, or separation—viz., through a mountain ravine); עַל־פְּנֵי הַיַּרְדֵּן, on the face of the Jordan.] The difficulty is to discover a locality which answers all the conditions of the text. Three different places have had their claims advocated by eminent scholars. As the words translated “before,” are used elsewhere (Gen. xxv. 18; Josh. xix. 11) to denote ‘east,’ Eusebius and Jerome (‘Onomast.’ article ‘Chorath’) have placed Cherith in the trans-Jordanic country; and Rabbi Swartz (‘Palestine,’ p. 51) takes the same view, placing it in Wady Alias el-Yabis, which is south of Mahanaim, and runs into the Jordan a few miles below the ford opposite Beth-shau (Kirby and Manley, p. 305). In favour of this claimant, it has been urged that Elijah would naturally wish to have the Jordan as a protecting barrier between him and the bloodhounds of the court, who laboured to track his route. The intermixture of hill and valley that forms a characteristic feature of that region, covered with dense woods, abounding in flowing streams, and in caverns on the precipitous sides of the rocky ravines, is strongly urged in support of the

hypothesis that Wady Alias was the Cherith, while local traditions lend it additional confirmation. But this description is equally applicable to other localities in Palestine; and, as shown above, the words “before” and “eastward” are not sufficiently precise to establish the determinate claims of this spot. One reason for this conclusion is the language of Josephus (‘Antiquities,’ b. viii., ch. xiii., sec. 2), who, while he does not mention the name of the brook, says that Elijah ‘departed into the southern parts;’ and the traditions of the Church have almost uniformly placed the brook of Elijah on the west side of the Jordan. Accordingly, considering “eastward” as meaning ‘south-east’—the direction in which the traditions describe the locality to have been situated—and “before” as denoting ‘towards’ (Gen. xviii. 26), modern scholars are divided in opinion between two wadys which lead down from the central mountain-chain to the western bank of the Jordan. The one is Wady Fasaal, flanked on both sides by steep precipitous rocks, and frequently swept by scorching winds (Van de Velde, ‘Syria and Palestine,’ ii., p. 309). The only foundation for its claim is the possession of a living fountain (‘Ain), which in a time of severe and prevalent drought would be a great boon to the fugitive prophet; and yet this very circumstance of its having a perennial spring is a direct refutation of its claim to be Cherith; not only because the brook dried up, while the living or flowing waters did not, but because the Cherith had no fountain, only a “brook” which would become dry when the protracted drought had exhales all the moisture of the land. The honour of having been the real Cherith of the prophet is assigned now by general consent to Wady Kelt, a little south of Wady Fasaal, and answering more fully than it to the description given in this passage. Its extension “eastward;” its numerous arch-mouthed caverns, any of which might have served as a safe hiding-place from the myrmidons of the court; its “brook” (nachal, not ain) flowing with impetuous current, yet capable of being dried up for want of rain to feed it, and producing a narrow strip of fresh verdure along the sides of its channel; its ‘cut’ or separation of the tremendous precipices at the deep bottom of the gorge; its opening at the termination “before” or ‘upon the face of’ the Jordan; its name Kelt, euphonized by the Arabs from the ancient Cherith, through a not uncommon substitution of L for R; and its being, moreover, beyond the confines of the kingdom of Israel, and within the territory of that of Judah—all these circumstances combined, harmonizing, as they appear to do, with the scriptural description, with Josephus, and with local traditions, have, in the minds of competent judges, created a strong presumption that its wild, unrequented, precipitous fastnesses afforded Elijah the refuge he was commanded to seek. Its vicinity to Gilgal, where he had so many friends and followers, and their ignorance of the place of his retreat, would induce Ahab to search for him in every quarter rather than there (Robinson, ‘Biblical Researches,’ ii., p. 288; Stanley, ‘Sinai and Palestine,’ pp. 299, 300; Osborne’s ‘Palestine, Past and Present,’ pp. 391-395; Porter’s ‘Handbook,’ p. 191). 4. I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there [בְּחֲרִית]; Septuagint, τοῖς κοραξίνοι. The

unto the word of the LORD: for he went and dwelt by the brook Cherith,
 6 that is before Jordan. And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in
 the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; and he drank of the
 7 brook. And it came to pass after a while, that the brook dried up,
 because there had been no rain in the land.

B. C. 910

Ex. 16, 35.
 Num 11, 33.
 Jud, 11, 14.
 2 at the end
 of days.

idea of such unclean and voracious birds being employed to feed the prophet has not only been a fertile subject of ridicule to infidels, but appeared to many believers so strange that they have laboured to make out the *Orebim*, which in our version has been rendered ravens, to be—as the word is used, Ezek. xxvii. 27—merchants, or Arabians (2 Chr. xxi. 16; Neh. iv. 7), or the citizens of Arabah, a town alleged, on Rabbinical authority, to have been near Beth-shan (Josh. xv. 6; xviii. 18). *Jerome* states that the inhabitants of this town supplied the prophet with food; and the testimony of this writer, who lived in the fourth century of our era, is considered all the more valuable that he spent several years in Palestine for the purpose of acquiring an accurate acquaintance with the Hebrew language, and with the manners of the people, with a view to the exposition of the Scriptures. In the common printed editions of the Vulgate, *corvi*, ravens, is the word used in this passage; but in 2 Chr. xxi. 16 and Neh. iv. 7, *Jerome* with propriety renders the original word Arabians. The Arabic version considers *Orebim*, in this passage, as denoting a people, and not ravens. To these authorities may be added the opinion of the Jewish Commentator *Jarchi*, who interprets the term in the same manner, conceiving it to be impossible for the Lord's prophet to receive food from creatures declared unclean by the law, of whose authority he was a zealous upholder and unflinching defender. These considerations have seemed in the minds of many to carry so much weight that they have considered the only probable interpretation of the passage is, that the *Orebim* who brought to Elijah bread in the morning and flesh in the evening, with unbroken regularity for a whole year, were not ravens, but the inhabitants of the city Orbo, or travelling merchants belonging to the caravans from Arabia. [As to the latter hypothesis, Ezek. xxvii. 27 has, רַבְרָבִים בְּרִבְרֵי, and the occupiers of thy merchandise.] But the word is here closely connected with that which follows, so as to be dependent for its meaning upon the association; and *orebim* is never used by itself to denote merchants. Besides, the position of Elijah's retreat refutes the supposition. The caravan route of the Arabian traders did not lie in the direction of the Wady Kelt; and as their travels were made only at distant periodical intervals, it is evident that they could not be the parties who brought the prophet his daily supplies. As little could it be some kind inhabitants of the town of Orbo; for, admitting the existence of such a town, of which, however, there is no historical evidence, its people would, according to the genius of the Hebrew language, have been called, not *Orebim*, but *Arabiim*; and then, how could the prophet be said to "hide himself" if he were dependent for his daily subsistence on the friendly attentions of benevolent persons in the neighbourhood? The secret of his retreat must inevitably have transpired; and yet it is said that, notwithstanding Ahab sought for him with untiring industry in all quarters, his hiding-place could not be discovered. It would have been impossible, while a system of vigilant espionage was maintained in every part of the country, and tempting rewards would be held out to any who would volunteer the much-wished-for information, that Elijah could have remained

concealed, had his supplies of food been derived either from Arabian merchants or the inhabitants of a neighbouring town. The common rendering, then, in our opinion, is preferable to either of these conjectures; and if Elijah was miraculously fed by ravens, it is idle to enquire where they found the bread and the flesh, for God would direct them. "He commanded the ravens to feed" the prophet. In the Scripture history of God's providence, such commands are frequently represented as given to the lower animals. The serpents, the locusts, the fishes, the billows of the sea, and the clouds of heaven, are all severally represented as acting at the mandate of God, and being employed in his service (2 Chr. vii. 13; Ps. lxxviii. 23; Isa. xiv. 12; Jon. ii. 10; Amos ix. 3). 'Properly speaking,' says *Dr. Paxton*, 'the inanimate and irrational parts of creation cannot receive and execute the commands of the Almighty: they are only passive instruments employed by Him, in His providential dispensations, to produce certain effects. To command the ravens, then, is to make use of them in providing for the necessities of his servant—to impart for a time an instinctive care to supply him with food, to which they were by nature entire strangers, and which they ceased to feel when the end was accomplished.' Of course, the flesh was suited to the taste of ravenous birds; and as the distance between Jerusalem and Cherith was not very great, it is possible, as some have suggested, that the fowls might have snatched it from the altar at the temple, and carried it in their talons to the prophet's hiding-place. But as to the bread, that was not food adapted to their instincts; so that their being instinctively stimulated to carry a portion of it daily along with the meat was a strong proof of a miraculous influence being exerted over them. But the ravens are solitary birds; it is the rooks which are gregarious, flying abroad in flocks, morning and evening; and hence, as a single raven could not bring a sufficient quantity of the viands, a difficulty is felt by some to account for the fact of the prophet's continued subsistence through such agency. As an attempt at removing this difficulty, we subjoin the following remarks by the editor of 'Calmet,' without committing ourselves to the adoption of his theory:—

"The original word "raven" includes the whole genus *corvus*; and, consequently, it may have been the rook, as *Taylor* conjectures, not an unclean bird, which was employed on this occasion." The same learned writer conjectures that the support of Elijah was obtained in some such way as this,—'Let us suppose,' says he, 'for a moment that Elijah was concealed in some rocky and mountainous spot where passengers never strayed, and that here a number of voracious birds had built their nests on the trees which grew around it, or on the projections of the rocks. These flying every day to procure food for their young, the prophet availed himself of a part of what they brought; and while they, obeying the dictates of nature, designed only to provide for their offspring, Divine Providence directed them to provide at the same time for the wants of Elijah; so that he gathered, whether from their nests, what they dropped or brought to him, or occasionally from both means, enough for his daily

8, And the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, Arise, get thee ⁹ to
 9 Zarephath, which *belongeth* to Zidon, and dwell there: behold, I have
 10 commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee. So he arose and went
 to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, behold, the
 widow woman *was* there gathering of sticks: and he called to her, and
 said, ¹¹ Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink.
 11 And as she was going to fetch *it*, he called to her, and said, Bring me, I
 12 pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand. And she said, *As* the LORD
 thy God liveth, I have not ¹³ a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel,
 and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold, I *am* gathering two sticks, that
 I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and ¹⁴ die.
 13 And Elijah said unto her, Fear not; go *and* do as thou hast said: ¹⁵ but
 make me thereof a little cake first, and bring *it* unto me, and after make
 14 for thee and for thy son: for thus saith the LORD God of Israel, The
¹⁶ barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the
 15 day *that* the LORD ¹⁷ sendeth rain upon the earth. And she went, and
¹⁸ did according to the saying of Elijah: and she, and he, and her house,
 16 did eat ¹⁹ many days. And ²⁰ the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did
 the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake
²¹ by Elijah.

17 And it came to pass, after these things, *that* the son of the woman, the
 mistress of the house, fell sick; and his sickness was so sore, that there
 18 was no breath left in him. And she said unto Elijah, ¹⁹ What have I to
 do with thee, O thou man of God? art thou come unto me to call my sin
 19 to remembrance, and to slay my son? And he said unto her, Give me
 thy son. And he took him out of her bosom, and carried him up into a
 20 loft, where he abode, and laid him upon his own bed. And he ²¹ cried
 unto the LORD, and said, O LORD my God, hast thou also brought evil
 21 upon the widow with whom I sojourn, by slaying her son? And ²² he
 stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the LORD,
 and said, O LORD my God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come ²³ into

B. C. 9:0
 9 Obad 20.
 Luk 4. 26,
 Sarepta.
 10 Gen. 21. 7.
 1's. 21. 1.
 Isa. 33. 16.
 John 4. 7.
 Heb. 11. 37.
 11 Gen. 18. 6.
 12 Gen 21. 15,
 16.
 13 Gen. 22. 1, 2.
 14 1'et 1. 7.
 15 Ps. 34. 7-9,
 19.
 16 Ps. 81. 1.
 Phil 4. 12.
 17 1 Tim. 4. 8.
 18 g'veth.
 19 2 Chr 10. 10.
 Matt. 10. 4.
 42.
 Matt. 20. 2.
 4 Or, a full
 year.
 21 Deut. 15. 10.
 Fro. 11. 24.
 5 by the
 hand of.
 6 Luke 5. 8.
 7 Phil. 4. 6.
 Jas. 5. 17,
 16.
 9 2 Ki. 4. 34,
 35.
 6 measured.
 Acts 20. 10.
 7 into his
 inward
 parts.

support. But I rather think, there being a good many of them, some might furnish him with bread (*i. e.*, grain) and others flesh, and *vice versa*, at different times; so that a little from each made up his solitary but satisfactory meal. To such straits was the exiled prophet driven, and such was the dependence of this zealous man of God. After the lapse of a year the brook dried up, and this was a new trial to Elijah's faith.

S. 11.—HE IS SENT TO A WIDOW OF ZAREPHATH.

8. the word of the Lord came unto him. Zarephath, or Sarepta, now Sūrafend, whither he was directed to go, was far away on the western coast of Palestine, about nine miles south of Zidon, and within the dominions of Jezebel's impious father, where the famine also prevailed. Meeting, at his entrance into the town, the very woman who was appointed by Divine Providence to support him, his faith was severely tested by learning from her that her supplies were exhausted, and that she was preparing her last meal for herself and son. The Spirit of God having prompted him to ask, and her to grant, some necessary succour, she received a prophet's reward (Matt. x. 41, 42); and for the one meal afforded to him, God, by a miraculous increase of the little stock, afforded many to her. 9. which *belongeth* to Zidon [לְצִדוֹן]—which is by or near Zidon. Sarepta was situated between Zidon and Tyre, close to the Mediterranean. The etymology of the name indicates that it was a place for smelting metals. Robinson ('Biblical Researches,' iii., 414) says that

in the rocks at the foot of the hills he saw numerous tombs excavated, which apparently belonged to this ancient city. 14. The barrel of meal shall not waste [לֹא יִפְּסֵד]—be ended, consumed.

17-24.—HE RAISES HER SON TO LIFE.

17. the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, fell sick. A severe domestic calamity seems to have led her to think that as God had shut up heaven upon a sinful land in consequence of the prophet, she was suffering on a similar account. 18. What have I to do with thee? The phrase is elliptic, and the meaning is, 'What is there in common to us two—to me, a sinful woman, and thee, a man of God—that we should thus have come together to my harm?' (cf. Judg. xi. 12; 2 Ki. iii. 13: see *Trench*, 'On Miracles,' p. 104.) Without answering her bitter upbraiding, the prophet takes the child, lays it on his bed, and, after a very earnest prayer, had the happiness of seeing its restoration, and along with it, gladness to the widow's heart and home. There is a remarkable difference noticeable between the miracles of the Old and the New Testaments. 'We find,' says *Trench*, 'the holy men of old sometimes bringing—if one may venture so to speak—hardly, and with difficulty, the wonder-work to pass. It is not born without pangs: there is sometimes a momentary pause, a seeming uncertainty about the issue; while the miracles of Christ and His apostles are always accomplished with the highest ease' (Num. xii. 13-15; ch. xviii. 42-44; 2 Ki. iv. 31-35). The prophet was sent to this widow, not merely for his own

- 22 him again. And the LORD ⁷heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of
 23 the child came into him again, and he ⁸revived. And Elijah took the
 child, and brought him down out of the chamber into the house, and
 delivered him unto his mother: and Elijah said, See, thy son liveth.
 24 And the woman said to Elijah, Now by this ⁹I know that thou *art* a man
 of God, *and* that the word of the LORD in thy mouth *is* truth.
- 18 AND it came to pass, *after* ¹⁰many days, that the word of the LORD
 came to Elijah in the third year, saying, Go, show thyself unto Ahab;
 2 and ¹¹I will send rain upon the earth. And Elijah went to show himself
 unto Ahab.
- 3 And *there was* a sore famine in Samaria. And Ahab called ¹²Obadiah,
 which *was* ¹³the governor of *his* house. (Now Obadiah feared ¹⁴the LORD
 4 greatly; for it was *so*, when ¹⁵Jezebel cut off the prophets of the LORD,
 that Obadiah took an hundred prophets, and hid them by fifty in a cave,
 5 and ¹⁶fed them with bread and water.) And Ahab said unto Obadiah,
 Go into the land, unto all fountains of water, and unto all brooks; per-
 6 adventure we may find grass to save the horses and mules alive, ¹⁷that we
 6 lose not all the beasts. So they divided the land between them, to pass
 throughout it: Ahab went one way by himself, and Obadiah went another
 way by himself.
- 7 And as Obadiah was in the way, behold, Elijah met him: and he knew
 8 him, and fell on his face, and said, *Art* thou that my lord Elijah? And
 9 he answered him, I *am*: go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah *is here*. And
 he said, What have I sinned, that thou wouldest deliver thy servant into
 10 the hand of Ahab, to slay me? *As* the LORD thy God liveth, there is no
 nation or kingdom whither my lord hath not sent to seek thee: and when
 they said, *He is not there*, he took an oath of the kingdom and nation,

B. C. 910.
 * Ps 65. 2.
 * Ps. 68. 19.
 * Deut. 32. 33.
 Luke 7. 14.
 Acts 20. 12.
 Heb. 11. 35.
 * John 3. 2.
 John 14. 20.
 CHAP. 18.
 * Luke 4. 25.
 Jas. 5. 17.
 * Lev. 26. 4.
 Deut. 28. 12.
 Joel 2. 23.
 Amos 4. 7.
 1 Obadiah.
 2 over his
 house.
 * Neh. 7. 2.
 Job 23. 24.
 Mal. 3. 16.
 Matt. 10. 23.
 Acts 10. 2.
 35.
 3 Jezebel.
 * Matt. 10. 40-
 42.
 Matt 25. 35,
 40
 4 that we
 cut not off
 ourselv-s
 from the
 beasts.

security, but on account of her faith, to strengthen and promote which he was directed to go to her, rather than to many widows in Israel, who would have eagerly received him on the same privileged terms of exemption from the grinding famine. The relief of her bodily necessities became the preparatory means of supplying her spiritual wants, and bringing her and her son, through the teaching of the prophet, to a clear knowledge of God, and a firm faith in His Word (Luke iv. 25).

CHAP. XVIII. 1-16.—ELIJAH MEETS OBADIAH.

1. the third year. In the New Testament it is said there was no rain "for the space of three years and six months." The early rain fell in our March, the latter rain in our October. Though Ahab might have at first ridiculed Elijah's announcement, yet, when neither of these rains fell in their seasons, he was incensed against the prophet as the cause of the nation's judgment, and compelled him, with God's direction, to consult his safety in flight. This was six months after the king was told there would be neither dew nor rain; and from this period the three years in this passage are computed. Go, show thyself unto Ahab. The king had remained obdurate and unrepentant. Another opportunity was to be given him of repentance, and Elijah was sent in order to declare to him the cause of the national judgment, and to promise him, on condition of his removing it, the immediate blessing of rain. 2. Elijah went—a marvellous proof of the natural intrepidity of this prophet, of his moral courage, and his unflinching confidence in the protecting care of God, that he ventured to approach the presence of the raging lion.

there was a sore famine in Samaria. Elijah found that the famine was pressing with intense severity on the capital. Corn must have been obtained for the people from Egypt or the

adjoining countries, else life could not have been sustained for three years; but Ahab, with the chamberlain of his royal household, is represented as giving a personal search for pasture to his cattle. On the banks of rivulets, grass—tender shoots of grass—might naturally be expected; but the water being dried up, the verdure would disappear. In the pastoral districts of the East, it would be reckoned a most suitable occupation still for a king or chief to go at the head of such an expedition. Ranging over a large tract of country, Ahab had gone through one district, Obadiah through another. 3. Obadiah feared the Lord greatly. Although he did not follow the course taken by the Levites and the majority of pious Israelites at that time, of emigration into Judah (2 Chr. xi. 13, 14), he was a secret and sincere worshipper. He probably considered the violent character of the government, and his power of doing some good to the persecuted people of God, as a sufficient excuse for his not going to worship in Jerusalem. 4. an hundred prophets—not men endowed with the extraordinary gifts of the prophetic office, but who were devoted to the service of God, preaching, praying, praising, &c. (1 Sam. x. 10-12). fed them with bread and water. These articles are often used to include sustenance of any kind. As this succour must have been given them at the hazard, not only of his place, but his life, it was a strong proof of his attachment to the true religion.

7. as Obadiah was in the way . . . Elijah met him. Deeming it imprudent to rush without previous intimation into Ahab's presence, the prophet solicited Obadiah to announce his return to Ahab. The commission, with a delicate allusion to the perils he had already encountered in securing others of God's servants, was, in very touching

- 11 that they found thee not. And now thou sayest, Go, tell thy lord,
 12 Behold, Elijah *is here*. And it shall come to pass, *as soon as* I am gone
 from thee, that ^ethe Spirit of the LORD shall carry thee whither I know
 not; and *so* when I come and tell Ahab, and he cannot find thee, he shall
 13 slay me: but I thy servant fear the LORD from my youth. Was it not
 told my lord what I did when Jezebel slew the prophets of the LORD, how
 I hid an hundred men of the LORD's prophets by fifty in a cave, and fed
 14 them with bread and water? And now thou sayest, Go, tell thy lord,
 15 Behold, Elijah *is here*: and he shall slay me. And Elijah said, *As* the
 LORD of hosts liveth, before whom I stand, I will surely show myself unto
 him to-day.
 16 So Obadiah went to meet Ahab, and told him: and Ahab went to meet
 17 Elijah. And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto
 18 him, ^fArt thou he that ^gtroubleth Israel? And he answered, I have not
 troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in ^hthat ye have forsaken
 the commandments of the LORD, and thou hast followed Baalim.
 19 Now therefore send, *and* gather to me all Israel unto mount ⁱCarmel, and
 the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and ^jthe prophets of the
 20 groves four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table. So Ahab sent unto all
 the children of Israel, and ^kgathered the prophets together unto mount
 Carmel.
 21 And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, ^lHow long halt ye
 between two ^mopinions? If the LORD *be* God, follow him: but if Baal,

B. C. 903.

^a 2 Ki. 2. 14.
 Eze. 3. 12.
 14.
 Matt. 4. 1.
 Acts 8. 39.
^f ch. 21. 29.
^g Josh. 7. 25.
 Jer. 2. 8, 9.
 Jer. 34. 8.
 Amos 7. 0.
 Luke 23. 2.
 Acts 16. 20.
 Ac s 17. 6.
^h ch. 9. 9.
 2 Chr. 15. 2.
 2 Chr. 24. 20.
ⁱ Josh. 19. 26.
 Jer. 46. 18.
^j ch. 16. 35.
^k ch. 23. 6.
^l 2 Ki. 17. 41.
 Matt. 6. 24.
 Luke 16. 16.
 17.
 1 Cor. .0. 31
 22.
 Rev. 3. 15.
^m Or,
 though's.

terms, declined, as unkind, and peculiarly hazardous. But Elijah having dispelled all the apprehensions entertained about the Spirit's carrying him away, Obadiah undertook to convey the prophet's message to Ahab, and solicit an interview. But Ahab, bent on revenge, or impatient for the appearance of rain, went himself to meet Elijah.

17. Art thou he that troubleth Israel? A violent altercation took place. Ahab thought to awe him into submission; but the prophet boldly and undisguisedly told the king that the national calamity was traceable chiefly to his own and his family's patronage and practice of idolatry. But while rebuking the sins, Elijah paid all due respect to the high rank, of the offender, and urged the king to convey, by virtue of his royal mandate, a public assembly, in whose presence it might be solemnly decided which was the troubler of Israel. The appeal could not well be resisted, and Ahab, from whatever motive, consented to the proposal. God directed and overruled the issue. 19. gather . . . the prophets of Baal . . . the prophets of the groves. From the sequel, it appears that the former only came. The latter, anticipating some evil, evaded the king's command, eat at Jezebel's table—*i. e.*, not at the royal table, where herself dined, but were maintained from her kitchen establishment (see on 1 Sam. xx. 24; ch. iv. 22). It was and is the custom of Eastern courts to entertain the officers attached to them from the royal table (*Athenæus*, iv., 10, p. 145). They were the priests of Astarte, the Zidonian goddess. 20. So Ahab sent unto all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together unto mount Carmel. The people—*i. e.*, the representatives of the people, stood before the mountain, on the plain of Esdraelon. The place was worthy of the greatness of the crisis, which was the greatest amongst many that have been signalized. Nature had there representatives from all her departments, to bear Jehovah's controversy with idolatrous man. Sea and river, and plain and mountain, great memories in the past, great occasions in the future—

all made Esdraelon the fitting scene and platform of the momentous debate that Elijah made to resound thereon. From every point over that 100 square miles of surface those interested in the issue of this great argument could watch the descent of the fiery response anticipated (*Drew's* 'Scripture Lands,' pp. 178, 179). "Mount Carmel" is a bold, bluff promontory, which extends from the western coast of Palestine, at the bay of Acre, for many miles eastward, to the central hills of Samaria. It is a long range, presenting many summits, and intersected by a number of small ravines. The spot where the contest took place is situated at the eastern extremity, which is also the highest point of the whole ridge. It is called el-Mohbraka, 'the Burning,' or 'the Burnt place.' No spot could have been better adapted for the thousands of Israel to have stood, drawn up on those gentle slopes. The rock shoots up in an almost perpendicular wall of more than 200 feet in height, on the side of the vale of Esdraelon. This wall made it visible over the whole plain, and from all the surrounding heights, where gazing multitudes would be stationed.

21. Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye? They had long been attempting to conjoin the service of God with that of Baal. It was an impracticable union; and the people were so struck with a sense of their own folly, or dread of the king's displeasure, that they "answered not a word." Elijah proposed to decide for them the controversy between God and Baal by an appeal, not to the authority of the law, for that would have no weight, but by a visible token from heaven. As fire was the element over which Baal was supposed to preside, he proposed that two bullocks should be slain, and placed on separate altars of wood—the one for Baal and the other for God—and on whichever the fire should descend to consume it, the event should determine the true God, whom it was their duty to serve. It is evident from this language that the mass of the people, ignorant and strongly addicted to idolatry, coun-

- 22 ^m then follow him. And the people answered him not a word. Then said Elijah unto the people, ⁿ I, *even* I only, remain a prophet of the LORD;
- 23 but Baal's prophets *are* four hundred and fifty men. Let them therefore give us two bullocks; and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay *it* on wood, and put no fire *under*: and I will
- 24 dress the other bullock, and lay *it* on wood, and put no fire *under*: and call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the LORD; and the God that ^o answereth by fire, let him be God. And all the people answered and said, ⁶ It is well spoken.
- 25 And Elijah said unto the prophets of Baal, Choose you one bullock for yourselves, and dress *it* first; for ye *are* many; and call on the name of
- 26 your gods, but put no fire *under*. And they took the bullock which was given them, and they dressed *it*, and called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon, saying, O Baal, ⁷ hear us! But *there was* ² no voice, nor any that ⁸ answered. And they ⁹ leaped upon the altar which
- 27 was made. And it came to pass at noon, that Elijah mocked them, and said, Cry ¹⁰ aloud; for he *is* a god: either ¹¹ he is talking, or he ¹² is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be
- 28 awaked. And they cried aloud, and ⁹ cut themselves, after their manner,
- 29 with knives and lancets, till ¹³ the blood gushed out upon them. And it came to pass, when mid-day was past, and they prophesied until the *time* of the ¹⁴ offering of the *evening* sacrifice, that *there was* neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any ¹⁵ that regarded.
- 30 And Elijah said unto all the people, Come near unto me. And all the

B. C. 906.
^m Josh. 21. 15.
ⁿ ch. 19. 10.
 11.
^o 1 Chr 21. 26.
 6 The word is good.
 7 Or, answer.
² Ps. 115. 5.
 1 Cor. 8. 4.
 8 Or, hear I.
 9 Or, leaped up and down at the altar.
 10 with a great voice.
 11 Or, he meditated.
 12 hath a pursuit.
 9 Lev. 19. 28.
 13 poured out blood upon them.
 7 1 Cor. 11. 4.
 14 ascending.
 15 attention.

sidered Baal as identical with Jehovah; while the worshippers of Jehovah, on the other hand, maintained His exclusive title to divine honours. The controversy, therefore, did not consist in a direct opposition between the worship of Jehovah and that of Baal; for the latter party, like the heathen in general, tolerated the worship of other deities along with their own favourite idols; but, as *Hengstenberg* states it ('*Pentateuch*,' i. pp. 170, 171), 'the persecution was directed against those who, like Elijah, bore powerful testimony against the union of what was irreconcilable, who loudly maintained that Jehovah identified with Baal was no longer Jehovah. The proposal which Elijah made from this point of view, that they should see whether Jehovah was God, or Baal, the priests of Baal, from their point of view, understood to be, whether Jehovah-Baal was God, or Jehovah in perfect exclusiveness. The question that he put before making his proposal plainly implies, that in the popular opinion these heterogeneous religious elements were blended in one' (cf. Hos. ii. 11). **the people answered him not a word.** It was precisely the same controversy as was of old between Moses and Pharaoh (see *Macdonald*, 'Introduction to the Pentateuch,' i. 177). **23. Let them . . . give us two bullocks, &c.** The preparations as described were exactly accordant with the prescriptions of the Mosaic ritual (see on Lev. i.); and the mode of decision suggested by Elijah is borrowed from Lev. ix. There was a close resemblance in the circumstances, though a much greater urgency for a miraculous attestation from heaven in the apostate times of Elijah, and the result was the same (cf. v. 39). **24. all the people answered and said, it is well spoken.** The proposal appearing every way reasonable, was received by the people with unanimous approval.

25. Elijah said unto the prophets of Baal, Choose you one bullock for yourselves. The priests of Baal commenced the ceremony by calling on their god. In vain did they continue

invoking their senseless deity from morning till noon, and from noon till evening, uttering the most piercing cries, using the most frantic gesticulations, and mingling their blood with the sacrifice. (See description of the manner and invocation of the heathen, *Osborne's* 'Palestine,' p. 253; *Roberts*, 'Oriental Illustrations,' in loco; *Darby's* 'Travels in Ceylon,' and *Dr. Marshall*, 'Ceylon.'). **28. cut themselves . . . with knives and lancets—(see *Grotius*.)** [The scenes of Carmel are transacted daily before the eyes of our missionaries. An account is given ('*Missionary Herald*,' p. 1005) of the rites of the Hindoo goddess Matha:—'There was a multitude of ten or twelve thousand people assembled. In a short time a man advanced into the centre of the group, pretending that the goddess had entered into him; pulling off his turban and tossing his long hair over his face, he began to leap and shake, uttering a noise occasionally like the bark of a dog. As his excitement increased, he beat himself with a chain, and made incisions in his tongue with a sword. Having taken the blood, he rubbed it on the foreheads of the spectators. By and by the infection spread, and others pretended to be in like manner possessed by the goddess; so that in a short time every party had three or four of the possessed. These poor, infatuated men continued to leap and shake the whole night.' (See *Graham's* 'Jordan and Rhine,' p. 176; *Virgil*, 'Æneid,' iv., 672; cf. Rev. xiii. 16, 17; xv. 2; xvi. 2; xix. 20; xx. 4.)] No response was heard; no fire descended. Elijah exposed their folly and impotence with the severest irony—**29. they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice** [אֶת־עֹלֹתֵי-הָעֶרְבַּיִם]—they imitated, at length, the manner of the true prophets, by shouting, and the singing of sacred music.

30. Elijah said unto all the people, Come near. As the day was far advanced, Elijah commenced his operations. Inviting the people to approach and see the entire proceeding, he first repaired an old altar of God, which Jezebel had demolished; then,

people came near unto him: and he repaired the altar of the LORD *that*
 31 was broken down. And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the
 number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the word of the
 32 LORD came, saying, "Israel shall be thy name; and with the stones he
 built an altar in ^{the} name of the LORD: and he made a trench about
 33 the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed. And he "put
 the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid *him* on the
 wood, and said, Fill four barrels with water, and ^{pour} *it* on the burnt
 34 sacrifice, and on the wood. And he said, Do *it* the second time: and
 they did *it* the second time. And he said, Do *it* the third time: and
 35 they did *it* the third time. And the water ^{ran} round about the altar;
 and he filled the trench also with water.
 36 And it came to pass at ^{the} time of the offering of the evening sacrifice,
 that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, LORD "God of Abraham,
 Isaac, and of Israel, ^{let} it be known this day that thou art God in Israel,
 and *that I am* thy servant, and *that* "I have done all these things at thy
 37 word. Hear me, O LORD, hear me; that this people may know that thou
 art the LORD God, and *that* thou hast "turned their heart back again.
 38 Then ^{the} fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the
 wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that *was* in
 the trench.
 39 And when all the people saw *it*, they fell on their faces; and they said,
 40 The LORD, he *is* the God! the LORD, he *is* the God! And Elijah said
 unto them, ^{Take} the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape.
 And they took them; and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon,
 and ^{slew} them there.
 41 And Elijah said unto Ahab, Get thee up, eat and drink; for *there is*
 42 ^a sound of abundance of rain. So Ahab went up to eat and to drink:
 and Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he ^{cast} himself down upon
 43 the earth, and put his face between his knees, and said to his servant, Go

B. C. 903.
 * Gen. 32. 23.
 Gen. 33. 20.
 Gen. 35. 10.
 2 Ki. 17. 34.
 Isa. 45. 1.
 † 1 Cor. 10. 31.
 † Col. 3. 17.
 † Lev. 1. 6.
 † Judg. 6. 20.
 † went.
 † Ex. 27. 39.
 † Gen. 23. 13.
 Ex. 3. 6.
 Ex. 4. 5.
 Ex. 20. 19.
 41.
 Matt. 22. 32.
 Heb. 11. 16.
 † ch. 8. 43.
 2 Ki. 19. 10.
 Is. 53. 18.
 * Num. 16. 28.
 † Jer. 10. 23.
 Jer. 31. 18.
 † Lev. 9. 21.
 Judg. 6. 21.
 1 Chr. 1. 23.
 2 Chr. 7. 1.
 17 Or. apprehend.
 2 Ki. 10. 25.
 † Deut. 13. 5.
 Deut. 18. 0.
 Rev. 19. 10.
 18 Or. a sound of a noise of rain.
 † Jas. 5. 17.

having arranged the cut pieces of the bullock, he caused four barrels or jars of water to be dashed all over the altar, and round in the trench. Once, twice, a third time this precaution was taken, and then, when he had offered an earnest prayer, the miraculous fire descended (Lev. ix. 24; Judg. vi. 21; xiii. 20; 1 Chr. xxi. 26; 2 Chr. vii. 1), and consumed not only the sacrifice, but the very stones of the altar. The impression on the minds of the people was that of admiration, mingled with awe; and with one voice they acknowledged the supremacy of Jehovah as the true God. Taking advantage of their excited feelings, Elijah called on them to seize the priestly impostors, and with their blood fill the channel of the river (Kishon), which, in consequence of their idolatries, the drought had dried up—a direction which, severe and relentless as it seems, it was his duty as God's minister to give (Deut. xiii. 5; xviii. 20). The natural features of the mount exactly correspond with the details of this narrative. The conspicuous summit, 1,635 feet above the sea, on which the altars were placed, presents an esplanade spacious enough for the king and the priests of Baal to stand on the one side, and Elijah on the other. It is a rocky soil, on which there is abundance of loose stones, to furnish the twelve stones of which the altar was built—a bed of thick earth, in which a trench could be dug; and yet the earth not so loose that the water poured into it would be absorbed; 250 feet beneath the altar plateau there is a perennial fountain, which, being close to the altar of the Lord, might not have been accessible to the people, and whence, therefore, even in that season of severe drought, Elijah

could procure those copious supplies of water which he poured over the altar. The distance between this spring and the site of the altar is so short as to make it perfectly possible to go thither and back again; whereas it must have been impossible *once* in an afternoon to fetch water from the sea (*Van de Velde*, ii., p. 893). The summit is 1,000 feet above the Kishon, which nowhere runs from the sea so close to the base of the mount as just beneath el-Mohrakra; so that the priests of Baal could in a few minutes be taken down 'to the brook (torrent), and slain there.' The place where the false prophets were discomfited and slain was towards that extremity of the mount which faces Jezreel (Esdraelon), and at a point near which it is approached by the Kishon. 'From this slaughter some travellers are disposed to derive the modern name of the river, el-Mukāta', following the meaning, *secutū excidit*, &c., of the Arabic verb (so *D'Arvieux*, "Memoire," ii., p. 294). But among the common people the name signifies merely "the ford," from another meaning of the same verb, *trajecit flumen*. See *Freytag's* "Lex. Arab." (*Robinson's* "Biblical Researches," iii., p. 232).

41-46.—ELIJAH, BY PRAYER, OBTAINS RAIN.

42. Ahab went up to eat and to drink. Ahab, kept in painful excitement by the agonizing scene, had eaten nothing all the day. He was recommended to refresh himself without a moment's delay; and while the king was thus occupied, the prophet, far from taking rest, was absorbed in prayer for the fulfilment of the promise (v. 1). put his face between his knees—a posture of earnest supplication still used. 43. Go up now,

- up now, look toward the sea. And he went up, and looked, and said,
- 44 *There is nothing.* And he said, Go ^e again seven times. And it came to pass at the seventh time, that he said, Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand. And he said, Go up, say unto Ahab, ¹⁰Prepare *thy chariot*, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not.
- 45 And it came to pass in the mean while, that the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode, and went
- 46 to Jezreel. And ^fthe hand of the LORD was on Elijah; and he girded up his loins, and ran before Ahab ²⁰to the entrance of Jezreel.
- 19 AND Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and withal how
- 2 he had slain ^aall the prophets with the sword. Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying, ^bSo let the gods do *to me*, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by ^cto-morrow about this
- 3 time. And when he saw *that*, he arose, and went for his life, and came
- 4 to Beer-sheba, which *belongeth* to Judah, and left his servant there. But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he ^drequested ¹for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life; for *I am*
- 5 not better than my fathers. And as he lay and slept under a juniper

B. C. 906.

^e Gen. 32. 26.

Hab. 2. 3.

¹⁰ 1ie, or,

Bind.

^f 2 Ki. 3. 15.

Eze. 1. 3.

Eze 3. 1'.

²⁰ till thou

come to

Jezreel.

CHAP. 19.

^a ch. 18. 40.^b Ruth 1. 17.

ch. 2. 23.

ch 20. 10.

2 Ki. 6. 31.

^c Fro 27. 1.^d Num 11. 15.

Jer 23. 11-

18.

Jon 4. 3. 6.

Phil. 1. 51.

¹ for his life.

look toward the sea. From the place of worship there is a *small eminence*, which, on the west and north-west side, intercepts the view of the sea (*Stanley*, 'Sinai and Palestine,' p. 347; *Van de Velde*, i., p. 121). It can be ascended in a few minutes, and presents a wide prospect of the Mediterranean. Six times the servant went up, but the sky was clear, the sea tranquil. On the seventh he descried the sign of approaching rain (see on ch. xvii. 21, 22). 44. a little cloud . . . like a man's hand. The clearness of the sky renders the smallest speck distinctly visible; and this is in Palestine the uniform precursor of rain. It rises higher and higher, and becomes larger and larger with astonishing celerity, till the whole heaven is black, and the cloud bursts in a deluge of rain. Prepare thy chariot . . . that the rain stop thee not—either by the river Kishon being suddenly so swollen as to be impassable, or from the deep layer of dust in the arid plain being turned into thick mud, so as to impede the wheels. 45. Ahab rode, and went to Jezreel—now Zerib, a distance of about ten miles. This race was performed in the midst of a tempest of rain. But all rejoiced at it, as diffusing a sudden refreshment over all the land of Jezreel. 46. Elijah . . . girded up his loins, and ran before Ahab. It was anciently, and still is, in some countries of the East, customary for kings and nobles to have runners before their chariot, who are tightly girt for the purpose. The prophet, like the Bedouins of his native Gilead, had been trained to run; and as the hand of the Lord was with him, he continued with unabated agility and strength. It was, in the circumstances, a most proper service for Elijah to render. It tended to strengthen the favourable impression made on the heart of Ahab, and furnished an answer to the cavils of Jezebel; for it showed that he who was so zealous in the service of God was at the same time devotedly loyal to his king. The result of this solemn and decisive contest was a heavy blow and great discouragement to the cause of idolatry. But subsequent events seem to prove that the impressions, though deep, were but partial and temporary.

CHAP. XIX. 1-3.—ELIJAH FLEES TO BEER-SHEBA.

3. And when he saw that [שָׁחָה]. The Jews, jealous of ascribing to the prophet the emotion

of fear, as derogatory to his high character, have regulated the punctuation of this word so that it is referred to שָׁחָה, to see; instead of שָׁחָה, to be afraid. But it is evident from the whole tenor of the context that his hasty and distant flight was prompted by the influence of sudden fear. He arose, and went for his life. He entered Jezreel full of hope. But a message from the incensed and hard-hearted queen, vowing speedy vengeance for her slaughtered priests, dispelled all his bright visions of the future. It is probable, however, that in the present temper of the people, even she could not have dared to lay violent hands on the Lord's servant, and purposely threatened him because she could do no more. The threat produced the intended effect, for his faith suddenly failed him. He fled out of the kingdom into the southernmost part of the territories in Judah; nor did he deem himself safe even there, but dismissing his servant, he resolved to seek refuge among the mountain recesses of Sinai, and there longed for death (*Jas. v. 17*) (*Pepe Smith's* 'Scripture Testimony,' p. 350). This sudden and extraordinary depression of mind arose from too great confidence inspired by the miracles wrought at Carmel, and by the disposition the people evinced there. Had he remained steadfast and immovable, the impression on the mind of Ahab and the people generally might have been followed by good results. But he had been exalted above measure (2 Cor. xii. 7-9), and being left to himself, the great prophet, instead of showing the indomitable spirit of a martyr, fled from his post of duty.

4-18.—HE IS COMFORTED BY AN ANGEL.

4. went a day's journey into the wilderness—on the way from Beer-sheba to Horeb [a wide expanse of sand-hills, covered with the זָרְחָה (not juniper, but broom shrub), whose tall and spreading branches, with their white leaves, afford a very cheering and refreshing shade]. 'The Rothem, or Retem,' says *Robinson* ('Biblical Researches,' i., p. 299), 'is the largest and most conspicuous shrub of these deserts, growing thickly in the valleys and water-courses. Our Arabs always selected the place of encampment (if possible) in a place where it grew, in order to be sheltered by it at night from the wind; and during the day, when they often went on in

tree, behold, then 'an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and
 6 eat. And he looked, and, behold, *there was* a cake baken on the coals,
 and a cruse of water at his ²head: and he did eat and drink, and laid
 7 him down again. And the angel of the LORD came again the second
 time, and touched him, and said, Arise and eat; because the journey is
 8 too great for thee. And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in
 the strength of that meat forty ⁷days and forty nights unto ⁹Horeb the
 mount of God.
 9 And he came thither unto ^ha cave, and lodged there; and, behold, the
 word of the LORD *came* to him, and he said unto him, What doest thou
 10 here, Elijah? And he said, ⁱI have been very ^jjealous for the LORD God
 of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown
 down thine altars, and ^kslain thy prophets with the sword; and ^lI, *even*
 11 I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away. And he said, Go
 forth, and stand ^mupon the mount before the LORD. And, behold, the
 LORD passed by, and ⁿa great and strong wind rent the mountains, and
 brake in pieces the rocks, before the LORD; *but* the LORD *was* not in the
 12 earthquake: and after the earthquake a fire; *but* the LORD *was* not in
 13 the fire: and after the fire a ^ostill small voice. And it was *so*, when
 Elijah heard it, that ^phe wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out,
 and stood in the entering in of the cave. And, behold, *there came* a voice
 14 unto him, and said, What doest thou here, Elijah? And he said, I have
 been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: because the children of
 Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain
 thy prophets with the sword; and I, *even* I only, am left; and they seek
 15 my life, to take it away. And the LORD said unto him, Go, return on
 thy way to the wilderness of Damascus: ^qand when thou comest, anoint
 16 Hazael *to be* king over Syria: and ^rJehu the son of Nimshi shalt thou

R. C. 506.
 P Ps 31. 7.
 Heb. 1. 14.
 2 bolster.
 J Ex 31. 21.
 Deut. 9. 9.
 18.
 Matt. 4. 2.
 9 Ex 3. 1.
 h Ex 33. 21.
 Heb. 11. 38.
 i Rom. 11. 3.
 j Num 25. 11.
 Ps. 69. 9.
 Ps. 119. 123.
 John 2. 17.
 k ch 18. 4.
 Mat. 2: 31-
 55.
 l ch. 18. 22.
 Rom 11. 3.
 m Ex. 24. 12.
 n Eze. 1. 4.
 Eze 37. 7.
 o Num 14. 18
 Neh 9. 17.
 Job 4. 16.
 Ps. 86. 15.
 Ps. 103. 5-
 15.
 Ps. 111. 4.
 Ps. 145. 8.
 Jas. 5. 11.
 P Ex. 3. 6.
 Isa 6. 2.
 q 2 Ki. 8. 12.
 r 1.
 r 2 Ki 9. 1.

advance of the camels, we found them not unfrequently sitting or sleeping under a bush of *retem*, to protect them from the sun. Its roots are very bitter, and are regarded by the Arabs as yielding the best charcoal. It was in this very desert, a day's journey from Beer-sheba, which gave the name to one of the stations of the ancient Israelites, that Elijah lay down and slept beneath a shrub of that name. [The Septuagint retains the original name, ὑποκάτω Ραζρέν, under a Rathman; Syriac, under a terebinth tree.] His gracious God did not lose sight of His fugitive servant, but watched over him, and miraculously ministering to his wants, enabled him, in a better, but not wholly right frame of mind, by virtue of that supernatural supply, to complete his contemplated journey. 8. he... did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb. He re-enacted in his own person the leading of Israel through the wilderness. Trial was the essential quality common to both events. The food which the angel brought him, and which lasted for the whole time, corresponded to the manna. Horeb is called the mount of God, in consequence of the solemn manifestations on its summit (cf. Exod. iii. 2 with xxxiii., xxxiv : see further, *Hengstenberg*, 'Pentateuch,' i., p. 172). At the same time, considering that the distance from Beer-sheba to mount Horeb is only a journey of eight or nine days, it is very probable that the number *forty* should be understood indefinitely for a great length of time (see on Gen. viii. 6; xvii. 17).

9. he came thither unto a cave [הַמְּדִינָה, to the cave; Septuagint, εἰς τὸ σπηλαῖον; the identical cave in which Moses saw the Lord (Exod.

xxxiii. 22)]. In the solitude of Sinai God appeared to instruct him. What doest thou here, Elijah? was a searching question addressed to one who had been called to so arduous and urgent a mission as his. By an awful exhibition of Divine power he was made aware of the Divine speaker who addressed him. 11. the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains. He is not a physical agent, great or small. The wind, the fire, the electricity, are ministers that do His pleasure, but they do not constitute a part of the nature, nor bear any resemblance to Him who is Lord. God is a spirit; and though the common mass of the Hebrew people might not have realized this great conception, yet there were certain individuals who, like Elijah, had more refined and elevated notions in regard to the pure spirituality of the Divine nature. Progress had been made in religious knowledge from the time of the burning bush. The attention of the prophet was arrested by the phenomena that took place. His petulance was silenced, his heart was touched, and he was bid without delay return to the land of Israel, and prosecute the Lord's work there. The design of this remarkable scene was to show Elijah that it was not according to the character of God to destroy or to coerce, but by the rational weapons of argument and preaching the Word, to persuade, the idolaters to abandon a false, and to embrace the true, religion. But, to convince him that an idolatrous nation will not be unpunished, He commissions him to anoint three persons who were destined in Providence to avenge God's controversy with the people of Israel. Anointing is used synonymously with appointment (Judg. ix. 8), and is applied to

- anoint to be king over Israel: and ^aElisha the son of Shaphat, of Abel-
 17 meholah, shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room. And ^b'it shall
 come to pass, *that* him that escapeth the sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay;
 18 and him that escapeth from the sword of Jehu ^cshall Elisha slay. Yet
³I ^d'have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not
 bowed unto Baal, ^eand every mouth which hath not kissed him.
 19 So he departed thence, and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who *was*
 plowing with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth:
 20 and Elijah passed by him, and cast his mantle upon him. And he left
 the oxen, and ran after Elijah, and said, Let me, I pray thee, kiss my
 father and my mother, and *then* I will follow thee. And he said unto
 21 him, ⁴Go back again: for what have I done to thee? And he returned
 back from him, and took a yoke of oxen, and slew them, and boiled
²their flesh with the instruments of the oxen, and gave unto the people,
 and they did eat. ³Then he arose, and went after Elijah, and ²ministered
 unto him.
 20 AND Ben-hadad the king of Syria gathered all his host together:
 and *there were* ^athirty and two kings with him, and horses and chariots:

B. C. 906.

^a Luke 4. 27.

called

Eliheus.

^c 2 Ki. 8. 12.

2 Ki. 9. 14.

2 Ki. 10. 6.

2 Ki. 13. 3.

^b Hos. 6. 5.³ Or, I will

leave.

^d Rom. 11. 4.^e Hos. 13. 2.⁴ Go return.² 2 Sam. 2.

22.

^v Matt. 4. 1-

27.

⁵ Ex. 24. 13.

Num. 27. 16-

20.

CHAP. 20.

^a Gen. 14. 1.

all named, although Jehu alone had the consecrated oil poured over his head. 'The symbolical action and the figure are mixed up in a remarkable manner—an evident proof of the little importance attached to the material form, even in the case of the former. In the case of Hazael it was a symbol of the divine power which was to be imparted to him as an instrument of Divine justice for the punishment of Israel. In other words, the appointment or exaltation of Hazael had a purely theocratic signification, as we may clearly perceive from the fact that Hazael was to be anointed in conjunction with Jehu and Elisha' (*Hengstenberg*, 'Christology,' iii., pp. 126-136). These persons were all three destined to be eminent instruments in achieving the destruction of idolaters, though in different ways. But of the three commissions Elijah personally executed only one—viz., the call of Elisha to be his assistant and successor, and by him the other two were accomplished (2 Ki. viii. 7-13; ix. 1-10). Having thus satisfied the fiery zeal of the erring but sincere and pious prophet, the Lord proceeded to correct the erroneous impression under which Elijah had been labouring, of his being the sole adherent of the true religion in the land; for God, who seeth in secret, and knew all that were His, knew that there were 7,000 persons who had not done homage (*lit.*, kissed the hand) to Baal. Osculation was a common form of idolatrous worship (cf. Job xxxi. 27; Hos. xiii. 2). *Clemens Alexandrinus*, in the seventh book of his 'Stromata,' gives a lengthened description of the various modes in which it was done. 16. Abel-meholah—the meadow of dancing, in the valley of the Jordan.

19-21.—ELISHA FOLLOWS ELIJAH.

19. Elisha the son of Shaphat (of Abel-meholah, the meadow of dancing)—a village of Issachar, near Scythopolis, situated in a watered district. Most probably he belonged to a family distinguished for piety, and for their opposition to the prevailing calf-worship. plowing with twelve yoke of oxen—indicating that he was a man of substance. The eastern plough is a very simple, primitive implement. Usually a man ploughs with a one-handled plough and two heifers, holding the handle with his right hand and the cord with the left. It is just a part of a tree, very slightly altered, and fitted with an iron shoe or point. Elisha's twelve yoke of oxen can mean

only that twelve ploughs were at work in other parts of the field, or perhaps more probably, as land was anciently measured by 'yokes of oxen,' an extent of soil had been ploughed equal to twelve yokes, and he was drawing his labour to a close. Elijah . . . cast his mantle upon him. This was an investiture with the prophetic office. It is in this way that the Brahmins, the Persian Sooffees, and other priestly or sacred characters in the East are appointed—a mantle being, by some eminent priest, thrown across their shoulders. The action of Elijah was probably accompanied by a benediction or utterance of some words, intimating to Elisha his call to the prophetic office. Elisha had probably been educated in the schools of the prophets. The anointing spoken of in the case of this prophet (v. 16) must be considered a merely figurative term, denoting the impartation to him of the gifts of the Spirit. Elijah passed by him—or passed on (apparently) without a moment's delay. [The Septuagint has *καὶ ἀπῆλθεν ἐπ' αὐτόν*, and he departed from upon him—i. e., after having performed his commanded duty.] 20. what have I done to thee?—i. e., Go, but keep in mind the solemn ceremony I have just performed on thee. It is not I, but God, who calls thee. Do not allow any earthly affection to detain you from obeying His call. 21. took a yoke of oxen—i. e., not above three years of age (ch. i. 9; Prov. xv. 17; xxii. 13), either stall-fed or taken fresh from the pastures (ch. iv. 23). Such a large preparation of animal food was reserved for festive occasions, and all the friends and domestics partook in succession of the viands. Having hastily prepared (2 Sam. xxiv. 22) a farewell entertainment to his family and friends, he left his native place, and attached himself to Elijah as his minister *עֲבָדָה*, and waited upon, attended him (2 Ki. iii. 11), as Joshua did to Moses (Josh. i. 1). According to Josephus, he at once received the prophetic afflatus, and commenced prophesying ('Antiquities,' b. viii., ch. xiii., sec. 7).

CHAP. XX. 1-12.—BEN-HADAD BESIEGES SAMARIA.

1. Ben-hadad the king of Syria. This monarch was the son of that Ben-hadad who, in the reign of Baasha, made a raid on the northern towns of Galilee (ch. xv. 20). The thirty-two kings that were confederate with him were probably tributary princes. The ancient kings of Syria and Phœnicia

- 2 and he went up and besieged Samaria, and warred against it. And he sent messengers to Ahab king of Israel into the city, and said unto him,
- 3 Thus saith Ben-hadad, Thy silver and thy gold *is* mine; thy wives also
- 4 and thy children, *even* the goodliest, *are* mine. And the king of Israel answered and said, My lord, O king, according to thy saying, ^bI *am* thine, and all that I have.
- 5 And the messengers came again, and said, Thus speaketh Ben-hadad, saying, Although I have sent unto thee, saying, Thou shalt deliver me
- 6 thy silver, and thy gold, and thy wives, and thy children; yet I will send my servants unto thee to-morrow about this time, and they shall search thine house, and the houses of thy servants; and it shall be, *that* whatsoever is ¹pleasant in thine eyes, they shall put *it* in their hand, and take
- 7 *it* away. Then the king of Israel called all ^cthe elders of the land, and said, Mark, I pray you, and see how this *man* seeketh mischief: for he sent unto me for my wives, and for my children, and for my silver, and
- 8 for my gold; and ²I denied him not. And all the elders, and all the
- 9 people, said unto him, Harken not *unto him*, nor consent. Wherefore he said unto the messengers of Ben-hadad, Tell my lord the king, All that thou didst send for to thy servant at the first I will do: but this thing I may not do. And the messengers departed, and brought him word again.
- 10 And Ben-hadad sent unto him, and said, ^dThe gods do so unto me, and more also, if the dust of Samaria shall suffice for handfuls for all the
- 11 people that ³follow me. And the king of Israel answered and said, Tell *him*, ^eLet not him that girdeth on *his harness* boast himself as he that
- 12 putteth it off. And it came to pass, when *Ben-hadad* heard this ⁴message, as he *was* ^fdrinking, he and the kings in the ⁵pavilions, that he said unto his servants, ⁶Set *yourselves in array*: and they set *themselves in array* against the city.
- 13 And, behold, there ⁷came a prophet unto Ahab king of Israel, saying, Thus saith the LORD, Hast thou seen all this great multitude? behold, I will deliver it into thine hand this day; and ^gthou shalt know that I
- 14 *am* the LORD. And Ahab said, By whom? And he said, Thus saith the LORD, *Even* by the ⁸young men of the princes of the provinces. Then he said, Who shall ⁹order the battle? And he answered, Thou.
- 15 Then he numbered the young men of the princes of the provinces, and they were two hundred and thirty-two; and after them he numbered all

R. C. 901.
^b Lev. 26. 31.
 Deut 28 49.
¹ Sam. 13. 6, 7.
² Ki 18. 31, 32.
¹ desirable.
^c Ex. 3. 16.
 Lev. 4. 15.
² Sam. 6. 3, ch. 8. 1.
 1 Chr. 13. 1.
 1 Chr. 23. 1.
 Pro. 11. 14.
² I kept not back from him.
^d ch. 19. 2.
 Acts 23. 12.
³ are at my feet.
 Ex. 11. 8.
 Judg 4. 10.
^e Pro. 27. 1.
 Eccl 7. 8.
⁴ word.
^f ch. 16. 9.
 Pro. 23. 29-32.
 Pro. 31. 4, 5.
 Eccl 10. 10.
⁵ Or, tents.
⁶ Or, Place the engines: and they placed engines
⁷ approached.
^g Ex 7. 5.
 Is. 9. 16.
⁸ Cr. servants.
⁹ b'nd, or, tie.

ruled only over a single city, and were independent of each other, except when one great city, as Damascus, acquired the ascendancy; and even then they were allied only in time of war. The Syrian army encamped at the gates, and besieged the town of Samaria. 2. Thus saith Ben-hadad, 3. Thy silver and thy gold is mine. The claim to the treasure is easily understood. Not so that made for the wives and children, and therefore it must be noticed, that he who obtained possession of the family of a king was considered in the East as possessing a title to be his legitimate successor, or feudal suzerain, (see on ch. xi.) To this message sent him during the siege, Ahab returned a tame and submissive answer, probably thinking it meant no more than an exaction of tribute. But the demand was repeated with greater insolence, and yet, from the abject character of Ahab, there is reason to believe he would have yielded to this arrogant claim also, had not the voice of his subjects been raised against it. Ben-hadad's object in these and other boastful menaces was to intimidate Ahab. But the weak sovereign began to show a little more spirit, as appears in his abandoning "my lord the king," for the single

"tell him," and giving him a dry but sarcastic hint to glory no more till the victory is won.

11. Let not him that girdeth on his harness, &c. This is an old and now obsolete term for *armour*, derived from the French *harnois* (see on Exod. xiii. 18). Kindling into a rage at the cool defiance, Ben-hadad gave orders for the immediate sack of the city. 12. as he was drinking, he and the kings in the pavilions—booths made of branches of trees and brushwood, which were reared for kings in the camp, as they still are for Turkish Pashas or Agas in their expeditions (*Keil*, in loco: see also *Chandler's* "Travels in Asia Minor," p. 149). set yourselves in array—invest the city.

13-20.—THE SYRIANS ARE SLAIN.

13. behold, there came a prophet unto Ahab. Though the king and people of Israel had highly offended Him, God had not utterly cast them off. He still cherished designs of mercy towards them, and here, though unasked, gave them a signal proof of His interest in them, by a prophet's animating announcement, that the Lord would that day deliver the mighty hosts of the enemy into his hands, by means of a small, feeble, inadequate band. Conformably to the prophet's instructions,

- 16 the people, *even* all the children of Israel, *being* seven thousand. And they went out at noon: but Ben-hadad *was* ^hdrinking himself drunk in the pavilions, he and the kings, the thirty and two kings that helped
- 17 him. And the young men of the princes of the provinces went out first; And Ben-hadad sent out, and they told him, saying, There are men
- 18 come out of Samaria. And he said, ⁱWhether they be come out for peace, take them alive; or whether they be come out for war, take them
- 19 alive. So these young men of the princes of the provinces came out of
- 20 the city, and the army which followed them. And they slew every one his man: and the Syrians ^jfled, and Israel pursued them; and ^kBen-
- 21 hadad the king of Syria escaped on an horse with the horsemen. And the king of Israel went out, and smote the horses and chariots, and slew the Syrians with a great slaughter.
- 22 And the prophet came to the king of Israel, and said unto him, Go, strengthen thyself, and mark, and see what thou doest: for ^lat the return of the year the king of Syria will come up against thee.
- 23 And the servants of the king of Syria said unto him, ^mTheir gods *are* gods of the hills; therefore they were stronger than we; but let us fight against them in the plain, and surely we shall be stronger than they.
- 24 And do this thing; ⁿTake the kings away, every man out of his place,
- 25 and put captains in their rooms: and number thee an army like the army that ^othou hast lost, horse for horse, and chariot for chariot; and we will fight against them in the plain, *and* surely we shall be stronger than they. And he hearkened unto their voice, and did so.
- 26 And it came to pass at the return of the year, that Ben-hadad numbered the Syrians, and went up to ^pAphek, ^qto fight against Israel.
- 27 And the children of Israel were numbered, and ^rwere all present, and went against them: and the children of Israel pitched before them like two little flocks of kids; but the Syrians ^sfilled the country.

B C. 601.

^a 2 Sam. 13.
23, 29.
ch. 16, 9.
1ro 20 1.
Dan. 5, 2.
30.
1Ios 4, 11.
Eph. 5, 13.
ⁱ 1 Sam 2, 3.
1 Sam. 14.
11, 12.
2 Ki. 14, 8.
1ro. 11, 2.
1ro 16, 18.
1ro 18, 12.
Luka 14, 11
^j Lev. 26, 8.
Ps. 33, 13.
^k Job 40, 11.
^l 2 Sam. 11, 1.
2 Chr 31, 10.
^m Isa 42, 8.
Jer 16, 19-
21.
Rom. 1, 21-
23.
ⁿ Job 5, 12.
13.
^o that was
fallen.
^p Josh. 13, 4.
^q to the war
with Is-
rael.
^r Or, wer-
victualled.
^s Judg. 6, 5.

232 young men went boldly out towards the camp of the enemy, while 7,000 more, apparently volunteers, followed at some little distance, or posted themselves at the gate, to be ready to reinforce those in front, if occasion required it. Ben-hadad, with his vassals and princes, were already, at that early hour—scarcely mid-day—deep in their cups; and though informed of this advancing company, yet, confiding in his numbers, or it may be, excited with wine, he ordered, with indifference, the proud intruders to be taken alive, whether they came with peaceable or hostile intentions. It was more easily said than done: the young men smote right and left, making terrible havoc among their intended captors, and their attack, together with the sight of the 7,000, who soon rushed forward to mingle in the fray, created a panic in the Syrian army, who immediately took to flight. Ben-hadad himself escaped the pursuit of his victors on a fleet horse, surrounded by a squadron of horse-guards. This glorious victory, won so easily, and with such a paltry force opposed to overwhelming numbers, was granted that Ahab and his people might know (v. 13) that God is the Lord. But we do not read of this acknowledgment being made, or of any sacrifices being offered in token of their national gratitude. (See *Pye Smith's* 'Scripture Testimony,' p. 353.)

22, the prophet came to the king of Israel, and said. The same prophet who had predicted the victory shortly re-appeared, admonishing the king to take every precaution against a renewal of hostilities on the following campaign. at the return of the year—i.e., in spring, when, on the cessation of the rainy season, military campaigns (2 Sam. xi. 1) were anciently begun. It happened

as the prophet had forewarned. Brooding over their late disastrous defeat, the attendants of Ben-hadad ascribed the misfortune to two causes—the one arose from the principles of heathenism, which led them to consider the gods of Israel as local deities—'gods of the hills'—whereas their power to aid the Israelites would be gone if the battle was maintained on the plains. The war-chariots of the Syrians would have full scope for action there; while the Hebrews were utterly deficient in that species of force (cf. Judg. v. 8; 1 Sam. xiii. 19-22). Probably, also, the Syrians supposed that as Canaan was a mountainous country, the Hebrews were fond of worshipping in high places, and that as their law was given from the summit of a mountain, the God of Israel was 'a god of the hills.' The other cause to which the Syrian courtiers traced their defeat at Samaria, was the presence of the tributary kings, who had probably been the first to take flight; and they recommended 'captains to be put in their rooms' [צְרִיחַ] (cf. v. 16; see on v. 15). Approving of these recommendations, Ben-hadad renewed his invasion of Israel the next spring, by the siege of Aphek, in the valley of Jezreel (cf. 1 Sam. xx. 1 with xxviii. 4), not far from Endor.

27, like two little flocks of kids. Goats are never seen in large flocks, or scattered, like sheep; and hence the two small, but compact divisions of the Israelite force are compared to goats, not sheep. Humanly speaking, that little handful of men must have been overpowered by numbers. But a prophet was sent to the small Israelite army to announce the victory, in order to convince the Syrians that the God of Israel was omnipotent everywhere—in the valley as well as on

28 And there came a man of God, and spake unto the king of Israel, and said, Thus saith the LORD, ^aBecause the Syrians have said, 'The LORD is God of the hills, but he is not God of the valleys, therefore will I deliver all this great multitude into thine hand; and ye shall know that I am the LORD.

29 And they pitched one over against the other seven days: and so it was, that in the seventh day the battle was joined: and the children of Israel

30 slew of the Syrians an hundred thousand footmen in one day. But the rest fled to Aphek, into the city; and there a wall fell upon twenty and seven thousand of the men that were left. And Ben-hadad fled, and

31 came into the city, ¹³into an inner chamber. And his servants said unto him, Behold now, we have heard that the kings of the house of Israel are merciful kings: let us, I pray thee, put sackcloth on our loins, and ropes upon our heads, and go out to the king of Israel: per-

32 adventure he will save thy life. So they girded sackcloth on their loins, and put ropes on their heads, and came to the king of Israel, and said, Thy servant Ben-hadad saith, I pray thee, let me live. And he said, Is

33 he yet alive? he is my brother. Now the men did diligently observe whether any thing would come from him, and did hastily catch it: and they said, Thy brother Ben-hadad. Then he said, Go ye, bring him. Then Ben-hadad came forth to him; and he caused him to come up into

34 the chariot. And Ben-hadad said unto him, ⁸The cities which my father took from thy father I will restore; and thou shalt make streets for thee in Damascus, as my father made in Samaria. Then said Ahab,

B. C. 101.
^a Ex. 10 5
 Ex. 31 14.
 Deut. 4. 21.
 Deut. 3. 35.
 36.
 Josh. 21. 19.
 Ps. 33. 10.
 Ps. 47. 8.
 Is. 149. 7.
 Isa. 30. 17.
 28.
 Isa. 57. 27.
 Isa. 59. 18.
 19.
 Nah. 1. 2.
¹³ into a chamber within a chamber, or, from chamber to chamber.
 ch. 2: 27.
⁷ Gen. 37. 34.
 2 Sam. 3. 31.
 2 Sam. 14. 2.
 2 Ki. 19. 1.
 Esth. 4. 1.
⁸ ch. 15. 10.

the hills. And accordingly, after the two armies had pitched opposite each other for seven days (i. e., according to the Oriental mode of reckoning, including only parts of the first and last days: cf. Matt. xii. 40; Luke ii. 21; also ch. xx. 29), they came to an open battle: 100,000 Syrians lay dead on the field, while the fugitives took refuge in Aphek, and there, crowding on the city walls, they endeavoured to make a stand against their pursuers; but the old walls giving way under the incumbent weight, fell, and buried 27,000 in the ruins. Ben-hadad succeeded in extricating himself, and with his attendants, sought concealment in the city, fleeing from chamber to chamber; or, as some think it, the chamber of a chamber—i. e., a harem [חַבְרֵי חַבְרֵי, the most private apartment of a house. The Septuagint has εἰσῆλθεν εἰς τὸν οἶκον τοῦ κοιτῶνος εἰς τὸ ταμίειον, entered into the house of the bedchamber; into the closet]; but seeing no ultimate means of escape, he was advised to throw himself on the tender mercies of the Israelitish monarch.

32. They girded sackcloth on their loins, and put ropes on their heads, and came to the king of Israel. It was considered an act of deep humility and submission for a vanquished foe to approach the conqueror with a sword suspended from his neck. A modern instance, which occurred on the storming of Bagdad by the Turks, 1638, is related in *Thevenot's* 'Travels,' Part i., p. 289. In the case of a defeated army, or remnant of an army, having resolved to beg for quarter, the vanquished general sought an interview with the vizier or prime minister, by whom he was introduced to the king, and in token of his throwing himself and his remaining soldiers upon the victor's clemency, he appeared with a black coarse scarf about his neck, a badge of mourning, and a sword fastened to it by the hilt. The ropes used by Ben-hadad and his companions in misfortune were probably adopted for want of scarfs, or as extraordinary tokens of affliction. "On their heads" [עַל רִאשֵׁיהֶם]

So the Septuagint, ἐπὶ τὰς κεφαλὰς αὐτῶν]. The Arabic version has 'necks,' and this is conformable to the Oriental custom. Captives were dragged by ropes round their necks, bound together in companies, or in a line, the loop of the rope being passed round each neck, and their hands tied behind their backs, as is depicted on the monuments of Egypt, also on the Persian sculptures at Behistun. 'The whole of this demeanour,' says *Sir John Malcolm* ('History of Persia'), 'is a mode of begging clemency the most humble, and is considered by proud and barbarous men the most ignominious. It signifies, I approach you as a criminal, and bring myself to submit to whatever terms you may impose.' 34. streets . . . in Damascus—implying that a quarter of that city was to be assigned to Jews, with the free exercise of their religion and laws, under a judge of their own. The provision was designed for the benefit of trading and commercial colonies of Jews who might be resident there. 'This privilege of having streets in a foreign capital,' says *Harmer*, iii., pp. 489-492 (quoting from *Knollis's* 'History of the Turks'), 'gave them liberty to have not only houses, but in each an oven, a mill, a bagnio, weights and measures for wine, oil, and honey, if they thought fit, and also to judge causes amongst themselves, together with as great a jurisdiction over all those that dwelt in their streets and houses, of whatever nation they might be, as the king of Jerusalem had over others. May we not believe that the same, or nearly the same, franchises and regalities the father of Ahab had granted to Ben-hadad's father to obtain peace, and that Ben-hadad, on this fatal turn of his affairs, proposed to grant to Ahab in Damascus a quarter for Jewish subjects to live in, which he should possess, and enjoy the same jurisdiction over them as he did over the rest of his kingdom? Such a power in Samaria, and such a making over of a part of it to him, in annexing it to the kingdom of Syria, with a right of building such idol-temples as he thought fit, was a sufficient disgrace

I will send thee away with this covenant. So 'he made a covenant with him, and sent him away.

35 And a certain man of "the sons of the prophets said unto his neighbour
 "in the word of the LORD, Smite me, I pray thee. And the man refused
 36 to smite him. Then said he unto him, Because thou hast not obeyed the
 voice of the LORD, behold, as soon as thou art departed from me, a lion
 shall slay thee. And as soon as he was departed from him, "a lion found
 37 him, and slew him. Then he found another man, and said, Smite me, I
 pray thee. And the man smote him, "so that in smiting he wounded
 38 him. So the prophet departed, and waited for the king by the way, and
 39 disguised himself with ashes upon his face. And "as the king passed by,
 he cried unto the king: and 'he said, Thy servant went out into the
 midst of the battle; and, behold, a man turned aside, and brought a man
 unto me, and said, Keep this man: if by any means he be missing, then
 "shall thy life be for his life, or else thou shalt "pay a talent of silver.

40 And as thy servant was busy here and there, "he was gone. And the
 king of Israel said unto him, "So shall thy judgment be; thyself hast
 41 decided it. And he hastened, and took the ashes away from his face; and
 42 the king of Israel discerned him that he was of the prophets. And he
 said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, 'Because thou hast let go out of thy
 hand a man "whom I appointed to utter destruction, therefore thy life
 43 shall go for his life, and thy people for his people. And the king of Israel
 'went to his house heavy and displeased, and came to Samaria.

21 AND it came to pass after these things, that Naboth the Jezreelite had
 a vineyard, which was in "Jezreel, hard by the palace of Ahab king of
 2 Samaria. And Ahab spake unto Naboth, saying, Give 'me thy 'vineyard,
 that I may have it for a garden of herbs, because it is near unto my
 house: and I will give thee for it a better vineyard than it; or, if it "seem

B. C. 900.

I Isa. 26. 10.

Isa. 23. 15.

" 2 Ki. 2. 3.

5, 7, 15.

" ch. 13. 17.

19.

" ch. 13. 21.

" smiting

and

wounding.

" 2 Sam. 12. 1.

" 2 Sam. 14. 5.

7.

" 2 Ki. 10. 24.

" weigh.

" he was

not.

" Job. 15. 6.

Luke 19. 22.

" 1 Sam. 15. 9.

ch. 22. 31-

37.

" of my

curse.

" ch. 21. 4.

ch. 21. 8.

CHAP. XXI.

" Ju'dg. 6. 33.

1 Sam. 29. 1.

" Ex. 20. 17.

Hab. 2. 9.

Luke 12. 15.

" 1 Sam. 8. 14.

" be good in.

" thine eyes.

to the father of Ahab; and the proposing to give Ahab a like honour in Damascus was a proof of the most abject adulation in Ben-hadad." So he made a covenant with him, and sent him away. This misplaced kindness to a proud and impious idolater, so unbecoming a theocratic monarch, exposed Ahab to the same censure and fate as Saul, (1 Sam. xv. 9, &c.) It was in opposition to God's purpose in giving him the victory.

35-42.—A PROPHET REPROVES HIM.

35. **Smite me.** This prophet is supposed (*v. 8*) to have been Micaiah. The refusal of his neighbour to smite the prophet was manifestly wrong, as it was a withholding of necessary aid to a prophet in the discharge of a duty to which he had been called by God, and it was severely punished, as a beacon to warn others (see on ch. xiii. 2-24). In general, it may be remarked, that the very actions and words of a prophet during the prophetic ecstasy were symbolical. In the case under notice, the refusal of the man who was asked to smite the excited prophet was morally good, on the supposition that the thing had not been commanded by the Spirit, and that the men knew not but the prophet might be disordered in his intellect. But yet it was a wrong refusal, as the person applied to, being of course a friend who was cognizant of the prophetic office of Micaiah, ought to have complied with the request, and the man was, on account of refusal, slain by a lion. The other individual, who obeyed the commandment by smiting the prophet so that he wounded him, did well, because that action served the purpose of the prophet, whose stroke symbolically represented that Ahab should be smitten; and the unbelief of the former, followed by his destruction, represented the unbelief of the king, who should, therefore, perish in a similar manner.

The prophet found a willing assistant, and then, waiting for Ahab, leads the king unconsciously, in the parabolic manner of Nathan (2 Sam. xii.), to pronounce his own doom, (see on ch. xxi.) 39. a talent of silver—£342.

CHAP. XXI. 1-4.—NABOTH REFUSES AHAH HIS VINEYARD.

1. Naboth . . . had a vineyard, which was in Jezreel. Ahab proposed to Naboth to give him a better in exchange, or to obtain it by purchase; but the owner declined to part with it; and in persisting in his refusal, Naboth was not actuated by any feelings of disloyalty or disrespect to the king, but solely from a conscientious regard to the divine law, which, for important reasons, had prohibited the sale of a paternal inheritance, or if, through extreme poverty or debt, an assignation of it to another was unavoidable, the conveyance was made on the condition of its being redeemable at any time—at all events, of its reverting at the jubilee to the owner (see on Lev. xxv. 23-28; Num. xxxvi. 8). 2. that I may have it for a garden of herbs. Whether Ahab thought that the vineyard of a subject might properly enough be converted into a kitchen garden for a king, or he set, as the Hebrews generally did, a high value on the possession of such a garden, at all events one chief reason for his eager desire to possess the vineyard of Naboth was its contiguity to the palace grounds. The herbs cultivated in such a garden as Ahab wished to form, were of course those indigenous to the country and the climate: the culinary vegetables of the Hebrews comprising gourds, cucumbers, melons; onions, leeks, and garlic; rice, arise, and cumin; mustard, cassia, and cinnamon; the former class being prized for their refrigerating qualities, tending to allay thirst as well as cool and refresh in the hot season,

3 good to thee, I will give thee the worth of it in money. And Naboth said to Ahab, The LORD forbid it me, "that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee.

4 And Ahab came into his house heavy and displeased because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him; for he had said, I will not give thee the inheritance of my fathers: and he laid him down upon his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no bread. But Jezebel his wife came to him, and said unto him, Why is thy spirit so sad, that thou eatest no bread? And he said unto her, Because I spake unto Naboth the Jezreelite, and said unto him, Give me thy vineyard for it: and he answered, I will not give thee my vineyard.

7 And Jezebel his wife said unto him, Dost thou 'now govern the kingdom of Israel? Arise, and eat bread, and let thine heart be merry: I will give thee the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite. So she wrote letters in Ahab's name, and sealed them with his seal, and sent the letters unto the elders and to the nobles that were in his city dwelling with Naboth.

9 And she wrote in the letters, saying, ²Proclaim a fast, and set Naboth 10 ³on high among the people; and set two men, ⁹sons of Belial, before him,

B. C. 1090.
 a Lev. 25. 23.
 Num. 36. 7.
 Eze. 46. 19.
 1 Sam. 8. 14.
 2 Sam. 13. 4.
 1 Ro. 30. 31.
 Eccl. 4. 1.
 Eccl. 8. 4.
 Dan. 5. 10.
 21.
 f Jer. 6. 7.
 Mic. 2. 1.
 Mic. 7. 3.
 2 Or, Call an assembly.
 3 in the top of the people.
 g Dent 13. 13.
 Jndg. 19. 22.
 1 Sam. 2. 12.
 2 Sam. 10. 1.
 2 Sam. 23. 6.
 2 Cor. 6. 15.

which prevailed during the greater part of the year; while the latter were useful as condiments, in seasoning viands, and serving as tonics.

4. he laid him down upon his bed. The divan extends across the whole length or breadth of a room. It is raised a little above the floor, and spread with carpets or fine mats, on which the inmates sit or recline, their backs being supported by cushions placed against the wall (see *Russel's 'Aleppo'; Shaw's 'Travels'*). turned away his face—either to conceal from his attendants the vexation of spirit he felt, or by the affectation of great sorrow rouse them to devise some means of gratifying his wishes.

5-16.—JEZEBEL CAUSETH NABOTH TO BE STONED.
 7. Dost thou now govern the kingdom of Israel?—a sarcastic taunt: 'A pretty king thou art! Canst thou use thy power, and take what thy heart is set upon?' Ahab seems not to have contemplated acquiring the much-wished-for plot of ground by injustice and cruelty. He never dreamed of the desperate expedient of realizing his desires by the method which Jezebel devised—at least he did not hint at such a thing; while her unscrupulous mind at once and unhesitatingly determined on the truly Oriental, despotic plan of getting rid of Naboth by murder. Arise . . . I will give thee the vineyard. No sooner does Jezebel learn the cause of her husband's distress than, after upbraiding him for his pusillanimity, and bidding him act as a king, she tells him to trouble himself no more about such a trifle; she would guarantee the possession of the vineyard.
 8. So she wrote letters . . . and sealed them with his seal. The seal-ring contained the name of the king, and gave validity to the documents to which it was affixed (Esth. viii. 8; Dan. vi. 17). Besides rings with a seal attached to them, there were other forms of seal or signet, neither set in metal nor worn on the fingers: these were engraved stones, on part of the surface of which the necessary figures and characters were inscribed. This practice probably originated with the Egyptians; but it was afterwards adopted by the Phœnicians. The stone was cut by a lapidary, in the form of a cylinder, a pyramid, or a square, according to the taste or fancy of the owner; at other times it was bisected, and on the convex superficies of the cut diameter the form of a scarabæus or beetle was engraved;

while the flat under-surface contained the legend or inscription for the seal. It has been conjectured, from Jezebel's Phœnician extraction and her ready command of the king's seal, that Ahab's might be of the Phœnician description. By allowing her the use of his signet, Ahab passively consented to Jezebel's proceeding. Being written in the king's name, it had the character of a royal mandate. sent the letters unto the elders and to the nobles that were in the city. They were the elders or civic authorities of Jezreel, and would in all likelihood be the creatures and fit tools of Jezebel. Ahab and Jezebel were now in Samaria (ch. xx. 43). 9. Proclaim a fast, &c. These obsequious and unprincipled magistrates did according to orders. Pretending that a heavy guilt lay on one, or some unknown party, who was charged with blaspheming God and the king, and that Ahab was threatening vengeance on the whole city unless the culprit were discovered and punished, they assembled the people to observe a solemn fast. Fasts were commanded on extraordinary occasions affecting the public interests of the state (2 Chr. xx. 3; Ezra viii. 21; Joel i. 14; ii. 15; Jon. iii. 5). This was a fast not appointed by divine, but by human authority. [בְּרַקָּה אֱלֹהִים] *ברקתא*. The verb *barak* signifies in most places to *bless*; and accordingly the Septuagint has *Εὐλόγησε* *Σεὐν καὶ βασιλεα*; and there are only two places of Scripture (Job i. 5; ii. 5, and here) in which it does not appear possible to give it this meaning. *Schultens, Dr. Lee*, and other able philologists think that it should have this meaning here also, for Elohim they consider to denote in both places false gods or idols. But though blessing idols might be punished as a crime in Israel, it is inconceivable that *blessing the king* could be a punishable offence. Besides, Elohim should not be taken in the sense of idols, unless there is something in the passage which indicates that that is the meaning. *Genenius* says that the signification of *cursing*, which is so obviously the meaning of the word in this passage, is supported by the analogy of the cognate languages. In fact, the secondary senses ascribed to *barak* belong as naturally to Hebrew usage as to that of other languages, in which such a usage is common.] 9. set Naboth on high—i. e., bring him to trial. During a trial the panel, or accused person, was

to bear witness against him, saying, Thou didst ^ablaspheme God and the king: and *then* carry him out, and ⁱstone him, that he may die.

11 And the men of his city, *even* the elders and the nobles who were the inhabitants in his city, did as Jezebel had sent unto them, *and as it was*

12 written in the letters which she had sent unto them; they ^jproclaimed a

13 fast, and set Naboth on high among the people. And there came in two men, children of Belial, and sat before him: and the men of Belial witnessed against him, *even* against Naboth, in the presence of the people, saying, Naboth did blaspheme God and the king. Then ^kthey carried him forth out of the city, and stoned him with stones, that he died.

14 Then they sent to Jezebel, saying, Naboth is stoned, and is dead. And

15 it came to pass, when Jezebel heard that Naboth was stoned, and was dead, that Jezebel said to Ahab, Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give thee for money: for

16 Naboth is not alive, but dead. And it came to pass, when Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, that Ahab rose up to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take possession of it.

17 And ^lthe word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, Arise,

18 go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, ^mwhich *is* in Samaria: behold, *he* ⁿ*is* in the vineyard of Naboth, whither he has gone down to possess it.

19 And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the LORD, ^oHast thou killed, and also taken possession? And thou shalt speak unto him, saying,

B. C. 899.

^a Ex. 22. 28.

Lev. 24. 15.

16

Acts 6. 11.

ⁱ Lev. 24. 14.

^j Job 15. 31.

Job 34. 31.

Pro. 11. 9.

^k Pro. 29. 12.

Isa 9. 16.

17.

Isa 32 6. 7.

Isa 53. 4.

1 Tim. 4. 2.

^k Num. 15. 26.

Josh. 7. 21.

25.

2 Chr 24. 21.

Mark 15. 20.

Acts 7. 68.

69.

Heb. 11. 37.

^l Ps. 9. 12.

^m ch. 13. 12.

2 Chr. 22. 9.

ⁿ Gen. 4. 9.

11.

2 Sam. 12. 9.

placed on a high seat, in the presence of all the court, in order that he might be identified by the witnesses. But as the guilty person was supposed to be unknown, the setting of Naboth on high among the people must have been owing to his being among the distinguished men of the place.

10. God and the king. This order is always observed when God is spoken of as the supreme head or ruler of the theocracy, and the king his vicegerent (cf. 1 Chr. xxix. 20).

13. there came in two men—worthless fellows, who had been bribed to swear a falsehood. The law required two witnesses in capital offences (Deut. xvii. 6; xix. 15; Num. xxxv. 30; Matt. xxvi. 60). Cursing God and cursing the king are mentioned in the law (Exod. xxii. 28) as theocratic offences closely connected, the king of Israel being the earthly representative of God in his kingdom. Thus this mock trial was conducted, and a conviction established by the local authorities for an alleged transgression of the Mosaic law. Neither the king nor the queen appeared to take part in it, although the latter was the secret instigator of the whole proceedings. The magistrates acted entirely through her influence and according to her instructions; so that although they were the obsequious agents in consummating this judicial murder, the guilty responsibility of the plot and its execution lay on the king and queen. they carried him forth out of the city, and stoned him. The law, which forbade cursing the rulers of the people, does not specify the penalty for this offence; but either usage had sanctioned, or the authorities of Jezreel had originated, stoning as the proper punishment. It was always inflicted out of the city (Acts vii. 58). 'The act of Naboth dying for his vineyard has been often adduced as a prophecy, not by word, but by deed, of the death of Christ, and the purpose of that death' (Trench, 'On the Parables,' p. 204) (cf. as to His suffering for alleged blasphemy, without the camp, John xix. 17; Heb. xiii. 12, 13). The whole of this infamous proceeding, conducted ostensibly according to the regular forms of criminal prosecution, furnishes clear proof that the constitution of the northern

remained exactly the same as that of the southern kingdom. The regulation which required two witnesses (Num. xxxv. 30; Deut. xviii. 6, 7; xix. 5), the charge made upon a ground purely theocratic (Exod. xxii. 28), the punishment left to the discretion of the magistrate, but awarded according to analogous cases (Deut. xiii. 11; xvii. 5), and the 'carrying out,' resting on Deut. xvii. 5,—all combine to show that the Mosaic law remained the established national code in Israel (see *Michaelis*, 'Laws of Moses,' article i., sec. 59; v., sec. 295; vi., sec. 299). Accordingly Ahab, when he could not prevail upon Naboth to part with an inheritance of which the law gave him the sole and independent right of disposing, thought of nothing else than submitting to the authority of constitutional law; and even Jezebel, unprincipled and lawless as she was, durst not openly use violent measures, but was obliged to seek the attainment of her iniquitous end by pursuing an apparent course of legal investigation into a calumnious charge. 15. Jezebel . . . said . . . Arise, take possession. Naboth's execution having been announced, and his family being involved in the same fatal sentence (2 Ki. ix. 26), his property became forfeited to the crown, not by law, but by traditional usage (see on 2 Sam. xvi. 4).

16. Ahab rose up to go down—from Samaria to Jezreel.

17-20.—ELIJAH DENOUNCES JUDGMENTS AGAINST AHAH AND JEZEBEL.

18. go down to meet Ahab . . . in the vineyard of Naboth. The place of meeting commanded a full view of the memorable scene of Elijah's controversy with the priests of Baal, and it was associated with the memory of other great transactions in Israelitish history. The demeanor and the language of Elijah were deeply striking and impressive, all the more from the solemn lessons of religion he had been taught in his seclusion at Horeb (see this well illustrated by *Mauvise*, 'Prophecs and Kings,' p. 136). 19. Hast thou killed, and also taken possession? While Ahab was in the act of surveying his ill-gotten possession, Elijah, by Divine commission, stood before him. The appearance of the prophet, at

Thus saith the LORD, ° In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine.

- 20 And Ahab said to Elijah, Hast thou found me, O ^p mine enemy? And he answered, I have found thee; because ^q thou hast sold thyself to work
- 21 evil in the sight of the LORD. Behold, ^r I will bring evil upon thee, and will take away thy posterity, and will cut off from Ahab ^s him that pisseth
- 22 against the wall, and ^t him that is shut up and left in Israel, and will make thine house like the house of ^u Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of ^v Baasha the son of Ahijah, for the provocation wherewith
- 23 thou hast provoked me to anger, and made Israel to sin. And ^w of Jezebel also spake the LORD, saying, The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the ^x wall of
- 24 Jezreel. Him ^y that dieth of Ahab in the city the dogs shall eat; and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat.
- 25 But ^z there was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the LORD, ^a whom Jezebel his wife ^b stirred up.
- 26 And he did very abominably in following idols, according to all things ^c as did the Amorites, whom the LORD cast out before the children of Israel.
- 27 And it came to pass, when Ahab heard those words, that he rent his clothes, and put ^d sackcloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and lay in sackcloth, and went softly. And the word of the LORD came to Elijah the
- 28 Tishbite, saying, Seest thou how Ahab ^e humbleth himself before me? Because he humbleth himself before me, I will not bring the evil in his days; but ^f in his son's days will I bring the evil upon his house.
- 22 AND they continued three years without war between Syria and Israel.
- 2 And it came to pass in the third year, that ^g Jehoshaphat the king of
- 3 Judah came down to the king of Israel. And the king of Israel said unto his servants, Know ye that ^h Ramoth in Gilead *is* ours, and we *be* ⁱ still,

B. C. 8:9.
^o ch. 22, 38.
^p ch. 18, 17.
Isa. 29, 21.
Amos 5, 10.
^q 2 Ki. 17, 17.
Rom. 7, 14.
^r Deut. 32, 35.
ch. 14, 10.
^s 1 Sam. 25, 22.
^t ch. 14, 10.
^u ch. 15, 23.
^v ch. 16, 3.
^w 2 Ki. 9, 33.
Ps. 7, 16.
^x Cr. ditch.
^y ch. 14, 11.
^z ch. 16, 30.
^a ch. 11, 1, 4.
ch. 16, 31.
^b Or, incited.
^c Gen. 15, 16.
2 Ki. 21, 11.
^d Gen. 37, 34.
^e Gen. 66, 33.
Ps. 78, 31-37.
^f 2 Ki. 9, 25.
CHAP. 21.
^g 2 Chr. 18, 2.
31.
^h Deut. 4, 47.
ⁱ silent from taking it.

such a time, was ominous of evil, but his language was much more so (cf. Ezek. xlv. 8; xlvii. 16-18). In the place where dogs licked, &c. Dogs in the East being allowed to run wild, and in packs, are ravenous, and hence it is a common phrase to give the carcase of an enemy or a worthless person to the dogs, as Achilles consigned the lacerated body of Hector. A righteous retribution of Providence. The prediction was accomplished, not in Jezreel, but in Samaria; and not on Ahab personally, in consequence of his repentance (v. 29), but on his son (2 Ki. ix. 25). The words "in the place where" might be rendered 'in like manner as.'

20. thou hast sold thyself to work evil—*i. e.*, allowed sin to acquire the unchecked and habitual mastery over thee (2 Ki. xvii. 17; Rom. vii. 11).

21. I will . . . 22. make thine house, &c.—(see on ch. xv. 29; xvi. 3-12.) Jezebel, though included among the members of Ahab's house, has her ignominious fate expressly foretold (see on 2 Ki. ix. 30).

27. Ahab . . . rent his clothes . . . went softly. He was not obdurate like Jezebel. This terrible announcement made a deep impression on the king's heart, and led for a while to sincere repentance. "Going softly"—*i. e.*, barefoot, and with a pensive manner within doors. He manifested all the external signs, conventional and natural, of the deepest sorrow. He was wretched; and so great is the mercy of God, that, in consequence of his humiliation, the threatened punishment was deferred. But he did not "bring forth fruits meet for repentance," neither abandoning idolatry and re-establishing the true faith, nor restoring the ill-gotten vineyard of Naboth. But the Lord displayed His clemency and long-suffering by giving him an extended opportunity and increased motives to return to God, who would have

mercy upon him, and to our God, who would abundantly pardon.

CHAP. XXII. 1-36.—AHAB SLAIN AT RAMOTH-GILEAD.

1. they continued three years without war between Syria and Israel. The disastrous defeat of Ben-hadad had exhausted the resources of his country. But, that his hereditary enmity remained unsubdued, was manifest by his breach of faith concerning the treaty by which he had engaged to restore all the cities which his father had seized (ch. xx. 34). 2. Jehoshaphat the king of Judah came down to the king of Israel. It was singular that a friendly league between the sovereigns of Israel and Judah should, for the first time, have been formed by princes of such opposite characters—the one pious, the other wicked. Neither this league, nor the matrimonial alliance by which the union of the royal families was more closely cemented, met the Lord's approval (2 Chr. xix. 2). It led, however, to a visit by Jehoshaphat, whose reception in Samaria was distinguished by the most splendid hospitality (2 Chr. xviii. 2). The opportunity of this visit was taken advantage of to push an object on which Ahab's heart was much set. 3. Know ye that Ramoth in Gilead is ours—the site of the present Salt Lake, in the province of Belka. It lay within the territories of the Israelitish monarch, and was unjustly alienated; but whether it was one of the cities usurped by the first Ben-hadad, which his son had promised to restore, or was retained for some other reasons, the sacred historian has not mentioned. In the expedition which Ahab meditated for the recovery of this town, the aid of Jehoshaphat was asked, and promised (see on 2 Chr. xviii. 3). Previous to declaring hostilities, it was customary to consult the prophets (see on 1 Sam. xxviii.); and Jehoshaphat

- 4 *and* take it not out of the hand of the king of Syria? And he said unto Jehoshaphat, Wilt thou go with me to battle to Ramoth-gilead? And Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, *I am* as thou *art*, my people as thy people, my horses as thy horses.
- 5 And Jehoshaphat said unto the king of Israel, Enquire, I pray thee, at
6 the word of the LORD to-day. Then the king of Israel ^agathered the prophets together, about ²four hundred men, and said unto them, Shall I go against Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall I forbear? And they said, Go up; for the LORD shall deliver *it* into the hand of the king.
- 7 And Jehoshaphat said, *Is there* not here a prophet of the LORD
8 besides, that we might enquire of him? And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, *There is yet* ^fone man, Micaiah the son of Imlah, by whom we may enquire of the LORD: but ^gI hate him; for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil. And Jehoshaphat said, Let not the king say so.
- 9 Then the king of Israel called an ³officer, and said, Hasten *hither*
10 Micaiah the son of Imlah. And the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah sat each on his throne, having put on their robes, in a ⁴void place in the entrance of the gate of Samaria; and all the prophets
11 prophesied before them. And Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah made him horns of iron; and he said, Thus saith the LORD, With these shalt thou
12 push the Syrians, until thou have consumed them. And all the prophets prophesied so, saying, ^hGo up to Ramoth-gilead, and prosper: for the LORD shall deliver *it* into the king's hand.
- 13 And the messenger that was gone to call Micaiah spake unto him, saying, Behold now, the words of the prophets *declare* good unto the king with one mouth: let thy word, I pray thee, be like the word of one of
14 them, and speak *that which is* good. And Micaiah said, *As* the LORD
15 liveth, what ⁱthe LORD saith unto me, that will I speak. So he came to the king.

B. C. 897.

o 2 Ki. 3. 7.

d ch. 18. 19.

2 They were

prophets

of the

groves,

hirelings of

Jezebel

ch 14. 19

Jer. 23. 1-17.

Eze 13. 1-23

o 2 Ki. 3. 11.

f ch 19. 10.

g ch 20. 43.

3 Or,

eunuch.

4 floor.

h Jer. 23. 25-

32.

i Num 22 39.

Ps 27. 1-14.

Ps. 56. 1-10.

Is. 118. 6.

Iro. 28. 1.

Jer. 1. 7, 17-

19.

Eze. 2. 3-3.

Eze. 3. 4-9.

Acts 4. 13.

29, 31

Acts 9. 29.

Acts 20. 50.

26, 27

Rom. 8. 31.

2 Cor. 2. 17.

2 Cor. 3. 12.

Gal 1. 9, 10.

Iph. 6. 19,

20.

having expressed a strong desire to know the Lord's will concerning this war, Ahab assembled 400 of his prophets. These could not be either the prophets of Baal nor of Asherah (ch. xviii. 19), but seem (v. 12) to have been false prophets, who conformed to the symbolic calf-worship of Jehovah. Being the creatures of Ahab, they unanimously predicted a prosperous issue to the war. But, dissatisfied with them, Jehoshaphat enquired if there was any true prophet of the Lord. Ahab agreed, with great reluctance, to allow Micaiah to be summoned. He was the only true prophet then to be found residing in Samaria, and he had to be brought out of prison (v. 26), into which, according to *Josephus*, he had been cast, on account of his rebuke to Ahab for sparing the king of Syria.

8. Micaiah the son of Imlah. He is not to be confounded with the prophet whose writings form part of the sacred canon, and who flourished a hundred years after.

10. a void place [רָצוּף]—a spacious level area; a threshing-floor, formed at the gate of Samaria (cf. 2 Chr. xviii. 9). It must have been a very large area, when two kings could hold their courts in it, with 400 false prophets and a vast multitude of people (2 Ki. vii. 1), and a market be held (2 Ki. xxiii. 8). 11. Zedekiah. . . made him horns of iron. Small projections, of the size and form of our candle extinguishers (worn in many parts of the East as military ornaments), were worn by the Syrians at that time, and probably by the Israelite warriors also. This false prophet, who made himself "horns of iron," meant by that

symbol to show that the king of Israel should have irresistible power. A horn of iron signifies an oppressive government. In short, Zedekiah, by assuming two horns, personated two heroes; and, pretending to be a prophet, wished in this manner to represent the kings of Israel and Judah in a military triumph. It was a symbolic action, to impart greater force to his language (see on Deut. xxxiii. 17); but 'it was little more than a flourish with a *spontoon*' (*Calmet*, 'Fragments'). It is curious that the modern dervishes carry about them the horn of a he-goat or a wild ox as a defensive weapon.

14. what the Lord saith unto me, that will I speak. On the way, the messenger who conducted him to the royal presence, informed him of the tenor of the prophecies already given, and recommended him to agree with the rest—no doubt, from the kindly motives of seeing him released from imprisonment. But Micaiah, inflexibly faithful to his divine mission as a prophet, announced his purpose to proclaim honestly whatever God should bid him. On being asked by the king, "Shall we go against Ramoth-gilead, or shall we forbear?" the prophet gave precisely the same answer as the previous oracles that had been consulted; but it must have been given in a sarcastic tone, and in ironical mockery of their way of speaking. Being solemnly urged to give a serious and truthful answer, Micaiah then declared the visionary scene the Spirit had revealed to him,—"I saw all Israel scattered upon the hills, as sheep that have not a shepherd." The purport of this was, that the army of Israel would be defeated and dispersed, that Ahab would fall in the battle,

And the king said unto him, Micaiah, shall we go against Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall we forbear? And he answered him, Go, and prosper: for the LORD shall deliver *it* into the hand of the king. And the king said unto him, How many times shall I adjure thee that thou tell me nothing but *that which is true* in the name of the LORD? And he said, I saw all Israel scattered upon the hills, as sheep that have not a shepherd: and the LORD said, These have no master; let them return every man to his house in peace.

18 And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, Did I not tell thee that he would prophesy no good concerning me, but evil?

19 And he said, Hear thou therefore the word of the LORD: ^kI saw the LORD sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him on his right hand and on his left. And the LORD said, Who shall ^opersuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead? And one said on this manner, and another said on that manner. And there came forth a spirit, and stood before the LORD, and said, I will persuade him.

22 And the LORD said unto him, Wherewith? And he said, I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And he said, ^mThou shalt persuade *him*, and prevail also: go forth, and do so.

23 Now ⁿtherefore, behold, the LORD hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the LORD hath spoken evil concerning thee.

24 But Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah went near, and ^osmote Micaiah on the cheek, and said, ^pWhich way went the Spirit of the LORD from me to speak unto thee? And Micaiah said, Behold, thou shalt see in that day, when thou shalt go ^qinto ^ran inner chamber to hide thyself.

B. C. 897.
 j Matt 9. 34.
^k Isa. 6. 1
 Dan. 7. 9.
^l Job 1. 6.
 Job 2. 1.
 Ps. 103. 20.
 Dan. 7. 10.
 Zech 1. 10.
 Matt 18. 10.
 Acts 5. 3, 5.
 Heb. 1. 7.
 14.
^o Or, deceive.
^m Judg 9. 23.
 Job 12. 16.
 Eze 14. 9.
ⁿ 2 Thea. 2. 11.
^o Eze 14 9
 Matt. 13. 12-15.
^p Jer 23. 16.
^q 2 Chr 18 23.
^r Or. from chamber to chamber.
^s a chamber in a chamber.
 ch. 10. 33.

and the people return without either being pursued or destroyed by the enemy.

18. Did I not tell thee that he would prophesy no good concerning me, but evil? Since Ahab was disposed to trace this unwelcome truth to personal enmity, Micaiah proceeded, fearlessly, to tell the incensed monarch, in full detail, what had been revealed to him. The Hebrew prophets, borrowing their symbolic pictures from earthly scenes, described God in heaven as a king in his kingdom. And as earthly princes do nothing of importance without asking the advice of their counsellors, God is represented as consulting about the fate of Ahab. This prophetic language must not be interpreted literally, and the command must be viewed as only a permission to the lying spirit (Rom. xi. 34). With regard to the idea of Satan, the tempter or lying spirit, conveyed by this passage, there is an advancement from the age of Job, who is assumed to have lived in patriarchal times. In the book of Job, he exerts his influence no further than the external relations of the patriarch (Job ii.); and even in Num. xxii. 22, he makes only a physical resistance to the journey of Balaam. [In the time of the Psalmist the angels were considered partly protecting (ch. xci. 11, 12), and partly deceiving or baneful spirits (ch. xxxv. 5, 6).] While here he extends his power to the mind and character. A spirit comes forward in order to *mislead* Ahab into a course of action contrary to the declared will of God. Indeed, the sentiments current amongst the Jews on this subject during the whole period from the earliest date of their history down to the Babylonish captivity were uncertain and fluctuating; and it was not until the time of Zechariah (ch. iii. 1, 2) that there was a decided opposition recognized as established between the good and the bad spirits or angels, (see an excellent article, 'Biblical Review,' ii.)

24. Zedekiah . . . smote Micaiah on the cheek.

The insolence of this man, the leader of the false prophets, seems to have been provoked by jealousy at Micaiah's assumed monopoly of the spirit of inspiration. Whether it were with the palm of the hand, the usual way, or with a sandal, scarcely less common, this mode of smiting is both severe and ignominious. Which way went the Spirit of the Lord from me to speak unto thee? [פָּהָךְ, from me.] According to the present text, Zedekiah claims to have spoken by the Divine Spirit, and he insinuates that if Micaiah, who gave a directly opposite judgment, had also received it, the Spirit must have passed from the one to the other, and he sarcastically asked what way He went. [But Micaiah had not assumed that Zedekiah and his associates had anything more than a lying spirit in them; and hence it has been suggested that פָּהָךְ has, in the course of transcription, been substituted for י, so that the reading should be פָּהָיךְ. Which way went the Spirit of God from him? The Septuagint omits the words. Ποιον πνεῦμα κυρίου τὸ λαλήσαν ἐν σοί—What kind of Spirit of the Lord (was it) that has spoken in you?] The calm reply of the Lord's prophet consisted in announcing the fate of the false prophets who suffered as the advisers of the disastrous expedition. Had this story been a myth, or a fictitious narrative framed for the purpose of guarding the mind against inlets to error and deception, no contrast could have been drawn more striking than this assembly of ministers of religion. On the one hand we see numbers, venerableness of character (at least in the popular opinion), unanimity of sentiment, consummate assurance, and court favour. On the other side, we see none but Micaiah—singular in his opinions, modest in his declarations, perhaps mean and low in his appearance, and unsupported by anything but conscious integrity. How instructive is the event! This man, though despised and hated, laid open the truth; while they, with all these favourable

- 26 And the king of Israel said, 'Take Micaiah, and carry him back unto
 27 Amon the governor of the city, and to Joash the king's son; and say,
 Thus saith the king, Put this *fellow* in the prison, and feed him with
 bread of affliction, and with water of affliction, until I come in peace.
 28 And Micaiah said, If thou return at all in peace, ⁹the LORD hath not
 spoken by me. And he said, Hearken, O people, every one of you.
 29 So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah went up to
 30 Ramoth-gilead. And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, ⁸I will
 disguise myself, and enter into the battle; but put thou on thy robes.
 31 And the king of Israel ⁷disguised himself, and went into the battle. But
 the king of Syria commanded his thirty and two captains, that had rule
 over his chariots, saying, Fight neither with small nor great, save only
 32 with the king of Israel. And it came to pass, when the captains of the
 chariots saw Jehoshaphat, that they said, Surely it *is* the king of Israel.
 And they turned aside to fight against him: and Jehoshaphat ⁶cried out.
 33 And it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots perceived that it
was not the king of Israel, that they turned back from pursuing him.
 34 And a *certain* man drew a bow ⁵at a venture, and smote the king of
 Israel between the ¹⁰joints of the harness: wherefore he said unto the
 driver of his chariot, Turn thine hand, and carry me out of the host; for
 35 I am ¹¹wounded. And the battle ¹²increased that day; and the king
 was stayed up in his chariot against the Syrians, and died at even: and
 36 the blood ran out of the wound into the ¹³midst of the chariot. And
 there went a proclamation throughout the host about the going down of
 the sun, saying, Every man to his city, and every man to his own country.
 37 So the king died, and ¹⁴was brought to Samaria; and they buried the

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⁹ Num. 16. 29.

Deut. 19. 10

² Ki 1. 10,

12.

Isa. 41. 26.

Jer. 29. 9, 9.

Acts 13. 10.

⁸ Cr, when

he was to

disguise

himself,

and enter

into the

battle.

⁷ 2 Chr 35. 22.

Fro. 21. 10.

Jer 23. 21.

⁶ 2 Chr 19. 31.

1 ro 13. 10.

⁹ in his

simplicity.

2 Sam 15.

11.

¹⁰ joints and

the breast-

plate.

Rev. 9. 9.

¹¹ made sick.

2 Chr 18. 23.

2 Chr 35. 23.

¹² ascended.¹³ bosom.¹⁴ came

appearances, became convicted of the most shameful adulation and falsehood.

26. Take Micaiah . . . 27. Put this fellow in the prison. Ahab, under the impulse of vehement resentment, remands the prophet until his return, bread of affliction . . . water of affliction—*i. e.*, the poorest prison fare. Micaiah submitted, but reiterated aloud, in the presence of all the bystanders, that the issue of the war would be fatal to Ahab.

29. went up to Ramoth-gilead. The king of Israel, hoping to evade the force of Micaiah's prophecy by a secret stratagem, used the greatest precaution against being discovered, by assuming the uniform of a subaltern, while he ungenerously advised Jehoshaphat to fight in his royal attire, and thus expose himself to the dangers which Ahab wished to avoid. The Syrian king, with a view either to put the speediest end to the war, or perhaps to wipe out the stain of his own humiliation (ch. xx. 31), had given special instructions to his thirty-two generals to single out Ahab, and to take or kill him, as the author of the war. The officers, naturally misled by the royally accoutred appearance of the king of Judah, at first directed their assault on Jehoshaphat, but becoming aware of their mistake, desisted. Ahab was wounded by a random arrow, and died at sunset. 34. And a certain man drew a bow at a venture. There is no evidence that this archer was one of the captains who had received special instructions from their Syrian master to search for Ahab. He is called simply 'a man,' for 'certain' is a supplement introduced by our translators: it is equivalent to 'one drew a bow,' and that person, too, did it without any particular aim. "At a venture" [עָרַב]—in his simplicity; *i. e.*, without any hostile or destructive purpose. [The Septuagint, in opposition to the Hebrew text, renders the word by εἰστόχος, with

a good aim.] and smote the king of Israel between the joints of the harness [בין הַרְבָּעִים]—between the openings and between the coat of mail; *i. e.*, between the joints of the *harness* (as it is called in our version); *i. e.*, armour. Some, less likely, render, the arm pits (cf. Jer. xxxviii. 12). [Septuagint, ἀπὸ μέσων τοῦ πνεύματος καὶ ἀπὸ μέσων τοῦ θώρακος, through the thorax and the lungs.] *Dr. Meyrick*, an authority on ancient armour, remarks on this incident as follows:—"Beneath the breastplate were belts, plated with brass or other metal, and the uttermost of them was bound upon the bottom of the tunic, which connected the pectoral with the belts, and all of them together formed a tolerably perfect armour for the front of the whole body. These belts were generally two, one above the other, and appear similar to those that are represented in ancient Greek sculpture, though in some degree higher up. This mode of arming perfectly explains the passage in Scripture where Ahab is said to have been smitten with an arrow between the openings or joints, that is, of the belts, and between the thorax or pectoral. The pectoral of the Egyptians was made of linen; and perhaps anciently that of the Jews was the same. In after-times they seem to have been covered with plates of metal, and in the New Testament we meet with the words "breastplates of iron" (Rev. ix. 9). The military *sagum*, or cloak, is called in our translation a *habergeon*, but the original is of doubtful signification, and occurs only twice. But of whatever kind the garment may have been, it had an aperture at the upper part, through which the head passed when it was put on the body. *Strutt* conjectures that it was the tunic upon which the thorax was put, and had the same relation to the thorax that the ephod had to the sacred pectoral or breastplate." The corpse was conveyed to Samaria; and as the chariot

38 king in Samaria. And *one* washed the chariot in the pool of Samaria; and the dogs licked up his blood; and they washed his armour; according 'unto the word of the LORD which he spake.

39 Now the rest of the acts of Ahab, and all that he did, and "the ivory house which he made, and all the cities that he built, *are* they not written

40 in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel? So Ahab slept with his fathers; and Ahaziah his son reigned in his stead.

41 And ^vJehoshaphat the son of Asa began to reign over Judah in the

42 fourth year of Ahab king of Israel. Jehoshaphat *was* thirty and five years old when he began to reign; and he reigned twenty and five years in Jerusalem: and his mother's name *was* Azubah the daughter of Shilhi.

43 And ^whe walked in all the ways of Asa his father; he turned not aside from it, doing *that which was* right in the eyes of the LORD: nevertheless ^xthe high places were not taken away; *for* the people offered and burnt

44 incense yet in the high places. And ^yJehoshaphat made peace with the king of Israel.

45 Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, and his might that he showed, and how he warred, *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles of

46 the kings of Judah? And ^zthe remnant of the sodomites, which remained in the days of his father Asa, he took out of the land.

47, *There* ^awas then no king in Edom: a deputy *was* king. Jehoshaphat

48 ¹⁵made ^bships of Tharshish to go to Ophir for gold: ^cbut they went not; ^dfor the ships were broken ^dat Ezion-geber. Then said Ahaziah the son of Ahab unto Jehoshaphat, Let my servants go with thy servants in the ships: but Jehoshaphat would not.

50 And ^eJehoshaphat slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father: and Jehoram his son reigned in his stead.

51 Ahaziah the son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and reigned two years

52 over Israel. And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, and ^fwalked in the way of his father, and in the way of his mother, and in the way of

53 Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin: for ^ghe served Baal, and worshipped him, and provoked to anger the LORD God of Israel, according to all that his father had done.

B. C. 897.
 ' ch 21. 19.
 2 Ki. 10. 10.
 Ps. 33. 11.
 Ps. 119. 89.
 Isa. 14. 27.
 Isa. 40. 8.
 " ch. 10. 18,
 22.
 Ps. 45. 8.
 Eze. 27. 6,
 15.
 Amos 3. 15.
 " 2 Chr. 20. 31.
 " ch. 15. 11,
 14.
 2 Chr. 14. 2-
 5, 11.
 2 Chr. 15. 8,
 17.
 2 Chr. 17. 3.
 " ch. 14. 23.
 Deut. 12. 5-
 14.
 2 Ki 12 3.
 " 2 Chr 19. 2
 2 Cor. 6. 14.
 " Gen. 13. 13.
 Gen. 19. 5.
 ch. 14. 24.
 ch. 15. 12.
 Jude 7.
 " Gen. 25. 23.
 2 Sam. 8. 14.
 2 Ki. 3. 9.
 2 Ki. 8. 20.
 15 Or, had
 ten ships.
 ch. 10. 22.
 b 2 Chr. 20. 35.
 c 2 Chr. 20. 37.
 d ch. 9. 26.
 e 2 Chr. 21. 1.
 f ch. 15. 26.
 " Judg. 2. 11.
 ch. 16. 31.

which brought it was being washed in a pool near the city, from the blood that had profusely oozed from the wound, the dogs, in conformity with Elijah's prophecy, came and licked it.

39, the rest of the acts of Ahab, and all that he did, and the ivory house which he made. Ivory came into great use amongst the Hebrews in the reign of Solomon (ch. x. 18, 22), through the Indian commerce he commenced. The Assyrians had long before applied it extensively in the decoration of their houses ('Nineveh and its Remains,' ii., p. 420), and borrowing this style from the past became a favourite fashion amongst the later Hebrews, to use it in ornamenting their furniture, and even in the construction of palaces (Ps. xlv. 8; Amos iii. 15; vi. 4; cf. *Homer*, 'Odyssey,' iv., 72; *Lucan*, 'Pharsalia,' x., 119; *Horace*, b. ii., ode xviii., 1). Ahab was succeeded by his son Ahaziah.

42. Jehoshaphat was thirty and five years old when he began to reign [יְהוֹשָׁפָט, whom Jehovah judgeth]—(see on 2 Chr. xx. 31.)

48. Jehoshaphat made ships of Tharshish [תַּרְשִׁישׁ]—Jehoshaphat had ten ships. [The Septuagint, Vatican, omits *vv.* 47, 48; Alexandrine, from which our translators have borrowed, reading תַּרְשִׁישׁ for תַּרְשִׁישׁ, renders, *καὶ ὁ βασιλεὺς ἰωσαφάτ ἐποίησεν πῆρας τῶν πορευθῆναι*, and king Jehoshaphat made ships to go (see on "Tharshish," ch. x. 22; cf. 2 Chr. viii. 17, 18).] but they went not; for the ships were broken. It appears that Jehoshaphat was desirous of reviving the trading voyages of Solomon's days, and as the record bears that they were to debark from the same port, it is probable that he contemplated the same circuitous route (see on 2 Chr. xx. 36, 37).

THE
SECOND BOOK OF THE KINGS,

COMMONLY CALLED,

THE FOURTH BOOK OF THE KINGS.

1, **THEN** Moab rebelled against Israel after the death of Ahab. And
2 **T** Ahaziah fell down through a lattice in his upper chamber that was
in Samaria, and was sick: and he sent messengers, and said unto them,
Go, enquire of ¹ Baal-zebub the god of Ekron whether I shall recover of
3 this disease. But the angel of the LORD said to Elijah the Tishbite,
Arise, go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria, and say
unto them, *Is it not because there is not a God in Israel, that ye go to*
4 enquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron? Now therefore thus saith the
LORD, ² Thou shalt not come down from that bed on which thou art
gone up, but shalt surely die. And Elijah departed.

B C 596.

CHAP. I.
¹ That is,
The mas-
ter of flies.
² The bed
whither
thou art
gone up
thou shalt
not come
down from
it.

CHAP. I. 1.—MOAB REBELLED.

1. **Then Moab rebelled.** Subdued by David (2 Sam. viii. 2), they had, in the partition of Israel and Judah, fallen to the share of the former kingdom. But they took advantage of the death of Ahab to shake off the yoke (see on ch. iii. 5). The casualty that befell Ahaziah prevented his taking active measures for suppressing this revolt, which was accomplished as a providential judgment on the house of Ahab for all their crimes.

2-S.—AHAZIAH'S JUDGMENT BY ELIJAH.

2. **Ahaziah fell down through a lattice in his upper chamber** [מַרְבֵּית, the net, or lattice; מַרְבֵּיתוֹ, in his loft—upper room]—(cf. Dan. vi. 11). A wooden parapet or fence, breast-high, surrounds the flat roofs of houses; and sometimes, instead of a parapet, the terraces are guarded, like the galleries, with balustrades only, or lattices—*i. e.*, net or trellised work (Deut. xxii. 8). The name seems to import that the roof of the royal palace in Samaria was surmounted on the roof in this fashion, and that it was over this trellis the king was carelessly leaning when it gave way; or, it might be an opening, like a skylight, in the roof itself, done over with lattice-work, which, being slender or rotten, the king stepped on and slipped through. This latter supposition is most probably the true one, as Ahaziah did not fall either into the street or the court, but "his upper chamber." **enquire of Baal-zebub.** Anxious to learn whether he should recover from the effects of this severe fall, he sent to consult Baal-zebub [בַּעַל זְבֻב—*i. e.*, the god of flies, fly destroyer, who was considered the patron deity of medicine. This consultation of a heathen deity by the king openly, affords a deplorable example of the extent to which the Israelites were infected with the baneful influence of Philistine idolatry, and it was a direct violation of the Mosaic law (Deut. xviii. 13, 14). *Hengstenberg* ('Pentateuch,' i., p. 89), following *Selden* ('De diis Syris,' 375), ridicules the idea that the Philistines believed they needed the Divine aid to save them from flies, and considers it as a derisive name. [But, not to speak of the Greeks, who had Ζεύς Ἀφροίτιος at Elis, and of the Romans, who had

their Myiagrus deus, or deus muscarum *Averuncus*, there was a pressing cause to call forth the religious sentiment of the Philistine heathen in this particular direction at Ekron.] Flies have at all times swarmed in great abundance in that locality; and sometimes they have multiplied in such myriads as to amount to a plague. *Jurieu* ('Hist. des Dogmes,' p. 631) identifies this god with Pluto of the Greeks and Romans. Hence a temple to that idol was erected at Ekron, which was resorted to far and wide, though it afterwards led to the destruction of the place (Zech. ix. 5; Amos i. 8; Zeph. ii. 4). 'After visiting Ekron, "the god of flies" is a name that gives me no surprise. The flies there swarmed, in fact, so innumeraably, that I could hardly get any food without these troublesome insects getting into it' (*Van de Velde*, i., p. 170). Other derivations have been given of the name of this idol. *Dr. Hyde* ('Vet. Persarum. Rel. Histor.,' cap. viii., p. 160) says that it comes from the Syriac Beel-debobo, or Beeldevovo—*i. e.*, the god of enmity. Others trace it to an Arabic origin, meaning fecundity; and that Ahaziah consulted the idol at Ekron in preference to all others, in his anxiety for an heir. But the first derivation is the right one. 3. **the angel of the Lord**—not an angel, but the angel who carried on all communications between the invisible God and His chosen people. This angel commissioned Elijah to meet the king's messengers, to stop them peremptorily on the idolatrous errand, and convey by them to the king information of his approaching death. This consultation of an idol being a breach of the fundamental law of the kingdom (Exod. xx. 3; Deut. v. 7), was a daring and deliberate rejection of the national religion. The Lord, in making this announcement of his death, designed that he should see in that event a judgment for his idolatry. 4. **Thou shalt not come down from that bed.** On being taken up, he had probably been laid on the divan—a raised frame about three feet broad, extending along the sides of a room, covered with cushions and mattresses, serving, in short, as a sofa by day and a bed by night, and ascended by steps. (Gen. xlix. 4; Ps. cxxxii. 3; cf. ch. xx. 2; also 1 Ki. xx. 4). **Elijah departed**—to his ordinary abode, which was then at mount Carmel (ch. ii. 25; 1 Ki. xviii. 42).

5 And when the messengers turned back unto him, he said unto them,
 6 Why are ye now turned back? And they said unto him, There came a man up to meet us, and said unto us, Go, turn again unto the king that sent you, and say unto him, Thus saith the LORD, *Is it* not because *there is* not a God in Israel, *that* thou sendest to enquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron? therefore thou shalt not come down from that bed
 7 on which thou art gone up, but shalt ^asurely die. And he said unto them, ³What manner of man *was he* which came up to meet you, and
 8 told you these words? And they answered him, *He was* ^ban hairy man, and girt with a girdle of leather about his loins. And he said, *It is* Elijah the Tishbite.
 9 Then the king ^csent unto him a captain of fifty with his fifty. And he went up to him; and, behold, he sat on the top of an hill. And he spake unto him, Thou ^dman of God, the king hath said, Come down.
 10 And Elijah answered and said to the captain of fifty, If I *be* a man of God, then let ^efire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty. And there came down fire from heaven, and consumed him and
 11 his fifty. Again ^falso he sent unto him another captain of fifty with his fifty. And he answered and said unto him, O man of God, thus hath
 12 the king said, Come down quickly. And Elijah answered and said unto them, If I *be* a man of God, let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty. And the fire of God came down from heaven,
 13 and consumed him and his fifty. And he sent ^gagain a captain of the third fifty with his fifty. And the third captain of fifty went up, and came and ⁴fell on his knees before Elijah, and besought him, and said
 14 unto him, O man of God, I pray thee, let my life, and the life of these fifty thy servants, be ^hprecious in thy sight. Behold, there came fire down from heaven, and burnt up the two captains of the former fifties with their fifties: therefore let my life now be precious in thy sight.
 15 And the angel of the LORD said unto Elijah, Go down with him; be not ⁱafraid of him. And he arose, and went down with him unto the king.
 16 And he said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Forasmuch as thou hast

B. C. 891.
^a Fro 14. 32.
³ What was the manner of the man?
^b Zech. 13. 4. Matt. 3. 4. Luke 1. 17. Rev. 11. 3.
^c 2 Ki. 6. 13, 14.
^d Ps. 105. 15.
^d Amos 7. 12. Matt 27. 29. Mark 15. 9, 32.
^e Num. 11. 1. Job 1. 16. Luke 9. 54.
^f Isa. 26. 11. Jer. 5. 3. John 18. 5, 12.
^g Acts 4. 16, 17.
^g Fro 27. 22. Eccl. 9. 3. Isa. 1. 5. Jer. 5. 3.
⁴ bowed.
^h 1 Sam. 23. 21.
ⁱ Ps. 72. 14. Gen. 15. 1. 1 Ki. 18. 15. Ps. 27. 1. Isa. 51. 12. Jer. 1. 17. Jer. 15. 20. Eze 2. 6. Matt. 10. 28.

5. the messengers turned back. They did not know the stranger; but his authoritative tone, commanding attitude, and affecting message, determined them at once to return. 7. What manner of man was he which came up? [עַלְמָן מִן הַשָּׁמַיִם]—What was the fashion, or appearance, or description, of the man? [Septuagint, τὸς ἢ κρισιος τοῦ ἀνδρός.] 8. an hairy man [עַלְמָן מִן הַשָּׁמַיִם, a man, lord of hair; Septuagint, ἀνὴρ ὄσους, a hairy, shaggy man (cf. Josephus, 'Antiquities,' b. v., ch. ii., sec. 5)]. This was the description, not of his person, as in the case of Esau, but of his dress, which consisted either of unwrought sheep or goat-skins (Heb. xi. 37), or of camel's hair-cloth—the coarser manufacture of this material—like the rough hair-cloth we use as coverings for goods. The dervishes and Bedouins are attired in this wild, uncouth manner; while their hair flows loose on the head, their shaggy cloak is thrown over their shoulders, and tied in front on the breast, naked, except at the waist, round which is a skin girdle—a broad, rough, leathern belt. The Soofees are supposed by some to derive their name from Soof (hair-cloth), for the members of this sect wear a uniform of this description (Joseph Wolff, 'Missionary Labours,' p. 75). Others, amongst whom is Dean Stanley (Smith's 'Dictionary,' article 'Elijah'), consider that the prophet was described as 'an hairy man' because the hair of his head and beard was long, hanging down his neck and shoulders.—Similar to this was the girdle of the pro-

phets, as in keeping with their coarse garments, and their stern, uncompromising office.
 9-16.—ELIJAH BRINGS FIRE FROM HEAVEN ON AHAZIAH'S MESSENGERS.
 9. Then the king sent unto him a captain of fifty—*i. e.*, an officer with a body of fifty soldiers at his command. Any appearance of cruelty that there is in the fate of the two captains and their men will be removed on a full consideration of the circumstances. God being the king of Israel, Ahaziah was bound to govern the kingdom according to the divine law: to apprehend the Lord's prophet, for discharging a commanded duty, was the act of an impious and notorious rebel. The captains abetted the king in his rebellion; and they exceeded their military duty by contemptuous insults. man of God. In using this term they either spoke derisively, believing him to be no true prophet, or, if they regarded him as a true prophet, the summons to him to surrender himself bound to the king was a still more flagrant insult; the language of the second captain being worse than that of the first. 10. If I be a man of God, then let fire come down [אֵשׁ יִרְדּוּ, fire shall come down; and so the Septuagint, καταβήσεται πῦρ]. The "fire" was lightning (v. 12). Not to avenge a personal insult of Elijah, but an insult upon God, in the person of His prophet; and the punishment was inflicted, not by the prophet, but by the direct hand of God. 15. he arose, and went down with him. A marvellous instance of faith and obedience. Though he well

sent messengers to enquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron, *is it not because there is no God in Israel to enquire of his word? therefore thou shalt not come down off that bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die.*

- 17 So he died according to the word of the LORD which Elijah had spoken. And ⁵Jehoram reigned in his stead, in the second year of Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah; because he had no son. Now the rest of the acts of Ahaziah which he did, *are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel?*
- 2 AND it came to pass, when the LORD would ^atake up Elijah into ²heaven by a whirlwind, that Elijah went with Elisha ^bfrom Gilgal. And Elijah said unto Elisha, ^cTarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me to Beth-el. And Elisha said *unto him, As the LORD liveth, and as ^dthy soul liveth, I will not leave thee.* So they went down to Beth-el.
- 3 And ^ethe sons of the prophets that *were* at Beth-el came forth to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the LORD will take away thy master from thy head to-day? And he said, Yea, I know *it*; hold ye
- 4 your peace. And Elijah said unto him, Elisha, tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me to Jericho. And he said, *As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee.* So they came to Jericho.
- 5 And the sons of the prophets that *were* at Jericho came to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the LORD will take away thy master from thy head to-day? And he answered, Yea, I know *it*; hold ye your
- 6 peace. And Elijah said unto him, Tarry, I pray thee, here; for the LORD hath sent me to Jordan. And he said, *As the LORD liveth, and as thy*
- 7 *soul liveth, I will not leave thee.* And they two went on. And fifty men of the sons of the prophets went, and stood ¹to view afar off: and
- 8 they two stood by Jordan. And Elijah took his mantle, and wrapped *it*

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⁵ The second year that Jehoram was Prorex, and the eighteenth of Jehoshaphat. ch. 3. 1.

CHAP. 2.

^a Gen 5. 21.
 1 Ki 19. 4.
 Luke 9. 51.
 Acts 9. 19.
 Heb 11. 5.
 Rev. 11. 12.
^b 1 Ki. 19. 21.
^c Ruth 1. 15, 16.
 2 Sam. 15. 19, 20.
 John 6. 67, 68.
^d 1 Sam. 1. 26, ch. 4. 30.
^e 1 Sam. 10. 10, 12.
 1 Sam. 19. 20.
 1 Ki 18. 4.
 1 Ki. 20. 25, ch. 4. 1, 33, ch. 9. 1.
¹ in sight, or, over against.

knew how obnoxious his presence was to the king, yet on receiving God's command, he goes unhesitatingly, and repeats with his own lips the unwelcome tidings conveyed by the messengers.

17, 18.—AHAZIAH DIES, AND IS SUCCEEDED BY JEHORAM.

17. in the second year of Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat. [The Septuagint has *ἐν ἔτει ὀκτῶ καιδεκάτῳ*, in the eighteenth year (cf. ch. iii. 1).] The text is apparently corrupt, arising probably from the error of a transcriber, who wrote Jehoram twice. This is a more likely way of accounting for the statement than the hypothesis that Jehoram was associated in the government with his father Jehoshaphat, of which there is no direct evidence (see 'Introduction to Kings'). "Jehoram"—the brother of Ahaziah (see on ch. iii. 1).

CHAP. II. 1-10.—ELIJAH DIVIDES JORDAN.

1. when the Lord would take up Elijah. A revelation of this event had been made to the prophet; but, unknown to him, it had also been revealed to his disciples, and to Elisha in particular, who kept constantly beside him. Gilgal. This Gilgal (Jiljil) was near Ebal and Gerizim: a school of the prophets was established there. At Beth-el there was also a school of the prophets, which Elijah had founded, notwithstanding that place was the head-quarters of the calf-worship; and at Jericho there was another. In travelling to these places, which he had done through the impulse of the Spirit (vv. 2, 4-6), Elijah wished to pay a farewell visit to the several institutions, which lay on his way to the place of ascension; and at the same time, from a feeling of humility

and modesty, to be in solitude, where there would be no eye-witnesses of his glorification. All his efforts, however, to prevail on his attendant to remain behind were fruitless. Elisha knew that the time was at hand, and at every place the sons of the prophets spoke to him of the approaching removal of his master. Their last stage was at the Jordan, in going to which they were followed at a distance by fifty scholars of the prophets, from Jericho, who were desirous, in honour of the great occasion, to witness the miraculous translation of the prophet (cf. 1 Sam. vii. 15). 'Jericho,' says Drew ('Scripture Lands,' p. 99) 'is very seldom mentioned in the history before the captivity, and chiefly in connection with the "schools of the prophets," whose habits and personal discipline were favoured by the wildness of the bordering desert.' The revelation of this striking event to so many was a necessary part of the dispensation; for it was designed to be, under the law, like that of Enoch in the patriarchal age, a visible proof of another state, and a type of the resurrection of Christ. 3. take away thy master from thy head—an allusion to the custom of scholars sitting at the feet of their master, the latter being over their heads (Acts xxii. 3).

7. they two stood by Jordan [עַל-יַרְדֵּן], upon the Jordan; so Septuagint, *ἐπὶ τοῦ Ἰορδάνου*.
 8. Elijah took his mantle [מָטְאָה]. This word generally denotes a large and sumptuous cloak (Josh. vii. 21; Jon. iii. 6); but here, the hairy mantle of the prophet (cf. vv. 13, 14; 1 Ki. xix. 13, 19; Zech. xiii. 4; also Gen. xxv. 25); Septuagint [τῆν μηλωτήν], the sheep's skin (Heb. xi. 37). and wrapped it together [עָרַבָה]—rolled it like a

- together, and smote the waters, and they were divided hither and thither, so that they two went over on dry ground.
- 9 And it came to pass, when they were gone over, that Elijah said unto Elisha, Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee. And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me. And he said, ²Thou hast asked a hard thing: nevertheless, if thou ^hsee me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so.
- 11 And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared ^aa chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.
- 12 And Elisha saw it, and he cried, ^jMy father, my father! the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And he ^ksaw him no more: and he
- 13 took hold of his own clothes, and ^lrent them in two pieces. He took up also the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and went back, and stood by

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f Ex. 14. 21.
 Josh. 3 10.
 Num. 11. 17-25.
 2 Thou hast done hard in asking
 A Acts 1. 10.
 i ch. 6. 17.
 Ps. 68. 17.
 Ps. 101. 4.
 Heb. 1. 7.
 11.
 j ch. 13. 1. 9.
 k Acts 1. 9.
 l Gen. 37. 29.
 31.
 Josh. 7. 6.

staff, and smote the waters. Like the rod of Moses, it had the divinely operating power of the Spirit (Exod. vii. 19; viii. 5, 16; ix. 23; x. 13; xiv. 16; cf. ch. ii. 20).

9. Elijah . . . Ask what I shall do for thee—trusting either that it would be in his power to bequeath it, or that God, at his entreaty, would grant it. let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me [אֶת־רוּחְךָ—אֶת־רוּחְךָ]—a portion of two; i. e., a double portion (Deut. xxi. 17). This request was not, as is commonly supposed, for the power of working miracles exceeding the magnitude and number of his master's, nor does it mean a higher endowment of the prophetic spirit; for Elisha was neither superior to, nor perhaps equally great with, his predecessor. But the phrase, "a double portion," was applied to the first-born; and therefore Elisha's request was simply to be heir to the prophetic office and gifts of his master. 10. Thou hast asked a hard thing—an extraordinary blessing, which I cannot, and God only can, give. Nevertheless Elijah, doubtless by the secret directions of the Spirit, proposed a sign, the observation of which would keep Elisha in the attitude of an anxious waiter, as well as suppliant, for the favour.

11-18.—HE IS TAKEN UP TO HEAVEN IN A CHARIOT OF FIRE.

11. as they still went on, and talked. Surely that conference was needful, and upon matters of high importance to the Church and the nation, in connection with the promises of their covenant God, otherwise we might have expected it would have given way to private meditation, and Elijah had been taken up rather from his knees than from his feet. But as *Bishop Hall* remarks ('Contemplations,' ii., pp. 25-29), 'There can be no better posture or state for the messenger of our dissolution to find us in, than in a diligent prosecution of our calling. The busy attendance on our holy vocation is no less pleasing to God than an immediate devotion.' 'Happy is the servant whom the Master, when he comes, shall find so doing,' behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire—some bright effulgence, which, in the eyes of the spectators, resembled those objects. Angels are called "chariots," and represented as such in mysterious fire (Ps. lxxviii. 18; Ezek. i. 4-13; x. 6). Angels are meant by chariots and "horses of fire," because, like chariots of war, they are the strength and protection of the Lord's people, and because of their swiftness in doing the work. *Dean Stanley* uses very ambiguous language respecting this miraculous event. He does not say that Elijah was lost in a tempest,

but he does not accept the miraculous view given in the record, and seems to believe the prophet was carried off, like Romulus, in a thunder-storm, narrated in the Oriental style of description. *Josephus*, whom the *Dean* apparently follows ('Antiquities,' b. ix., ch. ii., sec. 2) says that 'Elijah disappeared from among men, and no one knows of his death to this very day. Indeed, as to Elijah and as to Enoch, it is written in the sacred books that they disappeared, but so that nobody knew that they died.' That Enoch was actually translated, is placed beyond controversy by the testimony of the apostle. And the same conclusion is inferentially drawn in the analogous case of Elijah. *Bishop Hall's* observations on this translation of Elijah are too appropriate and beautiful to be disregarded,—'Long and happily had Elijah fought the wars of his God; and now, after his noble and glorious victories, God will send him a chariot of triumph. How full of heavenly joy was the soul of Elijah while he fore-knew and looked for this instant happiness! Jordan must be crossed by Elijah in his way to heaven. There must be a parallel betwixt the two great prophets that shall meet Christ at Tabor—Moses and Elias. Both received visions on Horeb; to both God appeared there—in fire and in other forms of terror; both were sent to kings—one to Pharaoh, the other to Ahab; both revenged idolatries with the sword—the one upon the worshippers of the golden calf, the other upon the four hundred Baalites; both divided the waters—the one of the Red Sea, the other of Jordan; both must be fetched away beyond Jordan,—the body of Elijah is translated, the body of Moses is hid. What Moses doth by his rod, Elijah does by his mantle; he only bids the waters stand aside, and they give way to his last walk, that he might with dry feet mount up into the celestial chariot.' went up by a whirlwind—a tempest or storm; wind accompanied with vivid flashes of fire, figuratively used for the Divine judgments (Isa. xxix. 6).

12. Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father—i. e., spiritual father, as the pupils of the prophets are called their sons. the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof—i. e., that is, as earthly kingdoms are dependent for their defence and glory upon warlike preparations, there a single prophet had done more for the preservation and prosperity of Israel than all her chariots and horsemen. took hold of his own clothes, and rent them—in token of his grief for his loss. 13. He took up also the mantle of Elijah. The transference of this prophetic cloak was, to himself, a pledge of

- 14 the ³bank of Jordan; and he took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and ^msmote the waters, and said, Where *is* the LORD God of Elijah? And when he also had smitten the waters, they parted hither and thither: and Elisha went over.
- 15 And when the sons of the prophets which *were* to view at Jericho saw him, they said, The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha. And they came
- 16 to meet him, and bowed themselves to the ground before him. And they said unto him, Behold now, there be with thy servants fifty ⁴strong men; let them go, we pray thee, and seek thy master: ⁿlest peradventure the Spirit of the LORD hath taken him up, and cast him upon ⁵some mountain, or into some valley. And he said, Ye shall not send. And when they urged him till he was ashamed, he said, Send. They sent therefore fifty
- 17 men; and they sought three days, but found him not. And when they came again to him, (for he tarried at Jericho,) he said unto them, Did I not say unto you, Go not?
- 19 And the men of the city said unto Elisha, Behold, I pray thee, the situation of this city *is* pleasant, as my lord seeth; but the ^owater *is*
- 20 naught, and the ground ^bbarren. And he said, Bring me a new cruse,
- 21 and put salt therein: and they brought *it* to him. And he went forth unto the spring of the waters, and ^pcast the salt in there, and said, Thus saith the LORD, I have healed these waters; there shall not be from thence
- 22 any more death or barren *land*. So the waters were healed unto this day, according to the saying of Elisha which he spake.

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³ lip.
¹ Ki. 9. 26.
^m Josh. 1. 1.
 9.
 Mark 16:10
 John 14.12
 Acts 2. 31.
 Acts 3. 12,
 18.
⁴ sons of
 strength.
ⁿ 1 Ki. 13. 12.
 Eze. 8. 3.
 Acts 8. 39.
⁵ one of the
 moun-
 tains.
^o Josh. 6. 25.
 1 Ki 16. 34.
⁶ causing to
 miscarry.
 Ex 23. 26
 Deut. 28. 2,
 4, 17.
 Hos. 9. 14.
^p Ex 15. 25.
 ch. 4. 41.
 ch 6. 6.
 John 9. 6.

his being appointed successor, and it was an outward token to others of the spirit of Elijah resting upon him. 14. smote the waters. The waving of the mantle on the river, and the miraculous division of the waters consequent upon it, was an evidence that the Lord God of Elijah was with him; and as this miracle was witnessed by the scholars of the prophets from Jericho, they forthwith recognized the pre-eminence of Elisha, as now the prophet of Israel. The mantle of an old sooffee bequeathed to a young one, is equivalent to making him heir or successor. 'The mantle of a dervish is considered as sacred, and valued as a precious legacy, if it had belonged to a dervish of note. Such ideas have been always prevalent in the East,' (see instances in *Joseph Wolff's* 'Missionary Labours,' p. 493, &c.)

15. when the sons of the prophets which were to view [בָּנֵי הַנְּבוֹנִים]—from over against; *i. e.*, from the opposite side of Jericho. 16. fifty strong men; let them go . . . and seek thy master. Though the young prophets from Jericho had seen Elijah's miraculous passage of the Jordan, they had not witnessed the ascension. They imagined that he might have been cast by the whirlwind on some mountain or valley; or, if he had actually been admitted into heaven, they expected that his body would still be remaining somewhere on earth. In compliance with their impertunity, he gave them permission, but told them what the result would be. lest peradventure the Spirit of the Lord hath taken him up, and cast him upon some mountain. "The Spirit of the Lord," in their view, meant the whirlwind or thunderstorm.

19-25—ELISHA HEALS THE WATERS.

19. the situation of this city is pleasant . . . but the water is naught, and the ground barren. There is near some tumuli, marking the ancient site of Jericho, a fountain, 'Ain es-Sultân, 'the Fountain of Elisha.' Its waters are diffused over the plain. 20. Bring me a new cruse, and put salt therein. The noxious qualities of the water could not be corrected by the infusion of salt; for,

supposing the salt was possessed of such a property, a whole spring could not be purified by a dishful for a day, much less in all future time. The pouring in of the salt was a symbolic act with which Elisha accompanied the word of the Lord, by which the spring was healed. 21. Thus saith the Lord, I have healed these waters. There can be no reason to doubt that this is the spring which flowed into the city; for Elisha "went forth unto the spring of the waters," and healed it, and caused even the land to become fruitful, which before was barren; and the rich verdure which follows its outgoings, the delicate, fringe-like beauty of the branches and graceful tendrils, so soft and slender and varied, as they crowd together, running their roots and fibres into the stream, adding to the music of its waters and the beauty of the scenery, all attest the lasting power of these words of Elisha (cf. Ps. cvii. 35, 36). (*Osborne's* 'Palestine, Past and Present,' p. 427; *Porter's* 'Handbook,' p. 192; *Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' ii., p. 253; 'Teut and Khan,' p. 372). There shall not be from thence any more death or barren land [רָחֵק מִיְּמֵי הַיַּרְדֵּן, land sterile, unproductive, waste]. The radical meaning of the word is given by our translators in the margin, 'causing to miscarry.' The learned editor of *Calmét* ('Fragments,' No. v.) considers the word applicable not to the land itself, but to the ungenerative influence of the soil about Jericho upon its inhabitants. 'As it never had occurred to our translators,' says he, 'that a city, which, by reason of some peculiarity in the land around it, was unfavourable to procreation or to parturition, could possibly be inhabited, and in fact be "pleasant," it has been usual to consider this word here (and here only) as expressing a blight on the fruits; but if this blight occurred every year, it were a circumstance no less singular (perhaps more so) than this fatal effect on animal life; and if this blight occurred but rarely, why ask the prophet to cure that to which all countries are sometimes subject? And, indeed, this seems contrary to the text, which says, "the city was pleasant;" for surely fertile

23 And he went up from thence unto Beth-el: and as he was going up by the way, there came forth little children out of the city, and mocked him, and said unto him, Go up, thou bald head; go up, thou bald head.

24 And he turned back, and looked on them, and cursed them in the name of the LORD. And there came forth two she-bears out of the wood, and tare forty and two children of them. And he went from thence to mount Carmel; and from thence he returned to Samaria.

3 NOW ^aJehoram the son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and reigned twelve years. And he wrought evil in the sight of the LORD; but not like his father, and like his mother; for he put away the ¹image of Baal ^bthat his father had made. Nevertheless he ^ccleaved unto ^dthe sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which made Israel to sin; he departed not therefrom.

4 And Mesha king of Moab was ^ea sheep-master, and rendered unto the king of Israel an hundred thousand ^flambs, and an hundred thousand rams, with the wool. But it came to pass, when ^gAhab was dead, that the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel.

B C H G.
^a 2 Chr. 36. 16.
 Pro 30 17.
 Isa. 5. 24.
 I-a 28. 22.
 Jer 5. 10-11.
 Luke 10. 16.
 1 Thes. 4. 8.
 CHAP. 3.
^a ch. 1. 17.
¹ statue.
^b 1 Ki. 16. 31, 32.
^c ch. 10. 25-31.
^d 1 Ki. 12. 29, 31, 32.
^e Gen. 31. 2.
 Job 1. 3.
^f Isa. 16. 1.
^g ch. 1. 1.

trees contribute to the pleasantness of a city's situation; besides Jericho is noticed as the city of palm trees (2 Chr. xxviii. 15). But what shall we say, if there be actually, at this time, cities in the same predicament as that in which Jericho was? Namely, where animal life of certain kinds, pines, decays, and dies; cities where that posterity which should replace the current mortality is either not conceived, or if conceived, is not brought to the birth, or if brought to the birth, is fatal in delivery both to the mother and her offspring.' He quotes the instances of Porto Bello, in South-America (*Don Ulloa's 'Voyage,'* vol. i., p. 93), and of Sennaar (*Bruce's 'Travels,'* vol. iv., p. 469, 471, 472) and he considers this bad property in the soil was the means of accomplishing the prediction of Joshua respecting the rebuilding of Jericho (cf. Josh. vi. 26 with 1 Ki. xvi. 34). By the prophet's curing the waters, it should seem they had, at least, some share in producing this effect by being drank, &c.; but those inhabitants of the city, and proprietors of the adjacencies, who solicited Elisha, plainly say, 'the land causes to miscarry.'

23. there came forth little children [קָטָנִים, young lads; applied to Isaac, Joseph, Reboam, when full-grown (Gen. xxii. 5; xli. 12; 2 Chr. xiii. 7); Septuagint, παιδία μικρά]—i. e., the idolatrous or infidel young men of the place, who affected to disbelieve the report of his master's translation, sarcastically urged Elisha to follow in the glorious career. bald head [קָלָפ, bald in the hinder part of the head;—an epithet of contempt in the East, applied to a person even with a bushy head of hair. Stanley is of opinion that it was applied to Elisha from the contrast presented by his bare shoulders and the shaggy locks of his prophetic predecessor; Septuagint, φαλακρό, bare head]. Beth-el, which Elisha was about to enter, was one of the strongholds of the Phœnician idolatry that had been patronized by Ahab; and these young idolaters, probably instigated by some of Baal's prophets, and who were desirous of pouring discredit and ridicule upon the report of Elishah's rapture, publicly insulted the new prophet by sarcastically bidding him follow his master. 24. he . . . cursed them in the name of the Lord. Not in a fit of irritation, or from an impulse of vindictive resentment, but as the minister of God, solemnly in His name pre-intimated the awful fate which, as a providential judgment, was about to overtake these idolaters.

there came forth two she-bears. They belonged to the *Ursus Syriacus*, the Palestine representative of the *Ursus Arctos* of northern Europe. It was found by Hemprich and Ehrenberg on one of the summits of Lebanon; and according to Dr. Thomson ('Land and Book'), it is still found on the high mountains of that part of the country. The appalling judgment that befell them was God's interference to uphold His newly invested prophet.

CHAP. III. 1-S.—JEHORAM'S EVIL REIGN OVER ISRAEL.

1. Jehoram . . . in . . . the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat—(cf. 1 Ki. xxii. 51.) To reconcile the statements in the two passages, we must suppose that Ahaziah, having reigned during the seventeenth and greater part of the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat, was succeeded by his brother Joram or Jehoram, in the end of that eighteenth year, or else that Ahaziah, having reigned two years in conjunction with his father (see on ch. i. 17), died at the end of that period, when Jehoram ascended the throne. His policy was as hostile as that of his predecessors, to the true religion; but he made some changes. Whatever was his motive for this alteration—whether dread of the many alarming judgments the patronage of idolatry had brought upon his father, or whether it was made as a small concession to the feelings of Jehoshaphat, his ally—he abolished idolatry in its gross form, and restored the symbolic worship of God, which the kings of Israel, from the time of Jeroboam, had set up as a partition-wall between their subjects and those of Judah.

4, 5.—MESHA, KING OF MOAB, REBELS.

4. Mesha king of Moab was a sheep-master [רֹעֶה, a herdsman, a sheep-breeder (Amos i. 1). The Septuagint retains the original, Μωσά βασιλεύς Μωάβ ἢν Νεκύε]. His dominions embracing an extensive pasture country, he paid, as annual tribute, the wool of 100,000 lambs and 100,000 rams. It is still common in the East to pay custom and taxes in the fruits or natural produce of the land. It is probable, however, that so immense flocks were not paid as a regular yearly tribute, but only on some special occasion, as the accession of a new king to the throne of Israel. 5. king of Moab rebelled. This is a repetition of ch. i. 1, in order to introduce an account of the confederate expedition for crushing this revolt, which had been allowed to continue unchecked during the short reign of Ahaziah.

6 And king Jehoram went out of Samaria the same time, and numbered
 7 all Israel. And he went and sent to Jehoshaphat the king of Judah,
 saying, The king of Moab hath rebelled against me: wilt thou go with
 me against Moab to battle? And he said, I will go up: ^a *I am as thou*
 8 *art*, my people as thy people, *and* my horses as thy horses. And he said,
 Which way shall we go up? And he answered, The way through the
 9 wilderness of Edom. So the king of Israel went, and the king of
 Judah, and the king of Edom: and they fetched a compass of seven days'
 journey: and there was no water for the host, and for the cattle ² that
 followed them.

10 And the king of Israel said, ⁱ Alas! that the LORD hath called these
 11 three kings together, to deliver them into the hand of Moab! But
^j Jehoshaphat said, *Is there* not here a ^k prophet of the LORD, that we may
 enquire ^l of the LORD by him? And one of the king of Israel's servants
 answered and said, Here *is* Elisha the son of Shaphat, which poured water
 12 on the hands of Elijah. And Jehoshaphat said, The word of the LORD is
 with him. So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat and the king of Edom
 13 went ^m down to him. And Elisha said unto the king of Israel, What
ⁿ have I to do with thee? ^o get thee to ^p the prophets of thy father, and to
 the prophets of thy mother. And the king of Israel said unto him, Nay:
 for the LORD hath called these three kings together, to deliver them into
 14 the hand of Moab. And Elisha said, ^q As the LORD of hosts liveth, before
 whom I stand, surely, were it not that I ^r regard the presence of Jehoshaphat
 the king of Judah, I would not look toward thee, nor see thee.

15 But now bring me ^s a minstrel. And it came to pass, when the minstrel

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^a 1 Ki. 22. 4.² at their feet.

Ex. 11. 8.

ⁱ Gen. 4. 13.

ch. 6. 13.

Ps. 73. 14.

Iro. 19. 3.

Isa. 8. 21.

Isa. 51. 20.

^j 1 Ki. 22. 7.^k Amos 3. 7.^l Josh. 9. 14.

Judg. 10. 5-11.

1 Chr. 10. 13.

1 Chr. 33. 9.

Ps. 55. 22.

Iro. 3. 5, 6.

^m ch. 2. 23.ⁿ Eze. 14. 3.^o Judg. 10. 11.

Ruth 1. 15.

^p 1 Ki. 13. 19.^q 1 Ki. 17. 1.

ch. 5. 16.

^r Ps. 15. 4.^s 1 Sam. 10. 5.

1 Sam. 16.

25.

1 Sam. 18.

10.

6-24.—ELISHA PROMISES WATER, AND VICTORY OVER MOAB.

6. king Jehoram . . . numbered all Israel—made a levy from his own subjects, and at the same time sought an alliance with Jehoshaphat, which, as on the former occasion with Ahab, was readily promised (1 Ki. xxii. 4). 8. Which way shall we go? . . . through the wilderness of Edom. This was a long and circuitous route, by the southern bend of the Dead Sea. Jehoshaphat, however, preferred it, partly because the part of the Moabite territory at which they would arrive was the most defenceless, and partly because he would thereby enlist in the expedition the forces of the king of Edom. But in penetrating the deep, rocky valley of Ahsy, which forms the boundary between Edom and Moab, the confederate armies were reduced, both man and beast, to the greatest extremity for want of water. They were disappointed by finding the wady of this valley, the brook Zered (Deut. ii. 13-18) (*Robinson*), dry. Jehoram was in despair. But the pious mind of Jehoshaphat enquired for a prophet of the Lord; and, on being informed that Elisha was at hand, 'the three kings went down to him;' *i. e.*, to his tent, which was either in the camp or close by it. He had been directed thither by the Spirit of God for this special purpose. They went to him, not only as a mark of respect, but to supplicate for his assistance, and knowing his stern temper.

11. which poured water on the hands of Elijah—*i. e.*, was his servant—this being one of the common offices of a servant; for the custom is not to plunge one's hands into a basin, but to hold them out, so that a servant may pour water on the hands of his master. One who is the servant of a holy man, *i. e.*, a priest or dervish, is, on this account, highly esteemed (*Joseph Wolff's* 'Missionary Labours,' p. 493). 12. Jehoshaphat said, The word of the Lord is with him. The phrase is used here as synonymous with 'a true and eminent prophet,' who will reveal God's will to

us, 13. What have I to do with thee, &c.

Wishing to produce a deep spirit of humility and contrition, Elisha gave a stern repulse to the king of Israel, accompanied by a sarcastic sneer, in bidding him go and consult Baal and his soothsayers. He acknowledged Jehoshaphat king of Judah alone, because it was the theocratic kingdom, and he was descended from the royal dynasty of David (see similar instances—Hosea, a prophet of Israel, dates his prophetic writings "in the days of Uzziah, &c., kings of Judah"). "What have I to do with thee?"—(see as to this elliptical phrase on 1 Ki. xvii. 18.) Its import in this passage is, What have we in common, I a prophet of the true God, and thou the descendant of idolatrous Ahab, that thou shouldst ask counsel of me? But the distressed condition, especially the imploring language, of the royal suppliants, who acknowledged the hand of the Lord in this distress, drew from the prophet the solemn assurance, that solely out of respect to Jehoshaphat, the Lord's true servant, did he take any interest in Jehoram. 15. bring me a minstrel. The effect of music in soothing the mind is much regarded in the East; and it appears that the ancient prophets, before entering on their work, commonly resorted to it as a preparative, by praise and prayer, and sometimes by ascetic exercises, to their receiving the prophetic afflatus (see as to the condition of the prophets when about to deliver their prophecies, *Hengstenberg*, 'Christology,' i., p. 294; *Henderson*, 'On Inspiration,' p. 19). The mind of Elisha was in all probability agitated and vexed by the scene that was enacted around him; and he desired something to soothe and tranquilize his passions. "A minstrel" [מְשֻׁרֵר]—a player on a stringed instrument (cf. 1 Sam. xvi. 16; Ps. xxxiii. 3) [Septuagint, ψαλλοντα]. The minstrel who played before the prophet was probably in the train of the king of Israel; for it was a common custom for kings to have a band of musicians attendant upon them (1 Sam. xvi. 23;

16 played, that 'the hand of the LORD came upon him. And he said, Thus
 17 saith the LORD, Make "this valley full of ditches: for thus saith the LORD,
 Ye shall not see wind, neither shall ye see rain; yet that valley "shall be
 filled with water, that ye may drink, both ye, and your cattle, and your
 18 beasts. And this is *but* a "light thing in the sight of the LORD: "he will
 19 deliver the Moabites also into your hand. And "ye shall smite every
 fenced city, and every choice city, and shall fell every good tree, and stop
 all wells of water, and ³mar every good piece of land with stones.
 20 And it came to pass in the morning, when ²the meat offering was
 offered, that, behold, there came water by the way of Edom, and the
 21 country was filled with water. And when all the Moabites heard that
 the kings were come up to fight against them, they ⁴gathered all that
 22 were able to ⁵put on armour, and upward, and stood in the border. And
 they rose up early in the morning, and the sun shone upon the water, and
 23 the Moabites saw the water on the other side *as red as blood*: and they
 said, This *is* blood: the kings are surely ⁶slain, and they have smitten
 24 one another: now therefore, Moab, to the spoil. And when they came to
 the camp of Israel, the Israelites rose up and smote the Moabites, so that
 they fled before them: but ⁷they went forward smiting the Moabites, even
 25 in *their* country. And they beat down the cities, and on every good piece
 of land east every man his stone, and filled it; and they stopped all the
 wells of water, and felled all the good trees: ⁸only in "Kir-haraseth
 left they the stones thereof; howbeit the slingers went about *it*, and
 smote it.
 26 And when the king of Moab saw that the battle was too sore for him,

B. C. 8 5

⁶ Eze. 1. 3.,
 Eze 3 11, 21,
 Eze 8. 1.
⁷ ch. 4. 3.
⁸ Ps. 107. 37.
⁹ Jer 32, 17,
 27.
 Mark 10, 27.
 Luke 1. 37.
 Eph. 3. 20.
² 1 Ki. 20 28.
³ 1 Sam. 15, 3.
⁴ grieve.
⁵ Ex. 29, 39,
 40.
⁶ were cried
 together.
⁷ gird him-
 self with a
 girdle.
⁸ destroyed.
⁹ Or, they
 smote in
 it even
 smiting.
¹⁰ until he
 left the
 stones
 thereof in
 Kir-har-
 seth.
¹¹ Isa. 16. 7.

Dan. iii. 4, 5; vi. 18). the hand of the Lord—a phrase significantly implying that the gift of prophecy was not a natural or inherent gift, but conferred by the power and grace of God. 16. Make this valley full of ditches [עָשׂוּ בְּעֵמֶק הַיַּרְדֵּן גִּבְעוֹת מַיִם]—Make in this wady ditches, ditches (*i. e.*, many tanks or cisterns), capable of holding water. These trenches were dug at nightfall, before which time there was no appearance of water. 17. Ye shall not see wind. It is common in the East to speak of *seeing* wind, from the clouds of straw, dust, or sand, that are often whirled into the air after a long drought. 19. ye shall smite every fenced city . . . and shall fell every good tree [בָּהֵן, good, *i. e.*, prolific, tree]. The destruction of fruit trees was expressly prohibited by the Mosaic law (see on Deut. xx. 19, 20). But a special permission was granted by God to the Israelites to do it on this occasion, as a punishment to the Moabites (cf. Jer. xviii. 11, 12), who were to be destroyed by extraordinary judgments of heaven, for their great wickedness. and mar every good piece of land with stones—by strewing the fields with heaps of small stones, so as to render them waste and incapable of tillage (cf. Job v. 23).

20. when the meat offering was offered—*i. e.*, at the time of the morning sacrifice, accompanied, doubtless, with solemn prayers; and these led, it may be, by Elisha on this occasion, as on a similar one by Elijah (1 Ki. xviii. 36). behold, there came water by the way of Edom. Far from the Israelitish camp, in the eastern mountains of Edom, a great fall of rain, a kind of cloud-burst, took place, by which the wady was at once filled, without their either seeing the wind or the rains. The divine interposition was shown by introducing the laws of nature to the determined end, and in the pre-determined way (*Keil*). It brought not only aid to the Israelitish army in their distress, by a plentiful supply of water, but destruction

on the Moabites, who, perceiving the water, under the refulgent rays of the morning sun, red like blood, concluded the confederate kings had quarrelled, and deluged the field with their mutual slaughter; so that, rushing to their camp in full expectation of great spoil, they were met by the Israelites, who, prepared for battle, fought, and pursued them. Their country was laid waste in the way which has always been considered the greatest desolation in the East (*v. 24*). 21. they gathered all that were able to put on armour [כָּפְלוּ הַיָּמִין וְהַשְּׂמֵאלָהּ], they came together of all who girded on a girdle, and upward—*i. e.*, who were capable of bearing arms. The Septuagint (Alexandrine) renders the Hebrew literally, *καὶ ἀνέβησαν ἐκ παντὸς περιζωσμένοι ζώνῃ καὶ ἔπαυον*; but the Vatican edition has deviated in a strange manner, *καὶ ἀνέβησαν ἐκ παντὸς περιζωσμένοι ζώνῃ καὶ εἶπον*, "Ω, and they cried out . . . and said, Oh!] 25. in Kir-haraseth [בְּקִיר הַרְשֵׁת, in the fortress of Haraseth, or Kirheres—fortress of brick (Isa. xvi. 7, 11; Jer. xviii. 31; or Kir Moab, Isa. xv. 1)]—(now Kerak), castle of Moab, then probably the only fortress in the land (*Porter's 'Handbook,' p. 59; Robinson, 'Biblical Researches,' ii., p. 296*). As the Hebrews, in reducing this place, "left the stones thereof," the name, from being *haraseth*, a *potsherd* or *earthen vessel*, was changed into *hares*, brick, from the baked bricks of which its wall was built (cf. *Josephus, 'Antiquities,' b. ix., ch. iii., sec. 2*).

26. when the king of Moab saw that the battle was too sore for him [וַיִּבֶן], strong, violent, obstinate]. For a time he sustained a siege, but perceiving the imminent peril in which his city was placed, and the alarming advances the besiegers were making, he determined to attempt a sally. Putting himself at the head of his 700 men [שָׂקַף הַיָּמִין], drawing sword—*i. e.*, armed warriors], he endeavoured to break through the ene-

he took with him seven hundred men that drew swords, to break through ²⁷ *even* unto the king of Edom: but they could not. Then he took ⁹ his eldest son, that should have reigned in his stead, and offered ^b him for a burnt offering upon the wall. And there was great indignation against Israel: and they departed from him, and returned to *their own land*.

⁴ NOW there cried a certain woman of the wives of ^a the sons of the prophets unto Elisha, saying, Thy servant my husband is dead; and thou knowest that thy servant did fear the LORD: and the creditor is come ^b to

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⁹ Perhaps the king of Edom's son.

^b Deut. 12. 31.

CHAP. 4.

^a 1 Ki. 20. 35.

ch. 2. 3. 5. 7.

^b Lev. 25. 33.

my's camp at a point where, as *Josephus* says, 'the watch seemed to be negligently kept.' to break through even unto the king of Edom. His object was not to effect his escape through the Edomite lines into the desert, though *Josephus* represents that as his motive ('Antiquities,' b. ix., ch. iii., sec. 2), but to be avenged on the king of Edom alone. Against that for his irrepresible rage was directed, because, having been a former ally, he had forsaken him, and joined confederacy with the kings of Israel and Judah against him. Hatred and revenge, when they are roused, commonly discharge their intensest violence against former friends or allies. Mesha, however, in his effort to penetrate to the king of Edom, met with a disastrous repulse; and now, finding himself reduced to the last extremities, he resolved on an act which, amongst the ancient Rephaites and Phœnicians, betokened the depth of desperation. 27. Then he took his eldest son, that should have reigned in his stead, and offered him for a burnt offering

[עֲרִיבָהוּ]—and offered an ascension offering. The most natural way of understanding this act is, that it was done by Mesha, king of Moab, who immolated his own son to Chemosh, the tutelary deity of his kingdom. And so *Josephus* regarded it ('Antiquities,' b. ix., ch. iii., sec. 2). [The Septuagint, however, has καὶ ἔδρασε τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ τὸν πρωτοτόκον, took his eldest (first-born) son, not αὐτοῦ (his own), but αὐτοῦ (his); i. e., the king of Edom's son, who had been captured during the siege, and whose life was to be sacrificed in the most cruel manner, in revenge for the union of Edom with the allied assailants of Moab. This is the opinion of *Theodoret* and several modern scholars, who further refer 'the great indignation against Israel' to Edom, who was unwillingly dragged into the war as a tributary of Judah, and thereby suffered the calamitous loss of the king's son. The former view, however—viz., that which regards Mesha as offering his son for a burnt offering upon the wall—appears to be the most obvious. It was done in accordance with the fierce fanaticism of the Moabite nation; and if, as *Michaelis* thinks, this act is referred to, Amos ii. 1, the king seems to have carried his vindictive feelings beyond the grave, and through the impulse of implacable enmity, to have violated the sanctity of the tomb, by raising the corpse of the king of Edom for posthumous dishonour on a funeral pile. they departed from him, and returned to their own land. By this deed of horror to which the allied army drove the king of Moab, a Divine judgment came upon Israel—that is, the besiegers feared the anger of God, which they had incurred, by giving occasion to the human sacrifice forbidden in the law (Lev. xviii. 21; xx. 3), and hastily raised the siege, and dispersing, returned to their respective countries. In order to convey an idea of the real import of this act of the king of Moab, it is necessary to observe that it was not only intended as a sacrifice of propitiation to the cruel gods of his country, but a murder in *terrorem hostium*, the memory of which would haunt

and blast them in all time coming. *Sanchoniathon* relates it as a custom amongst the ancient Rephaim, when their country was on the verge of being ruined by the ravages of war, to bring out, with the national consent, the heir-presumptive to the throne, adorned in all the insignia of royalty, and in presence of the assembled chiefs, offer him as a substitutionary victim, to propitiate the gods. The Moabites, who succeeded to the land, inherited also the social as well as religious usages of the Emim (Rephaim), and this malignant superstition amongst others, as the incident recorded in the text clearly proves. But this act, besides being a propitiatory sacrifice to Chemosh, was intended at the same time to appal the enemy, by a horrid scene, the sight of which, if allowed by their hostile persistence to be enacted, would have a baneful influence on the life and prosperity of all who witnessed it. Judging from the traditional usages of the Brahmims in India, the prevalence of such an idea is of ancient date; and the whole circumstances of the transaction, as narrated in this passage, show that the object was to horror-strike the enemy. Not only did the king of Moab prepare to offer his son on the wall, i. e., publicly, but the whole process,—the youthful and richly-attired victim, the wood, the fire, the bloody knife—all were designed to deter them from prosecuting the siege; and if it had not that effect, then the crimson tide, the dark column of smoke from the burnt offering, would show that the spirit of the substitute had fled, and his manes would trouble, terrify, and pursue every one of them through life. This view affords a natural explanation of a difficulty which appears insoluble in any other way—viz., the cause of the great indignation against Israel, of the sudden termination of the siege, and of the hasty return of the allies to their homes. For on the hypothesis above stated, the king of Moab not only offered this sacrifice as a means of imploring the interposition of his gods, but of terrifying his enemies; and that the sight of his public preparations for the solemn offering of a human sacrifice did produce such an appalling effect, through the deep and wide-spread influence of Phœnician superstition in Edom, in Israel, and perhaps to some extent in Judah also, is evident from the fact that, hastily breaking up their camp, they "departed from him, and returned to their own land."

CHAP. IV. 1-7. — ELISHA AUGMENTS THE WIDOW'S OIL.

1. there cried a certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets. They were allowed to marry as well as the priests and Levites. Her husband, not enjoying the lucrative profits of business, had nothing but a professional income, which in that irreligious age would be precarious and very scanty, so that he was not in a condition to provide for his family, or to leave them in comfortable circumstances at his death. In fact, he had died insolvent. the creditor is come to take . . . my two sons to be bondmen. A

2 take unto him my two sons to be bondmen. And Elisha said unto her, What shall I do for thee? tell me, what hast thou in the house? And she said, Thine handmaid hath not any thing in the house, save ^ca pot of 3 oil. Then he said, Go, borrow thee vessels abroad of all thy neighbours, 4 *even* empty vessels; ¹borrow not a few. And when thou art come in, 5 thou shalt shut the door upon thee and upon thy sons, and shalt pour 6 out into all those vessels, and thou shalt set aside that which is full. So she went from him, and shut the door upon her and upon her sons, who 7 brought *the vessels* to her; and she poured out. And it came to pass, when ^athe vessels were full, that she said unto her son, Bring me yet a vessel. And he said unto her, *There is* not a vessel more. And the oil 8 stayed. Then she came and told the man of God. And he said, Go, sell the oil, and pay thy ²debt, and live thou and thy children of the rest. 9 And ³it fell on a day, that Elisha passed to ^cShunem, where *was* a great woman: and she ⁴constrained him to eat bread. And *so* it was, *that*, as 10 oft as he passed by, he turned in thither to eat bread. And she said unto ^fher husband, Behold now, I perceive that this *is* an holy man of 11 God which passeth by us continually. Let us ^gmake a little chamber, I pray thee, on the wall; and let us set for him there a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick: and it shall be, when he cometh to us, 12 that he shall turn in thither. And it fell on a day, that he came thither, and he turned into the chamber, and lay there. And he said to Gehazi his servant, Call this Shunammite. And when he had called her, she 13 stood before him. And he said unto him, Say now unto her, Behold, thou hast been careful for us with all this care; what *is* to be done for thee? wouldest thou be spoken for to the king, or to the captain of the 14 host? And she answered, I dwell among mine own people. And he said, What then *is* to be done for her? And Gehazi answered, Verily she hath 15 no child, and her husband is old. And he said, Call her. And when he 16 had called her, she stood in the door. And he said, ^hAbout this ⁵season, according to the time of life, thou shalt embrace a son. And she said, 17 Nay, my lord, *thou* man of God, do not lie unto thine handmaid. And the woman conceived, and bare a son at that season that Elisha had said unto her, according to the time of life.

B. C. 895.

^c 1 Ki. 17. 12.

Isa. 11. 32.

Jas. 2. 5.

¹ Cr. scant

not.

ch. 3. 16.

ch. 13. 18.

19.

Ps. 81. 10.

John 16. 21.

^d Matt. 9. 29.

Matt. 13. 55.

Matt. 14. 50.

Matt. 15. 27.

Luke 6. 19.

² Cr.

creditor

Rom. 13. 8.

³ there was

a day.

^e Josh. 19. 18.

1 Sam. 25. 4.

⁴ laid hold

on him

^f Pro. 31. 10.

11.

¹ Pet. 3. 1.^g Ps. 112. 9.

Pro. 11. 24.

Isa. 32. 8.

Matt. 10. 41.

42.

Matt. 25. 40.

Luke 6. 35.

3.

Rom. 12. 13.

² Cor. 8. 2.² Cor. 9. 6.

11.

Heb. 13. 1, 2.

^h Gen. 17. 21.

Gen. 15. 10.

14.

⁵ set time.

Hebrew was permitted by the law (Lev. xxv. 39; Deut. xv. 12) to sell himself, with his children, and another Hebrew to buy them, till the year of jubilee should set them free; but the purchaser was restricted from subjecting them to the rigorous service of a slave (Lev. xxv. 39, 40). A thief might be sold, in order that by his service he might repay his theft (Exod. xxii. 2, 3). But the law did not confer upon a creditor the power of selling an insolvent debtor. The practice had crept in through time; and to such an extent had it grown, that the sons and daughters of the debtor (Neh. v. 5), his wife, as well as his children (Matt. xviii. 25), nay, even the sons of a deceased debtor, were liable to be sold. The practice existed in the countries bordering on ancient Israel; and acts of cruelty similar to that which is related in this passage are frequently done in the East at the present day; for at Damascus, Bagdad, and Bokhara, the sons are taken as bondmen by the creditors of their father (see *Joseph Wolff*, 'Missionary Labours,' p. 493). 2. a pot—or cruet of oil. This comprising her whole stock of domestic utensils, he directs her to borrow empty vessels not a few; then, secluding herself with her children, she was to pour oil from her cruse into the borrowed vessels, and selling the oil, discharge the debt, and then maintain herself and family with the remainder. 6. the oil stayed

—i. e., ceased to multiply; the benevolent object for which the miracle had been wrought having been accomplished.

8-17.—PROMISES A SON TO THE SHUNAMMITE.

8. Elisha passed to Shunem—now Sulam, in the plain of Esdraelon, at the south-western base of Little Hermon. The prophet in his journey was often entertained here by one of its pious and opulent inhabitants. 10. Let us make a little chamber—not build, but prepare it. She meant a room in the *oleah*, the porch, or gateway (Judg. ii. 20-25; 2 Sam. xviii. 33; 1 Ki. xvii. 19), attached to the front of the house, leading into the court and inner apartments. The front of the house, excepting the door, is a dead wall, and hence this room is called a chamber in the wall. It was usually appropriated to the use of strangers, or lodgers for a night, and from its seclusion, convenient for study and retirement. 13. what is to be done for thee? Wishing to testify his gratitude for the hospitable attentions of this family, he announced to her the birth of a son 'about this time next year.' The interest and importance of such an intelligence can only be estimated by considering that Oriental women, and Jewish in particular, connect ideas of disgrace with barrenness, and cherish a more ardent desire for children than women in any other part of the world (Gen. xviii. 10-15).

18 And when the child was grown, it fell on a day, that he went out to his
 19 father to the reapers. And he said unto his father, My head, my head!
 20 And he said to a lad, Carry him to his mother. And when he had taken
 him, and brought him to his mother, he sat on her knees till noon, and
 21 then died. And she went up, and laid him on the bed of the man of God,
 22 and shut the door upon him, and went out. And she called unto her
 husband, and said, Send me, I pray thee, one of the young men, and one
 23 of the asses, that I may run to the man of God, and come again. And
 he said, Wherefore wilt thou go to him to-day? *it is* neither new moon
 24 nor sabbath. And she said, *It shall be* well. Then she saddled an ass,
 and said to her servant, Drive, and go forward; ⁷slack not *thy* riding for
 25 me, except I bid thee. So she went, and came unto the man of God ¹to
 mount Carmel.

And it came to pass, when the man of God saw her afar off, that he
 26 said to Gehazi his servant, Behold, *yonder is* that Shunammite: run now,
 I pray thee, to meet her; and say unto her, *Is it* well with thee? *is it*
 well with thy husband? *is it* well with the child? And she answered, *It*
 27 *is* well. And when she came to the man of God to the hill, she caught
⁸him by the feet: but Gehazi ²came near to thrust her away. And the
 man of God said, Let her alone; for her soul *is* vexed within her: and
 28 the LORD hath hid *it* from me, and hath not told me. Then she said,
 29 Did I desire a son of my lord? did I not say, Do not deceive me? Then
 he said to Gehazi, ³Gird up thy loins, and take my staff in thine hand,
 and go thy way: if thou meet any man, ⁴salute him not; and if any
 salute thee, answer him not again: and ⁵lay my staff upon the face of
 30 the child. And the mother of the child said, ⁶As the LORD liveth, and
 as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. And he arose, and followed her.
 31 And Gehazi passed on before them, and laid the staff upon the face of
 the child; but *there was* neither voice nor ¹⁰hearing: wherefore he went again
 32 to meet him, and told him, saying, The child ⁹is not awaked. And when
 Elisha was come into the house, behold, the child was dead, and laid upon

B. C. 805.
⁶ peace.
⁷ restrain
 not for m³
 to ride.
¹ 1 Ki. 18. 19.
 42.
 ch. 2. 25.
 Isa. 35. 2.
⁸ by his
 feet.
⁷ Matt. 15. 23.
 Matt. 20. 31.
 Mark 10. 11.
 John 4. 27.
 John 12. 4.
 6.
⁹ bitter.
¹ Sam 1. 10.
 Job 10. 1.
 Pro. 14. 10.
 Pro. 18. 14.
² 1 Ki. 18. 46.
 ch. 9. 1.
¹ Luke 10. 4.
¹⁰ Ex. 7. 19.
 Ex. 14. 16.
 Josh. 6. 4.
 ch. 2. 8, 14.
 Acts 3. 16.
 Acts 19. 12.
⁹ ch. 2. 2.
¹⁰ attention.
¹ 1 Ki. 18. 25.
 29.
⁶ Job 14. 12.
 Dan. 12. 2.
 Mark 5. 33.
 John 11. 11,
 12.
 Eph. 5. 11.

18-37.—RAISES HER DEAD SON.

19. My head, my head! The cries of the boy, the part affected, and the season of the year, make it probable that he had been overtaken by a stroke of the sun. Pain, stupor, and inflammatory fever, are the symptoms of the disease, which is often fatal. 20. he sat on her knees till noon [שָׁבַע, sat; but the Septuagint seem to have read καὶ ἐκοιμήθη ἐπὶ τῶν γονάτων, and he slept on her knees]. 22. she called unto her husband. Her heroic concealment of the death from her husband is not the least interesting feature of the story. 23. Wherefore wilt thou go to him to-day? it is neither new moon nor sabbath. It appears from the text that it was usual at this time to visit the prophets, and probably to make them presents of victuals. 24. said to her servant, Drive, and go forward. It is usual for women to ride on asses, accompanied by a servant, who walks behind, and drives the beast with his stick, goading the animal at the speed required by his mistress. The Shunammite had to ride a journey of five or six hours to the top of Carmel.

26. And she answered, It is well. Her answer was purposely brief and vague to Gehazi, for she reserved a full disclosure of her loss for the ear of the prophet himself. She had met Gehazi at the foot of the hill, and she stopped not in her ascent till she had disburdened her heavy-laden spirit at Elisha's feet. The violent paroxysm of grief into which she fell on approaching him, appeared to

Gehazi an act of disrespect to his master. He was preparing to remove her when the prophet's observant eye perceived that she was overwhelmed with some unknown cause of distress. How great is a mother's love! how wondrous are the works of Providence! The Shunammite had not sought a son from the prophet—her child was in every respect the free gift of God. Was she then allowed to rejoice in the possession for a little, only to be pierced with sorrow by seeing the corpse of the cherished boy? Perish, doubt and unbelief! This event happened that "the works of God should be made manifest" in His prophet, "and for the glory of God." 29. take my staff. . . and lay . . . upon the face of the child. The staff was probably an official rod of a certain form and size. Necromancers used to send their staff, with orders to the messengers to let it come in contact with nothing by the way that might dissipate or destroy the virtue imparted to it. Some have thought that Elisha himself entertained similar ideas, and was under an impression that the actual application of his staff would serve as well as the touch of his hand. But this is an imputation dishonourable to the character of the prophet. He wished to teach the Shunammite, who obviously placed too great dependence upon him, a memorable lesson to look to God. By sending his servant forward to lay his staff on the child, he raised her expectations, but at the same time taught her that his own help was unavailing—"there was neither voice nor hearing." The command, to "salute no man

33 his bed. He ^pwent in therefore, and shut the door upon them twain,
 34 ^qand prayed unto the LORD. And he went up, and lay upon the child,
 and put his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his
 hands upon his hands; and ^rhe stretched himself upon the child, and the
 35 flesh of the child waxed warm. Then he returned, and walked in the
 house ¹¹to and fro; and went up, ^sand stretched himself upon him: and
 36 ^tthe child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes. And he
 called Gehazi, and said, Call this Shunammite. So he called her. And
 37 when she was come in unto him, he said, Take up thy son. Then she
 went in, and fell at his feet, and bowed herself to the ground, and ^utook
 up her son, and went out.
 38 And Elisha came again to ^vGilgal: and *there was* a dearth in the land;
 and the sons of the prophets *were* ^wsitting before him: and he said unto
 his servant, Set on the great pot, and seethe pottage for the sons of the
 39 prophets. And one went out into the field to gather herbs, and found a
 wild vine, and gathered thereof wild gourds his lap-full, and came and
 40 shred *them* into the pot of pottage: for they ^xknew *them* not. So they
 poured out for the men to eat: and it came to pass, as they were eating
 of the pottage, that they cried out, and said, O *thou* man of God, *there is*
 41 ^ydeath in the pot. And they could not eat *thereof*. But he said, Then
 bring meal: and ^zhe cast *it* into the pot; and he said, Pour out for the
 people, that they may eat. And there was no ¹²harm in the pot.
 42 And there came a man from ^aBaal-shalisha, ^band brought the man of
 God bread of the first-fruits, twenty loaves of barley, and full ears of eorn
 43 eat. And his servitor said, ^cWhat! should I set this before an hundred
 men? He said again, Give the people, that they may eat: for thus saith

B C. 835.

^p Matt 6. 6.
^q 1 Ki. 17. 20.
 ch. 5. 11.
 ch. 6. 17, 19.
 20.
 John 11. 41.
 42.
 Jas. 5. 16.
^r Acts 0. 10.
¹¹ onc;
 hither and
 onc;
 thither.
^s 1 Ki. 17. 21.
^t ch. 8. 1, 5.
 ch. 13. 21
 Luke 7. 14.
 15.
^u Heb. 11. 35
^v ch. 2. 1.
^w Luke 10. 29
 Acts 22. 3.
^x Matt. 7. 16
^y Ex. 10. 17.
^z Ex. 15. 25.
 John 9. 6.
¹² evil thing.
^a 1 Sam. 9. 4.
^b Gal 6. 6.
¹³ Or, in his
 scrip, cr.
 garment
^c Luke 9. 13
 John c. 9.

by the way," showed the urgency of the mission, not simply as requiring the avoidance of the tedious and unnecessary greetings so common in the East (Luke x. 1); but the exercise of faith and prayer. It could not be that Elisha himself expected his staff to raise to life the widow's child, for he must have known well that if he set about anything in his own strength, or expected anything from the means, without looking directly to God in and through the means, he would be rebuked, and left without success. But the act of Gehazi was allowed to fail, in order to free the Shunammite, and the people of Israel at large, of the superstitious notion of supposing a miraculous virtue resided in any person, or in any rod, and that it was only through earnest prayer and faith in the power of God, and for His glory, that this and every miracle was to be performed. 34. lay upon the child, &c.—(see on 1 Ki. xvii. 21; Acts xx. 10). Although this contact with a dead body would communicate ceremonial uncleanness, yet, in performing the great moral duties of piety and benevolence, positive laws were sometimes dispensed with, particularly by the prophets. 35. the child sneezed seven times, and . . . opened his eyes. These were the first acts of restored respiration, and they are described as successive steps. Miracles were for the most part performed instantaneously, but sometimes also they were advanced progressively towards completion, and until the Gospel dispensation, when the Spirit was poured out fully, they were performed as it were by effort, and as in this case, after partial failure (1 Ki. xviii. 44, 45; Mark viii. 24, 25). Some of the old Jewish writers held that this son became afterwards the prophet Habakkuk, and consequently the earliest of the prophets whose collected writings are contained in Scripture; but this is a mere fancy.

38-41.—HEALS DEADLY POTTAGE.

38. there was a dearth in the land—(see on ch. viii. 1.) the sons of the prophets were sitting before him. When receiving instruction, the scholars sat under their masters. This refers to their being domiciled under the same roof (cf. ch. vi. 1). Set on the great pot. As it is most likely that the Jewish would resemble the Egyptian "great pot," it is seen by the monumental paintings to have been a large goblet, with two long legs, which stood over the fire on the floor. The seethed pottage consisted of meat cut into small pieces, mixed with rice or meal, and vegetables. 39. went out into the field to gather herbs. Wild herbs are very extensively used by people in the East, even by those who possess kitchen-gardens. The fields are daily searched for mallows, asparagus, and other wild plants. wild vine [פֶּזֶז]—'vine of the field;' supposed to be the *colocynthis*, a cucumber which, in its leaves, tendrils, and fruit, bears a strong resemblance to the wild vine. The 'gourds,' or fruit, are of the colour and size of an orange, bitter to the taste, causing colic, and exciting the nerves; largely eaten, they would occasion such a derangement of the stomach and bowels as to be followed by death. The meal which Elisha poured into the pot was a symbolic sign that the noxious quality of the herbs was removed. lap-full. The hyke, or large cloak or plaid, is thrown loosely over the left shoulder, and fastened under the right arm, so as to form a lap or apron.

42-44.—SATISFIES A HUNDRED MEN WITH TWENTY LOAVES.

42. brought the man of God bread of the first-fruits, twenty loaves. Loaves in the East are exceedingly small, something like our penny rolls.

- 44 the LORD, They shall eat, and shall leave *thereof*. So he set *it* before them, and they did eat, ^dand left *thereof*, according to the word ^eof the LORD.
- 5 NOW ^aNaaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria, was ^ba great man ¹with his master, and ²honourable, because by him the LORD had given ³deliverance unto Syria: he was also a mighty man in valour; *but*
- 2 *he was a leper*. And the Syrians had gone out by companies, and had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid; and she
- 3 ⁴waited on Naaman's wife. And she said unto her mistress, Would God my lord *were* ⁵with the prophet that *is* in Samaria! for he would ⁶recover
- 4 him of his leprosy. And *one* went in, and told his lord, saying, Thus and thus said the maid that *is* of the land of Israel.
- 5 And the king of Syria said, Go to, go, and I will send a letter unto the king of Israel. And he departed, and ^ctook ⁷with him ten talents of
- 6 silver, and six thousand *pieces* of gold, and ten changes of raiment. And he brought the letter to the king of Israel, saying, Now when this letter is come unto thee, behold, I have *therewith* sent Naaman my servant to
- 7 thee, that thou mayest recover him of his leprosy. And it came to pass, when the king of Israel had read the letter, that he ^drent his clothes, and said, *Am I* ^eGod, to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy? wherefore consider, I pray you, and see how he seeketh a quarrel against me.
- 8 And it was *so*, when Elisha the man of God had heard that the king of Israel had rent his clothes, that he sent to the king, saying, Wherefore hast thou rent thy clothes? let him come now to me, and ^fhe shall know
- 9 that there is a prophet in Israel. So Naaman came with his horses and
- 10 with his chariot, and stood at the door of the house of Elisha. And Elisha sent a messenger unto him, saying, Go and ^gwash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean.

	B. C. 591.
^a	Matt. 14. 10.
	Matt. 15. 37.
	John 6. 13.
^b	Gen. 18. 14.
	Jer. 32. 17.
	CHAP. 5.
^a	1 Ki. 8. 41-43.
	Luke 4. 27.
^b	Ex. 11. 3.
	ch. 4. 8.
	Esth. 9. 4.
	Esth. 10. 3.
	1 before.
²	lifted up, or, accepted in countenance, or, gracious.
³	Or,
	victory.
⁴	was before.
⁵	before.
⁶	gather in.
^c	1 Sam. 9. 8.
	ch. 8. 8, 9.
⁷	in his hand.
^d	Gen. 37. 29.
^e	Gen. 30. 2.
	Num. 14. 6.
	Deut. 32. 29.
	1 Sam. 2. 6.
^f	Ex. 4. 30.
^g	ch. 4. 41.
	John 9. 7.

43. They shall eat, and shall leave thereof. This was not a miracle of Elisha, but only a prediction of one by the word of the Lord; and thus it differed widely from those of Christ (Matt. xv. 37; Mark viii. 8; Luke ix. 17; John vi. 12).

CHAP. V. 1-7.—NAAMAN'S LEPROSY.

1. Naaman . . . was a great man with his master—highly esteemed for his military character and success. and honourable [נָשָׂא, exalted, looked up to; Septuagint, *τεθραυμασμενος*], because by him the Lord had given deliverance unto Syria [צָרָה; Septuagint, *Syria*, the name given in the time of the kings to the country north of Canaan]. Jehovah, the God of Israel, is here represented as guiding the destinies of a heathen kingdom—not a mere local deity, as idolaters placed some one or other of their numerous divinities over certain provinces; but the great Being whose superintending providence is over all the nations of the earth. *but he was a leper*. This leprosy, which in Israel would have excluded him from society, did not affect his free intercourse in the court of Syria. 2. a little maid—who had been captured in one of the many predatory incursions which were then made by the Syrians on the northern border of Israel (see on 1 Sam. xxx. 8; ch. xiii. 21; xxiv. 2). By this young Hebrew slave of his wife, Naaman's attention was directed to the prophet of Israel as the person who would remove his leprosy. Naaman, on communicating the matter to his royal master, was immediately furnished with a letter to the king of Israel, and set out for Samaria, carrying with him, as an indispensable preliminary in the East, very costly presents.

5. ten talents of silver—£3,421. six thousand pieces of gold—a large sum, of uncertain value. ten changes of raiment—splendid dresses for festive occasions; the honour being thought to consist not only in the beauty and fineness of the material, but in having a variety to put on one after another in the same night. 7. when the king of Israel had read the letter . . . that he rent his clothes. According to an ancient practice among the Eastern people, the main object only was stated in the letter that was carried by the party concerned, whilst other circumstances were left to be explained at the interview. This accounts for Jehoram's burst of emotions—not horror at supposed blasphemy, but alarm and suspicion that this was merely made an occasion for a quarrel. *Am I God, to kill and to make alive?* All this show of offended piety was only a pretence, for Jehoram himself was an idolater, and he assumed a zeal for the Divine glory merely to excite a fiercer rage against a monarch whom he supposed to be meditating his ruin. But how did he not think of Elisha? A moment's reflection on the character, association, and habits of this king of Israel will suffice to convince any one that such a prince as he was would not readily think of Elisha, or, perhaps, have heard of his miraculous deeds.

8-15.—ELISHA SENDS HIM TO JORDAN, AND HE IS HEALED.

8. Elisha . . . sent to the king, saying . . . let him come now to me. Through indirect channels the prophet learned what had passed in the palace, and he took immediate care to relieve the king of all anxiety, by requesting that the Syrian captain might be directed to him. This was the

- 11 But Naaman was ^hwroth, and went away, and said, Behold, ⁸I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the LORD his God, and ⁹strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper.
- 12 *Are* not ¹⁰Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them, and be clean? So he turned,
- 13 and ⁱwent away in a rage. And his servants came near, and spake unto him, and said, My father, *if* the prophet had bid thee *do some* great thing, wouldest thou not have done *it*? how much rather then, when he saith to
- 14 thee, Wash, and be clean? Then went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God: and ^jhis flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and ^khe was clean.
- 15 And ^lhe returned to the man of God, he and all his company, and came and stood before him: and he said, Behold, now ^mI know that *there is* ⁿno God in all the earth, but in Israel: now therefore, I pray thee, take ^oa blessing of thy servant. But he said, ^pAs the LORD liveth, before whom I stand, ^qI will receive none. And he urged him to take *it*; but he
- 17 refused. And Naaman said, Shall there not then, I pray thee, be given to thy servant two mules' burden of earth? for thy servant will henceforth offer neither burnt offering nor sacrifice unto other gods, but unto the
- 18 LORD. In this thing the LORD pardon thy servant, *that* when my master goeth into the house of Rimmon to worship there, and he ^rleaneth on my hand, and I bow myself in the house of Rimmon: when I bow down myself in the house of Rimmon, the LORD pardon thy servant in this

B. C. 891.

^a 1 Cor 2. 14.^b I said, or,

I said with

myself, He

will surely

come out,

e.c.

^c move up

and down.

^d Or,

Amana.

^e Fro. 14. 17.

Fro. 16. 32.

Ecl. 7. 9.

^f Job 23. 25.^g Luke 4. 27.^h Luke 17. 15.ⁱ 1 Sam. 17.

46, 47.

Isa. 43. 10.

Rom. 10. 10.

ⁿ Dan 2. 47.

Dan. 3. 21.

^o Gen. 31. 11.^p ch. 3. 14.^q Gen. 14. 23.

Matt. 10. 8.

Acts 8. 18.

^r ch. 7. 2. 17.

grand and ultimate object to which, in the providence of God, the journey of Naaman was subservient. On the Syrian general, with his imposing retinue, arriving at the prophet's house, Elisha sent him a message to "go and wash in Jordan seven times." This apparently rude reception to a foreigner of so high dignity, incensed Naaman to such a degree that he resolved to depart, scornfully boasting that 'the rivers of Damascus were better than all the waters of Israel.' 11. **strike his hand over the place**—*i. e.*, wave it over the diseased parts of his body. It was anciently, and still continues to be, a very prevalent superstition in the East, that the hand of a king, or person of great reputed sanctity, touching, or waved over a sore, will heal it. 12. **Abana and Pharpar**—the Abana (strong); the Greek Chryssorhoas (golden stream), now Barrada (gold river). Taking its rise in Anti-Lebanon at a height of 3,340 feet above the sea, and at least 1,000 feet above Damascus, it waters about 311 square miles of arable land. The Barrada and one of its five tributaries, most probably the 'Awaj. *Joseph Schwarz* (in 'Geography of Palestine') says that the Jews resident in Damascus describe Damascus still as 'situated on the two rivers Abana and Pharpar' (*Wilson's Lands of the Bible*, ii., 325, note; *Ritter's 'Erdkunde'*, cxvii., p. 1303; *Porter's 'Five Years in Damascus'*, i., pp. 159, 162, 394, 395; ii., 11, 248, 249, 358; *Lord Lindsay, 'Holy Land'*, p. 330). The waters of Damascus are still as highly extolled by their inhabitants for their purity and coldness. 14. **Then went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan.** Persuaded by his calmer and more reflecting attendants to try a method so simple and easy, he followed their instructions, and was cured. The cure was performed on the basis of God's covenant with Israel, by which the land, and all pertaining to it, was blessed. Seven was the symbol of the covenant (*Keil*).

15-19.—ELISHA REFUSES NAAMAN'S GIFTS.

15. he returned to the man of God. After the miraculous cure, Naaman returned to Elisha, to

whom he acknowledged his full belief in the sole supremacy of the God of Israel, and offered him a liberal reward. **take a blessing of thy servant** [תְּרִיבָהּ]—a gift or present, in token of good-will, and usually offered with an expression of good wishes. But to show that he was not actuated by the mercenary motives of the heathen priests and prophets, Elisha, though he accepted presents on other occasions (ch. iv. 42), respectfully but firmly declined them on this, being desirous that the Syrians should see the piety of God's servants, and their superiority to all worldly and selfish motives in promoting the honour of God and the interests of true religion. 17. **two mules' burden of earth**—with which to make an altar (Exod. xx. 24) to the God of Israel. What was his motive or his purpose in this proposal—whether he thought that God could be acceptably worshipped only on his own soil, or he wished, when far away from the Jordan, to have the earth of Palestine to rub himself with, which the Orientals use as a substitute for water; and whether, by making such a request of Elisha, he thought the prophet's grant of it would impart some virtue, or whether, like the modern Jews and Mohammedans, he resolved to have a portion of this *holy earth* for his nightly pillow, it is not easy to say. It is not strange to find such notions in so newly a converted heathen. 18. **goeth into the house of Rimmon**—a Syrian deity, probably the sun, or the planetary system, of which a pomegranate (Hebrew, Rimmon) was the symbol. **leaneth on my hand**—*i. e.*, meaning the service which Naaman rendered as the attendant of his sovereign. It is quite clear that Naaman, as a convert to the faith of the true God, meant to perform no act of religion in the temple of Rimmon, and hoped that his official attendance there upon his royal master would be pardoned, as not done by his consenting will. In regard to the privilege of toleration to worship the true God, there is no reason to believe that it would not be enjoyed by Naaman, as by Joseph, Daniel latterly, Nehemiah, and others. In regard to Naaman's remark about 'bowing in the house of

19 thing. And he said unto him, Go in peace. So he departed from him ¹¹a little way.

20 But Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God, said, Behold, my master hath spared Naaman this Syrian, in not receiving at his hands that which he brought; but, as the Lord liveth, I will run after him,

21 and take somewhat of him. So Gehazi followed after Naaman. And when Naaman saw him running after him, he lighted down from the chariot to meet him, and said, ¹²Is all well? And he said, All is well. My master hath sent me, saying, Behold, even now there be come to me from mount Ephraim two young men of the sons of the prophets: give

23 them, I pray thee, a talent of silver, and two changes of garments. And Naaman said, Be content, take two talents. And he urged him, and bound two talents of silver in two bags, with two changes of garments, and laid them upon two of his servants; and they bare them before him.

24 And when he came to the ¹³tower, he took them from their hand, and bestowed them in the house: and he let the men go, and they departed.

25 But he went in, and stood before his master. And Elisha said unto him, Whence comest thou, Gehazi? And he said, Thy servant went ¹⁴no

26 whither. And he said unto him, Went not mine heart with thee, when the man turned again from his chariot to meet thee? Is it a time to receive money, and to receive garments, and oliveyards, and vineyards,

27 and sheep, and oxen, and men-servants, and maid-servants? The leprosy therefore of Naaman shall cleave unto thee, and unto thy seed for ever. And he went out from his presence a ¹⁵leper as white as snow.

6 AND ¹⁶the sons of the prophets said unto Elisha, Behold now, the 2 place where we dwell with thee is too strait for us. Let us go, we pray

E. C. 894.

¹¹ a little piece of ground, as Gen 3. 16.

¹² Ps. 10. 3.

¹³ Pro. 15. 27.

¹⁴ Luke 12. 15.

¹⁵ Col. 3. 5.

¹⁶ 1 Tim 6. 10.

¹⁷ Is there peace? ¹⁸ Or, secret place.

¹⁹ Pro. 30. 20.

²⁰ Eze 31. 31.

²¹ Luke 13. 2.

²² 26-30

²³ not hither or thither.

²⁴ 1 ro 12. 22.

²⁵ Acts 5. 3.

²⁶ 1s. 67. 11.

²⁷ Ac's 13. 9.

²⁸ 1s. 16. 4.

²⁹ Ps. 32. 10.

³⁰ Ps. 140. 11.

³¹ Pro. 13. 21.

³² 1 Tim. 6. 6.

³³ Ex. 4. 6.

CHAP. 6.

¹ ch 2. 3.

² sit before.

³ ch 4. 38.

Rimmon, Elisha's prophetic commission not extending to any but the conversion of Israel from idolatry, he makes no remark, either approving or disapproving, on the declared course of Naaman, but simply gives (v. 19) the parting benediction. But another view has been given of Naaman's and Elisha's words, by rendering them in the past tense, which is perfectly admissible. 'In this thing the Lord pardon thy servant, that when my master went into the house of Rimmon to worship there, and he leaned on my hand, and I worshipped in the house of Rimmon; in that I have worshipped in the house of Rimmon, the Lord pardon thy servant in this thing.' 19. And he said unto him, Go in peace—i. e., God will accept of thy repentance. The Septuagint, however, does not support the interpretation in our version (see fully in Poli Synopsis). So he departed from him a little way [עַל־דֶּגֶר, אֶת־הַיָּרֵךְ, a piece of ground or way (see on Gen. xxxv. 16; xlviii. 7); Septuagint, eis Δεσραθα τῆς γῆς]. The name in this Aramaic form was probably used in the days of the Greek translators as a definite measure of length. [In the last-cited passage they accompany Χαθραθα (the form used there), with the explanatory clause, κατα τον ιπποδρομιον a race-course, the distance a horse should be made to go for daily exercise, probably three or four miles (see Rosenmüller's 'Bible Geography,' 1, p. 24).

20. 27.—GEHAZI, BY A LIE, OBTAINS A PRESENT, BUT IS SMITTEN WITH LEPROSY.

20. I will run after him, and take somewhat of him. The respectful courtesy to Elisha, shown in the person of his servant, and the open-handed liberality of his gifts, attest the fulness of Naaman's gratitude; while the lie, the artful management in dismissing the bearers of the treasure, and the deceitful appearance before his master, as if he had not left the house, give a most unfavour-

able impression of Gehazi's character. 23. in two bags. People in the East, when travelling, have their money, in certain sums, put up in bags. 24. when he came to the tower [עִירָה, the hill, rising ground; some particular tumult or eminence at the entrance into the city. The Septuagint has ἦλθεν eis τὸ σκοτεινόν, he came to the dark (secret) place]. 26. Is it a time to receive money, &c. [The Septuagint renders, You have now received money and garments, and may obtain oliveyards and vineyards, &c., yet the leprosy of Naaman (notwithstanding all your wealth) will cleave to you, &c.] 'Nor,' says Poole, 'was this punishment too severe for Gehazi's wickedness, which was great and various; horrid covetousness, which is idolatry; the profanation of God's name by a wicked oath; downright theft; deliberate and impudent lying, and that to a prophet, which was in a manner a lying to the Holy Ghost (Acts v. 3); a desperate contempt of God's omniscience, justice, and holiness; a horrible reproach fastened upon the prophet and his religion; and a mischievous scandal given to Naaman, and to all other Syrians who might hear of it.' 27. leper as white as snow—(see on Lev. xiii. 3.) This heavy infliction was not too severe for the crime of Gehazi. For it was not the covetousness alone that was punished; but at the same time the ill use made of the prophet's name to gain an object prompted by a mean covetousness, and the attempt to conceal it by lying (Keil).

CHAP. VI. 1-7.—ELISHA CAUSES IRON TO SWIM.

1. the place where we dwell with thee—margin, 'sit before thee.' The one points to a common residence, the other to a common place of meeting. The tenor of the narrative shows the humble condition of Elisha's pupils. The place was either Beth-el or Jericho—probably the latter. The ministry and miracles of Elisha brought great

thee, unto Jordan, and take thence every man a beam, and let us make
 3 us a place there, where we may dwell. And he answered, Go ye. And
 one said, Be content, I pray thee, and go with thy servants. And he
 4 answered, I will go. So he went with them. And when they came to
 5 Jordan, they cut down wood. But as one was felling a beam, the ²ax
 head fell into the water: and he cried, and said, Alas, master! for it was
 6 borrowed. And the man of God said, Where fell it? And he showed
 him the place. And ^bhe cut down a stick, and cast *it* in thither; and
 7 the iron did swim. Therefore said he, Take *it* up to thee. And he put
 out his hand, and took it.
 8 Then the king of Syria warred against Israel, and took counsel with
 9 his servants, saying, In such and such a place *shall be* my ³camp. And
 the man of God sent unto the king of Israel, saying, ^cBeware that thou
 10 pass not such a place; for thither the Syrians are come down. And the
 king of Israel sent to the place which the man of God told him and
 warned him of, and saved himself there, not once nor twice.
 11 Therefore the heart of the king of Syria was sore troubled for this
 thing; and he called his servants, and said unto them, Will ye not show
 12 me which of us *is* for the king of Israel? And one of his servants said,
⁴None, my lord, O king: but Elisha, the prophet that *is* in Israel, telleth
 the king of Israel the words that thou speakest in thy bed-chamber.
 13 And he said, Go and spy where he *is*, that I may send and fetch him.
 And it was told him, saying, Behold, *he is* in ^dDothan.
 14 Therefore sent he thither horses, and chariots, and a ⁵great host: and
 15 they came by night, and compassed the city about. And when the ^eserv-
 vant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host
 compassed the city both with horses and chariots. And his servant said
 16 unto him, Alas, my master! how shall we do? And he answered, Fear
 not; for ^fthey that *be* with us *are* more than they that *be* with them.
 17 And Elisha prayed; and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he
 may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he
 saw: and, behold, the mountain *was* full of ^ghorses and chariots of fire
 18 round about Elisha. And when they came down to him, Elisha prayed
 unto the LORD, and said, Smite this people, I pray thee, with blindness.

B. C. 893.

² iron.^b Ex. 15. 26.

ch. 2. 21.

ch. 4. 41.

John 26. 7.

³ Or, en-

camping.

^c ch. 13. 14.

Ps. 25. 14.

Pro 3. 32.

Isa. 6. 13.

Amos 3. 7.

Matt. 5. 13.

Rev. 1. 1.

⁴ No.^d Gen. 37. 17.⁵ heavy.⁶ Or,

minister.

Ex 24. 13.

^e 2 Sam. 22. 3.

31.

2 Chr. 32. 7.

Ps. 3. 3-5.

Ps. 13. 2.

Ps. 27. 1-3.

Ps. 28. 7, 8.

Ps. 34. 22.

Ps. 40. 4.

Ps. 55. 1².

Ps. 64. 10.

Ps. 91. 2.

Pro. 1⁵. 10.

Pro. 21. 31.

Pro 23. 25.

Isa. 8. 10.

Isa. 43. 1.

Rom. 8. 31.

ch. 2. 11.

Ps. 34. 7.

Ps. 68. 17.

Zech. 1. 8.

Zech. 6. 1-7.

Heb. 1. 14.

accessions to his schools. 2. Let us go . . . unto Jordan — whose wooded banks would furnish plenty of timber. 5. it was borrowed — *lit.*, begged. The scholar's distress arose from the consideration that the axe had been lent to him; and that owing to his poverty he could not procure another. 6. cut down a stick, and cast it in thither. Although this means was used, it had no natural adaptation to make the iron swim. Besides, the Jordan is at Jericho so deep and rapid that there were a thousand chances to one against the stick falling into the hole of the axe-head. All attempts to account for the recovery of the lost implement on such a theory must be rejected. "The iron did swim" — only by the miraculous exertion of Elisha's power.

8-17.—DISCLOSES THE KING OF SYRIA'S COUNSEL.
 8. the king of Syria warred against Israel. This seems to have been a sort of guerilla warfare, carried on by predatory inroads on different parts of the country. Elisha apprised king Jehoram of the secret purposes of the enemy, so, by adopting precautionary measures, he was always enabled to anticipate and defeat their attacks. The frequency of his disappointments having led the Syrian king to suspect some of his servants of carrying on a treacherous correspondence with the enemy, he was informed about Elisha, whose apprehension he forthwith determined to effect.
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This resolution was, of course, grounded on the belief that however great the knowledge of Elisha might be, if seized and kept a prisoner, he could no longer give information to the king of Israel.

13. Dothan — or Dothaim; a little north of Samaria (see on Gen. xxxvii. 17).

15. his servant said . . . Alas, my master! how shall we do? On the Syrian detachment surrounding the place by night, for the apprehension of the prophet, his servant was paralyzed with fear. This was a new servant, who had only been with him since Gehazi's dismissal, and, consequently, had little or no experience of his master's powers. His faith was easily shaken by so unexpected an alarm. 17. Elisha prayed . . . that he may see — the invisible guard of angels that encompass and defend us (Ps. xxxiv. 7). The opening of the eyes, which Elisha prayed for, referred to the spirit, not to the body. The eye of faith sees the reality of the Divine presence and protection where all is vacancy or darkness to the ordinary eye. The horses and chariots were symbols of the Divine power (see on ch. ii. 12); and their fiery nature denoted their supernatural origin; for fire, the most ethereal of earthly elements, is the most appropriate symbol of the Godhead (*Keil*).

18-23.—HIS ARMY SMITTEN WITH BLINDNESS.

18. Smite this people, I pray thee, with blindness.

And ⁹ he smote them with blindness according to the word of Elisha.
 19 And Elisha said unto them, This *is* not the way, neither *is* this the city:
⁷ follow me, and I will bring you to the man whom ye seek. But he led
 20 them to Samaria. And it came to pass, when they were come into
 21 Samaria, that Elisha said, LORD, open the eyes of these *men*, that they
 may see. And the LORD opened their eyes, and they saw; and, behold,
they were in the midst of Samaria.
 21 And the king of Israel said unto Elisha, when he saw them, ⁴My father,
 22 shall I smite *them*? shall I smite *them*? And he answered, Thou shalt
 not smite *them*: wouldest thou smite those whom thou hast taken cap-
 tive with thy sword and with thy bow? ⁴Set bread and water before
 23 them, that they may eat and drink, and go to their master. And he
 prepared great provision for them: and when they had eaten and drunk,
 he sent them away, and they went to their master. So ³the bands of
 Syria came no more into the land of Israel.
 24 And it came to pass after this, that Ben-hadad king of Syria gathered
 25 all his host, and went up, and besieged Samaria. And there was a great
⁴famine in Samaria: and, behold, they besieged it, until an ass's head
 was sold for fourscore *pieces* of silver, and the ⁸fourth part of a cab of
 26 dove's dung for five *pieces* of silver. And as the king of Israel was passing
 by upon the wall, there cried a woman unto him, saying, Help, my lord,
 27 O king! And he said, ⁹If the LORD do not help thee, whence shall I help
 thee? out of the barn-floor, or out of the wine-press? And the king said
 28 unto her, ¹What aileth thee? And she answered, This woman said unto
 me, Give thy son, that we may eat him to-day, and we will eat my son
 29 to-morrow. So ^mwe boiled my son, and did eat him: and I said unto her
 on the ¹⁰next day, Give thy son, that we may eat him; and she hath hid
 30 her son. And it came to pass, when the king heard the words of the
 woman, that he rent ⁿhis clothes; and he passed by upon the wall, and

B C. 453
⁹ Gen. 19. 11.
 Job 5. 14.
 Acts 3. 9.
⁷ come ye
 after me
 Matt. 16. 24.
 Mark 8. 34.
^h ch. 2. 12.
 ch. 8. 9.
ⁱ 1ro 25. 21.
 Rom 12. 50.
^j ch. 5. 2.
 ch. 24. 2.
^k Lev. 21. 23.
⁸ That is,
 about
 three gills.
 a cab beinz
 about
 three
 pints.
⁹ Or, Let
 not the
 LORD
 save thee.
 Ps. 127. 1.
ⁱ Judg. 15. 23.
 Isa. 22. 1.
^m Lev. 26. 29.
 Deut. 23. 53.
 57.
¹⁰ other.
ⁿ Gen. 27. 29.
 34.
 1 Ki. 21. 27.
 ch. 5. 7.
 ch. 19. 37.

ness—not a total and material blindness—for then they could not have followed him—but a mental hallucination (see on Gen. xix. 11), that they did not perceive or recognize him to be the object of their search. The Syriac and Arabic versions convey the impression that their sight was obscured by a dense fog or haze. 19. This is not the way, neither is this the city. This is considered by some as a falsehood or equivocation, like the falsehood of Abraham to Abimelech and Pharaoh, of Isaac to Pharaoh, of Rebekah and Jacob to Isaac, and many of the patriarchs. But the statement is so far true, that, as he had now left the place of his residence, they would not have got him by that road. But the ambiguity of his language was purposely framed to deceive them; and yet the deception must be viewed in the light of a stratagem, which has always been deemed lawful in war. he led them to Samaria. When they were arrived in the midst of the capital, their eyes, at Elisha's request, were opened, and they then became aware of their defenceless condition, for Jehoram had received private premonition of their arrival. The king, so far from being allowed to slay the enemies who were thus unconsciously put in his power, was recommended to entertain them with liberal hospitality, and then dismiss them to their own country. This was a humane advice; it was contrary to the usage of war to put war-captives to death in cold blood, even when taken at the point of the sword, much more those whom the miraculous power and providence of God had unexpectedly placed at his disposal. In such circumstances, kind and hospitable treatment was every way more becoming in itself, and would be productive of the best effects. It would redound

to the credit of the true religion, which inspired such an excellent spirit into its professors; and it would not only prevent the future opposition of the Syrians, but make them stand in awe of a people who, they had seen, were so remarkably protected by a prophet of the Lord. The latter clause of v. 23 shows that these salutary effects were fully realized. A moral conquest had been gained over the Syrians.

24-33.—BEN-HADAD BESIEGES SAMARIA.

24. Ben-hadad . . . besieged Samaria. This was the predicted accomplishment of the result of Ahab's foolish and misplaced kindness (1 Ki. xx. 42). 25. an ass's head was sold for fourscore pieces of silver. Though the ass was deemed unclean food, necessity might warrant their violation of a positive law when mothers, in their extremity, were found violating the laws of nature. The head was the worst part of the animal. Eighty pieces of silver, equal to £5, 5s. the fourth part of a cab. A cab was the smallest dry measure. The proportion here stated was nearly half a pint for 12s. 6d. "Dove's dung" is thought by Bochart to be a kind of pulse or pea, common in Judaea, and still kept in the store-houses of Cairo and Damascus, and other places, for the use of it by pilgrim caravans. By *Linneus* and other botanists it is said to be the root or white bulb of the plant *Ornithogalum umbellatum*, Star of Bethlehem. The sacred historian does not say that the articles here named were not regularly sold at the rates described, but only that instances were known of such high prices being given. 26. as the king . . . was passing—to look at the defences, or to give some necessary orders for manning the walls. 29. we boiled my son, and

- the people looked, and, behold, *he had* sackcloth within upon his flesh.
- 31 Then he said, °God do so and more also to me, if the head of Elisha the son of Shaphat shall stand on him this day.
- 32 But Elisha ²sat in his house, and ²the elders sat with him; and *the king* sent a man from before him: but ere the messenger came to him, he said to the elders, ⁷See ye how this son of ⁵a murderer hath sent to take away mine head? Look, when the messenger cometh, shut the door, and hold him fast at the door: *is* not the sound of his master's feet behind him? And while he yet talked with them, behold, the messenger came down unto him: and ¹¹he said, Behold, this evil *is* of the LORD; 'what should I wait for the LORD any longer?
- 7 THEN Elisha said, Hear ye the word of the LORD; Thus saith the LORD, ⁴To-morrow, about this time, *shall* a measure of fine flour *be sold* for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, in the gate of
- 2 Samaria. Then ¹a lord on whose hand the king leaned answered the man of God, and said, Behold, ⁶*if* the LORD would make windows in heaven, might this thing be? And he said, Behold, thou shalt see *it* with thine eyes, but ⁴shalt not eat thereof.
- 3 And there were four leprous men ⁴at the entering in of the gate; and
- 4 they said one to another, Why sit we here until we die? If we say, We will enter into the city, then the famine *is* in the city, and we shall die

B. C. 892.

° 1 Ki. 19. 2.
Acts 23. 14.
P Ps. 118. 6, 9.
q Eze. 8. 1.
Eze. 10. 1.
Mal. 3. 16.
r Luke 13.32.
s 1 Ki. 18. 4.
¹¹ That is, Jehoram.
t Job 21. 15.
Pro. 30. 9.
Mal. 3. 14.

CHAP. 7.

⁴ Ps. 46. 1.
¹ a lord which belonged to the king leaning upon his hand.
ch. 5. 18.
b Gen. 7. 11.
c Heb. 3. 17.
d Lev. 13. 46.

did eat him—(see on Deut. xxviii. 53.) 30. had sackcloth . . . upon his flesh. The horrid recital of this domestic tragedy led the king soon after to rend his garment, in consequence of which it was discovered that he wore a penitential shirt of hair-cloth. Mourners (2 Sam. iii. 31) and the prophets (Matt. iii. 24) wore sackcloth—a large square piece of coarse cloth, wrapped round the person and fastened at the waist by a girdle. The common practice was to wear the sackcloth over the under-dress—the more closely fitting tunic; and accordingly the words signifying putting on or off the sackcloth are the same which are used to gird or to loosen any external article of dress. This rough material was sometimes worn next the skin, and as it is affirmed here of the king of Israel, the fact seems to betoken the depth of his mental distress. It is more than doubtful, however, if he was truly humbled on account of his own and the nation's sins, otherwise he would not have vowed vengeance on the prophet's life. The true explanation seems to be, that Elisha having counselled him not to surrender, with the promise, on condition of deep humiliation, of being delivered, and he having assumed the signs of contrition without receiving the expected relief, regarded Elisha, who had proved false and faithless, as the cause of all the protracted distress.

32. But Elisha sat in his house, and the elders sat with him. The latter clause of v. 33, which contains the king's impatient exclamation, enables us to account for the impetuous order he issued for the beheading of Elisha. Though Jehoram was a wicked king, and most of his courtiers would resemble their master, many had been won over, through the prophet's influence, to the true religion. A meeting, probably a prayer-meeting, of those was held in his house, probably the school of the prophets (vv. 1, 2), and them he not only apprised of the king's design against himself, but disclosed to them the proof of a premeditated deliverance. shut the door, and hold him fast at the door—because the messenger would be sent immediately by the king, who would revoke the rash and inconsiderate order. 33. while he yet talked with them, behold, the messenger. [The Septuagint has *αγγελος*, as if they understood a

second messenger had come, bearing the utterance with which the chapter ends.] That utterance is apparently a response to an exhortation of the prophet to wait the Lord's way and time of deliverance; and the import of the king's answer is, that while he could not but acknowledge this evil, so heavily scourging the land, was from the Lord, he thought the condition of the kingdom was beyond remedy desperate, since mothers were appeasing the pangs of hunger with the flesh of their own children.

CHAP. VII. 1-16. — ELISHA PROPHECIES IN-CREDIBLE PLENTY IN SAMARIA.

1. Hear ye the word of the Lord. This prediction, though uttered first to the assembled elders, was intimated to the king's messengers, who reported it to Jehoram (v. 15). To-morrow, about this time, shall a measure of fine flour be sold for a shekel, &c. This may be estimated at a peck of fine flour for 2s. 6d., and two pecks of barley at the same price. in the gate of Samaria. Vegetables, cattle, and all sorts of country produce, are still sold every morning at the gates of towns in the East. 2. a lord on whose hand the king leaned. When an Eastern king walks, or stands abroad in the open air, he always supports himself on the arm of the *highest* courtier present. if the Lord would make windows in heaven [מַחְזְבֵּי]—windows closed by a lattice; but here "windows in heaven" denote sluices, floodgates, opened to let rain fall (cf. Gen. vii. 11; viii. 2; Isa. xxiv. 18; lx. 8; Hos. xiii. 3). [The Septuagint renders it *καταράκτας ἐν οὐρανῷ*; that is, Should God rain down corn, as He had formerly done manna, this prediction might be verified.] The scoffing infidelity of this remark, which was a sneer against, not the prophet only, but the God he served, was justly and signally punished (see v. 20).

3. there were four leprous men. The account of the sudden raising of the siege, and the unexpected supply given to the famishing inhabitants of Samaria, is introduced by a narrative of the visit and discovery, by these poor creatures, of the extraordinary flight of the Syrians. at the entering in of the gate—living, perhaps, in some

there: and if we sit still here, we die also. Now therefore come, and let us fall unto the host of the Syrians: if they save us alive, we shall live; 5 and if ^e they kill us, we shall but die. And they rose up in the twilight, to go unto the camp of the Syrians: and when they were come to the uttermost part of the camp of Syria, behold, *there was* no man there. For the LORD had made the host of the Syrians ^f to hear a noise of chariots, and a noise of horses, *even* the noise of a great host: and they said one to another, Lo, the king of Israel hath hired against us ^g the kings of the 7 Hittites, and the kings of the Egyptians, to come upon us. Wherefore they ^h arose, and fled in the twilight, and left their tents, and their horses, and their asses, *even* the camp as it *was*, and fled for their life. 8 And when these lepers came to the uttermost part of the camp, they went into one tent, and did eat and drink, and carried thence silver, and gold, and raiment, and went and hid *it*; and came again, and entered into 9 another tent, and carried thence *also*, and went and hid *it*. Then they said one to another, We ⁱ do not well: this day *is* a day ^j of good tidings, and we hold our peace: if we tarry till the morning light, ^k some mischief will come upon us: now therefore come, that we may go and tell the 10 king's household. So they came and called unto the porter of the city; and they told them, saying, We came to the camp of the Syrians, and, behold, *there was* no man there, neither voice of man, but horses tied, and 11 asses tied, and the tents as they *were*. And he called the porters; and they told *it* to the king's house within. 12 And the king arose in the night, and said unto his servants, I will now show you what the Syrians have done to us. They know that we *be* hungry; therefore are they gone out of the camp to hide themselves in the field, saying, When they come out of the city, we shall catch them 13 alive, and get into the city. And one of his servants answered and said, Let *some* take, I pray thee, five of the horses that remain, which are left ^l in the city, (behold, they *are* as all the multitude of Israel that are left in it; behold, *I say*, they *are* even as all the multitude of the Israelites 14 that are consumed,) and let us send and see. They took therefore two chariot horses; and the king sent after the host of the Syrians, saying, 15 Go and see. And they went after them unto Jordan; and, lo, all the way *was* full of garments and ^m vessels, which the Syrians ⁿ had cast away in their haste: and the messengers returned, and told the king.

B C. 92.

^o Gen. 43. 14.
^p 2 Sam. 14. 14.
 Esth. 4. 16.
 Job 31. 15.
 Luke 15. 17-19.
 Heb. 9. 27.
^q Lev. 26. 36.
 2 Sam. 5. 21.
 ch. 3. 23.
 ch. 19. 7.
 Job 15. 21.
 Eze. 10. 5.
 Rev. 6. 15, 16.
^r 1 Ki. 10. 29.
^s Job 18. 11.
 Ps. 48. 4-7.
 Ps. 53. 5.
 Pro. 28. 1.
 Jer. 43. 8, 9.
^t Hag. 1. 4, 5.
 1 hil. 2. 14.
 2 Pet. 1. 19.
^u Esth. 9. 17.
 Isa. 41. 27.
 Nah. 1. 15.
 Luke 2. 10.
^v we shall find punishment.
 Num 32. 23.
^w in it.
^x Or, furniture.
^y Job 3. 4.
 Isa. 2. 20.
 Isa. 10. 3.
 Isa. 31. 7.
 Eze. 18. 31.
 Matt 16. 26.
 Matt 24. 16.
 1^z.
 Phil. 3. 7.
 Heb 12. 1.

lazar-house there (Lev. xiii. 4-6; Num. v. 3). 5. they rose up in the twilight—*i. e.*, the evening twilight (*v.* 12). the uttermost part of the camp of Syria—*i. e.*, the extremity nearest the city. 6. the Lord had made . . . the Syrians. This illusion of the sense of hearing, whereby the besiegers (who, be it remembered, had not meditated assault, but only reducing the city by famine) imagined the tramp of two armies from opposite quarters, was a great miracle, which God wrought directly for the deliverance of His people.

8. these lepers . . . did eat and drink. After they had appeased their hunger, and secreted as many valuables as they could carry, their consciences smote them for concealing the discovery, and they hastened to publish it in the city. 9. if we tarry till the morning light, some mischief will come upon us [וְאִם נִשְׁמְרֵם עַד בֹּקֶר]—we shall find punishment. 10. horses tied, and asses tied, and the tents as they were. The uniform arrangement of encampments in the East is, to place the tents in the centre, while the cattle are picketed all around as an outer wall of defence; and hence the lepers describe the cattle as the first objects they saw.

12. I will now show you what the Syrians have done. Similar stratagems have been so often resorted to in the ancient and modern wars of the East (see 'History of the Revolt of Ali Bey' for a deception almost the same), that there is no wonder Jehoram's suspicions were awakened. But the scouts whom he despatched soon found unmistakable signs of the panic that had struck the enemy, and led to a most precipitous flight. 13. one of his servants answered and said, &c. The sentence which follows, as it stands in our version, is very obscure. Literally rendered it is thus:—^z Let, then, I pray thee, five of the horses remaining, which are left in it (*viz.*, the city), behold them like all the multitudes in Israel left in it, behold them like all the multitudes in Israel which are consumed.' The meaning seems to be, that those horses which still survive will, in all likelihood, soon share the doom of all others in Israel; wherefore, if we should employ them in this enquiry, and they should be surprised and killed, their fate will be no harder, in being cut down by the sword, than if they remained here to die of famine. The Septuagint represents the five horses as the whole stock remaining, which the people in their ex-

16 And the people went out, and spoiled the ^{nts} of the Syrians. So a measure of fine flour was sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for
 17 a shekel, ^{according to the word of the LORD.} And the king appointed the lord on whose hand he leaned to have the charge of the gate: and the people trode upon him in the gate, and he died, ^{as the man of God had}
 18 said, who spake when the king came down to him. And it came to pass as the man of God had spoken to the king, saying, ^{"Two measures of} barley for a shekel, and a measure of fine flour for a shekel, shall be to-
 19 morrow about this time in the gate of Samaria: and that lord answered the man of God, and said, Now, behold, ^{if the LORD should make windows} in heaven, might such a thing be? And he said, Behold, thou shalt see
 20 it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof. And ^{so} it fell out unto him: for the people trode upon him in the gate, and he died.
 8 THEN spake Elisha unto the woman, whose ^ason he had restored to life, saying, Arise, and go thou and thine household, and sojourn where-soever thou canst sojourn: for the LORD ^bhath called for a famine; and
 2 it shall also come upon the land seven years. And the woman arose, and did after the saying of the man of God: and she went with her household,
 3 and sojourned in the land of the Philistines seven years. And it came to pass at the seven years' end, that the woman returned out of the land of the Philistines: and she went forth to cry unto the king for her house and
 4 for her land. And the king talked with ^cGehazi, the servant of the man of God, saying, Tell me, I pray thee, all the great things that Elisha hath
 5 done. And it came to pass, as he was telling the king how he had ^drestored a dead body to life, that, behold, the woman, whose son he had restored to life, cried to the king for her house and for her land. And Gehazi said, My lord, O king, this *is* the woman, and this *is* her son,
 6 whom Elisha restored to life. And when the king asked the woman, she told him. So the king appointed unto her a certain ¹officer, saying, Restore all that *was* her's, and all the fruits of the field since the day that she left the land, even until now.

B. C. 892.
 Num. 23. 19.
 Isa 44. 26.
 1 Cor. 1. 9.
 1 Thes. 5. 24.
 Deut. 32. 35.
 39, 40.
 ch 6. 32.
 2 Chr 26. 19
 Job 21. 25-50.
 Job 31. 3.
 Ps. 31. 17.
 Isa 6. 24.
 Isa. 23. 22.
 Jer. 5. 11-14.
 Nah. 1. 2.
 Luke 10. 16.
 ver. 1.
 Num. 20. 12.
 Job 20. 23.
 Jer. 17. 6.
 Heb 3. 13.
 CHAP. 8.
 a ch 4. 35.
 b Gen. 41. 25-28, 32.
 Lev. 26. 19, 20, 26.
 2 Sam 24. 13.
 Ps. 107. 16.
 Hag. 1. 11.
 Luke 21 11.
 Acts 11. 23.
 c ch. 5. 27.
 d ch. 4. 35.
 1 Or. eueuch.

tremities had not killed and eaten [Λαβέτωσαν δὴ πέντε τῶν ἵππων τῶν ὑπόλειμμένων οἱ κατελείφθησαν ἄνε, ἰδοὺ εἰσι πρὸς πᾶν τὸ πλῆθος Ἰσραὴλ τὸ ἐκλείπων].

17-20.—THE UNBELIEVING LORD TRODDEN TO DEATH.

17. the king appointed the lord, &c. The news, spreading like lightning through the city, was followed, as was natural, by a popular rush to the Syrian camp. To keep order at the gate, the king ordered his minister to keep guard; but the impetuosity of the famishing people could not be resisted. The lord was trodden to death, and Elisha's prophecy, in all respects, accomplished.

CHAP. VIII. 1-7.—THE SHUNAMMITE'S LAND RESTORED.

1. Then spake Elisha unto the woman—rather, 'had spoken.' The repetition of Elisha's direction to the Shunammite is merely given as an introduction to the following narrative; and it probably took place before the events recorded in chs. v. and vi. the Lord hath called for a famine. All such calamities are chastisements inflicted by the hand of God; and this famine was to be of double duration to that one which happened in the time of Elijah (Jas. v. 17)—a just increase of severity, since the Israelites still continued obdurate and incorrigible under the ministry and miracles of Elisha (Lev. xxvi. 21, 24, 28). 2. sojourned in the land of the Philistines seven years. Their territory was recommended to her from its contiguity to her usual residence; and now that this state had been so greatly

reduced, there was less risk than formerly from the seductions of idolatry, and many of the Jews and Israelites were residing there. Besides, an emigration thither was less offensive to the king of Israel than going to sojourn in Judah. 3. cry unto the king for her house and for her land [ἤγγυ], to present a humble petition (cf. 2 Sam. xix. 28); Septuagint, βοήσαι πρὸς τὸν βασιλέα, to complain to the king]. In consequence of her long-continued absence from the country, her possessions were occupied by her kindred, or had been confiscated to the crown. No statute in the law of Moses ordained that alienation; but the innovation seems to have been adopted in Israel. 4. the king talked with Gehazi. The circumstances narrated in these opening verses are generally believed to have taken place before the infliction of leprosy upon Gehazi, though they are recorded after the account of it. Kings in the East often talk with the servants of others about the doings and affairs of their masters. 'Goosh Bekee, the prime minister of the king of Bokhara, engaged my Jewish servant in a conversation about my business' (Joseph Wolf, 'Missionary Labours,' p. 493). The providence of God so ordained that king Jehoram had been led to enquire with great interest into the miraculous deeds of Elisha, and that the prophet's servant was in the act of relating the marvellous incident of the restoration of the Shunammite's son, when she made her appearance to prefer her request. The king was pleased to grant it, and a state officer was charged to afford her every facility in

7 And Elisha came to Damascus; and Ben-hadad the king of Syria was
 8 sick; and it was told him, saying, The man of God is come hither. And
 the king said unto ^eHazael, ^fTake a present in thine hand, and go, meet
 the man of God, and ^genquire of the LORD by him, saying, Shall I recover
 9 of this disease? So Hazael went to meet him, and took a present ²with
 him, even of every good thing of Damascus, forty camels' burden, and
 came and stood before him, and said, Thy son Ben-hadad king of Syria
 10 hath sent me to thee, saying, Shall I recover of this disease? And Elisha
 said unto him, Go, say unto him, Thou mayest certainly recover: howbeit
 11 the LORD hath showed me that he shall surely die. And he settled his
 countenance ³stedfastly, until he was ashamed: and the man of God
 12 ^hwept. And Hazael said, Why weepeth my lord? And he answered,
 Because I know the ⁱevil that thou wilt do unto the children of Israel:
 their strong holds wilt thou set on fire, and their young men wilt thou
 13 slay with the sword, and ^jwilt dash their children, and rip up their women
 with child. And Hazael said, But what! ^kis thy servant a dog, that he
 should do this great thing? And Elisha answered, ^lThe LORD hath
 14 showed me that thou shalt be king over Syria. So he departed from
 Elisha, and came to his master; who said to him, What said Elisha to
 thee? and he answered, He told me that thou shouldst surely recover.
 15 And it came to pass on the morrow, that he took a thick cloth, and
 dipped it in water, and spread it on his face, so that he died: and Hazael
 reigned in his stead.

D. C. 885.
 * 1 Ki. 19, 13.
 f 1 Sam. 9. 7.
 1 Ki. 14, 3.
 ch. 5. 6.
 g Josh. 9. 14.
 Judg. 23. 4.
 1 Sam. 9. 9.
 ch. 1. 2.
 ch. 3. 11-13.
 Luke 13. 23.
 Acts 16. 30.
 2 in his
 hand.
 3 and set it.
 h Gen. 45. 2.
 Ps. 119, 133.
 Jer. 4. 19.
 Jer. 9. 1, 18.
 Luke 19. 41.
 i ch. 10. 32.
 ch. 12. 17.
 ch. 13. 13.
 Amos 1. 3.
 j ch. 15. 16.
 Hos. 13. 16.
 Amos 1. 13.
 k 1 Sam. 17.
 43.
 l 1 Ki. 19, 16.

the recovery of her family possession out of the hands of the occupier.

7-15.—HAZAEI KILLS HIS MASTER AND SUCCEEDS HIM.

7. Elisha came to Damascus—being directed thither by the Spirit of God, in pursuance of the mission formerly given to his master in Horeb (1 Ki. xix. 15), to anoint Hazael king of Syria. 8. the king said unto Hazael, &c. It is an interesting confirmation of the sacred history, that the names of king Ben-hadad and his minister Hazael, as inscribed on the famous obelisk of Nimroud, were first deciphered by the late Dr. Hincks. On the arrival of the prophet being known, Ben-hadad, who was sick, sent to enquire the issue of his disease; and, according to the practice of the heathens in consulting their soothsayers, ordered a liberal present in remuneration of the service. The consultation of Elisha by the heathen king of Syria needs occasion no surprise; for it is probable, or rather certain, from the time of Nazman's cure (ch. v.), that the fame of the Hebrew prophet was diffused throughout that country. But besides, amongst the Shemith nations in particular, there was, with all the diversity of gods, a general community of religious sentiment. The people of one region never hesitated to recognize the prophets or priests of another. 9. forty camels' burden. The present, consisting of the rarest and most valuable produce of the land, would be liberal and magnificent. But it must not be supposed it was actually so large as to require forty camels to carry it. The Orientals are fond of display, and would ostentatiously lay upon forty beasts what might very easily have been borne by four. Thy son Ben-hadad. So called from the established usage of designating the prophet 'father.' This was the same Syrian monarch who had formerly persecuted him (see on ch. vi. 13, 14). 10. Go, say . . . Thou mayest certainly recover. There was no contradiction in this message. This part was properly the answer to Ben-hadad's enquiry. The second part was intended for Hazael, who, like an artful and ambitious courtier, reported

only as much of the prophet's statement as suited his own views (cf. v. 14). *Waterland* ('Scripture Vindicated,' part ii., p. 122), however, translates Elisha's words, 'Go, say, thou shalt certainly not live; for the Lord hath shown me,' &c. 11. he settled his countenance stedfastly [עָקַבְתָּ עֵינַי וַיִּשְׁקָהוּ, and he fixed his countenance, and set it; Septuagint, παρέστη τῷ προσώπῳ αὐτοῦ, και ἔθηκεν], until he was ashamed—i. e., Hazael. The stedfast, penetrating look of the prophet seemed to have convinced Hazael that his secret designs were known; and the deep emotions of Elisha were justified by the horrible atrocities, too common in ancient warfare, which that successful usurper committed in Israel (ch. x. 32; xiii. 3, 4, 22). Elisha's prophecy of Hazael's wickedness was a striking instance of a final effort to prevent the perpetration of that wickedness. 13. Hazael said, But what! is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing? [אֵינִי כֹלֵב, the dog; the Septuagint has ὁ κύων ὁ τεθνηκως, the dead dog. This is the full phrase used in the East (cf. 1 Sam. xxiv. 14). The predicate is not כֹּלֵב, which, as the article shows, belongs to the subject, עֶבְרָךְ, being assumed by Hazael as denoting, according to Oriental usage, the abject nature of his condition; the predicate is אֵינִי, what is thy servant? what power has he, or what prospect of ever possessing power sufficient for doing this great thing? It was the greatness, not the atrocity, that startled him; and it is of meanness, not of cruelty, that the dog is the Oriental symbol' (*Black's* 'Exegetical Study of the Oriental Scriptures,' p. 33). 15. took a thick cloth, &c. [כִּתְמָרָה]—the coarse (hair) cloth used as a coverlet. In the East this article of bed furniture is generally a thick quilt of wool or cotton, so that, with its great weight when steeped in water, it would be a fit instrument for accomplishing the murderous purpose, without leaving any marks of violence. But it has been supposed by many (amongst whom are J. D. Michaelis and

16 And in the fifth year of Joram the son of Ahab king of Israel, Jehoshaphat *being* then king of Judah, ^mJehoram the son of Jehoshaphat
 17 king of Judah ⁴began to reign. Thirty ⁿand two years old was he when
 18 he began to reign; and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem. And he
 walked in the way of the kings of Israel, as did the house of Ahab; for
 the daughter of Ahab was his wife: and he did evil in the sight of
 19 the LORD. Yet the LORD would not destroy Judah for David his ser-
 vant's sake, ^oas he promised him to give him alway a ⁵light, *and* to his
 children.
 20 In his days ²Edom revolted from under the hand of Judah, ²and made
 21 a king over themselves. So Joram went over to Zair, and all the
 chariots with him: and he rose by night, and smote the Edomites which
 compassed him about, and the captains of the chariots: and the people
 22 fled into their tents. ⁶Yet Edom revolted from under the hand of Judah
 unto this day. ⁷Then Libnah revolted at the same time.
 23 And the rest of the acts of Joram, and all that he did, *are* they not
 24 written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah? And Joram
 slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of
 David: and ⁷Ahaziah his son reigned in his stead.
 25 In the twelfth year of Joram the son of Ahab king of Israel did Ahaziah
 26 the son of Jehoram king of Judah begin to reign. Two ⁸and twenty
 years old *was* Ahaziah when he began to reign; and he reigned one year
 in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Athaliah, the ⁸daughter of
 27 Omri king of Israel. And ⁴he walked in the way of the house of Ahab,
 and did evil in the sight of the LORD, as *did* the house of Ahab: for he
 28 *was* the son-in-law of the house of Ahab. And he went with Joram the
 son of Ahab to the war against Hazael king of Syria in Ramoth-gilead;
 29 and the Syrians wounded Joram. And ⁴king Joram went back to be
 healed in Jezreel of the wounds ⁹which the Syrians had given him at
¹⁰Ramah, when he fought against Hazael king of Syria. And ²Ahaziah
 the son of Jehoram king of Judah went down to see Joram the son of
 Ahab in Jezreel, because he *was* ¹¹sick.
 9 AND Elisha the prophet called one of the ^achildren of the prophets,
 and said unto him, ⁶Gird up thy loins, and take this box of oil in thine
 2 hand, ^cand go to Ramoth-gilead: and when thou comest thither, look
 out there Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat, the son of Nimshi, and go in,
 and make him arise up from among his brethren, and carry him to an

B. C. 892.
^m 2 Chr. 21. 3.
 4.
⁴ reigned.
 Began to
 reign in
 consort
 with his
 Father.
ⁿ 2 Chr. 21. 5.
^o 2 Sam. 7. 13.
 1 Ki. 11. 56.
⁵ candle, or,
 lamp.
 Ps. 132. 17.
⁷ Gen. 27. 40.
 ch. 3. 27.
 2 Chr. 21. 6-
 10.
⁹ 1 Ki. 22. 47.
⁶ And so
 fulfilled,
 Gen. 27. 40.
⁷ Josh. 21.13.
 2 Chr. 21.10.
⁷ Called,
 Azariah,
 2 Chr. 22. 6,
 and
 Jehoahaz,
 2 Chr. 21.17.
⁸ 2 Chr. 21. 2.
⁸ Or, grand-
 daughter:
 ver. 18.
⁹ 2 Chr. 22. 7.
¹⁰ ch. 9. 15.
⁹ wherewith
 the Syrians
 had
 wounded
¹⁰ Ramoth,
 ver. 18.
¹¹ 2 Chr. 22. 6.
¹¹ wounded.
 CHAP. 9.
^a 1 Ki. 23. 35.
^b Jer. 1. 17.
^c ch. 8. 28.

Harmer) doubtful that Hazael purposely murdered the king. It is common for Eastern people to sleep with their faces covered with a mosquito net, and in some cases of fever they damp the bed clothes. Hazael, aware of those chilling remedies being usually resorted to, might have, with an honest intention, spread a refreshing cover over him; or Ben-hadad, encouraged by the report of Elisha's answer, might do it himself, and a sudden chill being produced, the act might have become unexpectedly fatal. The rapid occurrence of the king's death and immediate burial were favourable to Hazael's instant elevation to the throne.

16-23.—JEHORAM'S WICKED REIGN.
 16. Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat . . . began to reign—(see on ch. iii. 1.) His father resigned the throne to him two years before his death. 18. daughter of Ahab—Athaliah, through whose influence Jehoram introduced the worship of Baal and many other evils into the kingdom of Judah (see 2 Chr. xxi. 2-20). This apostasy would have led to the total extinction of the royal family in that kingdom, had it not been for the divine promise to David, (2 Sam. vii.) A national chastisement, however, was inflicted on Judah by the

revolt of Edom, which, being hitherto governed by a tributary ruler (ch. iii. 9; 1 Ki. xxii. 47), erected the standard of independence (see on 2 Chr. xxi. 9).

24.—AHAZIAH SUCCEEDS HIM.
 24. Ahaziah his son reigned in his stead—(see on 2 Chr. xxii. 1-6.)

CHAP. IX. 1-23.—Jehu is ANOINTED.
 1. Elisha . . . called one of the children of the prophets. This errand referred to the last commission given to Elijah in Horeb (1 Ki. xix. 16), box of oil [יָרֵךְ, called a "vial," 1 Sam. x. 1, and "horn," 1 Sam. xvi. 1; Septuagint, τὸν φακόν, the vessel, in the shape of a lentil.] Ramoth-gilead—a city of great importance to the Hebrew people, east of Jordan, as a fortress of defence against the Syrians. Jehoram had regained it (ch. viii. 29); but the Israelitish army was still encamped there, under the command of Jehu. 2. look out there Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat, the son of Nimshi. It appears from this that he was the grandson of Nimshi, though in a loose sense he is commonly styled his "son" (v. 20; 1 Ki. xix. 16; cf. Matt. i. 1). carry him to

3 ¹inner chamber; then ^atake the box of oil, and pour *it* on his head, and say, Thus saith the LORD, I have anointed thee king over Israel. Then
 4 open the door and flee, and tarry not. So the young man, *even* the young man the prophet, went to Ramoth-gilead.
 5 And when he came, behold, the captains of the host *were* sitting; and he said, I have an errand to thee, O captain. And Jehu said, Unto
 6 which of all us? And he said, To thee, O captain. And he arose, and went into the house; and he poured the oil on his head, and said unto him, ^eThus saith the LORD God of Israel, I have anointed thee king over
 7 the people of the LORD, *even* over Israel. And thou shalt smite the house of Ahab thy master, that ^fI may avenge the blood of my servants the prophets, and the blood of all the servants of the LORD, ^gat the hand of
 8 Jezebel. For the whole house of Ahab shall perish: and ^hI will cut off from Ahab ⁱhim that pisseth against the wall, and him ^jthat is shut up
 9 and left in Israel. And I will make the house of Ahab like the house of ^kJeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of ^lBaasha the son of
 10 Ahijah: and ^mthe dogs shall eat Jezebel in the portion of Jezreel, and *there shall be none to bury her*. And he opened the door, and fled.
 11 Then Jehu came forth to the servants of his lord: and *one* said unto him, *Is all well?* wherefore came ⁿthis mad fellow to thee? And he said
 12 unto them, Ye know the man, and his communication. And they said, *It is false; tell us now*. And he said, Thus and thus spake he to me,
 13 saying, Thus saith the LORD, I have anointed thee king over Israel. Then they hasted, and ^otook every man his garment, and put *it* under him on
 14 the top of the stairs, and blew with trumpets, saying, Jehu ²is king! So Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat the son of Nimshi conspired against Joram.
 (Now Joram had kept Ramoth-gilead, he and all Israel, because of Hazael
 15 king of Syria: but ^pking ³Joram was returned to be healed in Jezreel of the wounds which the Syrians ⁴had given him, when he fought with Hazael king of Syria.)
 And Jehu said, If it be your minds, *then* ⁵let none go forth *nor* escape

B. C. 884.
 1 chamber in a chamber
^d 1 Ki. 19. 16.
^e 1 Sam. 2. 7.
^f 2 Chr. 22. 7.
^g Ps. 54. 10, 11.
^h Ps. 116. 15.
ⁱ 1 Ki. 18. 4.
^j 1 Ki. 21. 15.
^k 1 Ki. 14. 10.
^l 1 Ki. 21. 21.
^m Ps. 76. 8-10, 12.
ⁿ Ps. 110. 5
^o 1 Sam. 25. 22.
^p Deut. 31. 36.
^q 1 Ki. 14. 10.
^r 1 Ki. 16. 3.
^s 1 Ki. 21. 23.
^t Jer. 15. 3.
^u Jer. 22. 19.
^v Jer. 36. 10.
^w Jer. 49. 56.
^x Hos. 9. 7.
^y John 10. 10.
^z 1 Cor. 4. 10.
^{aa} Matt. 21. 7.
^{ab} Mark 11. 7, 8.
^{ac} reigneth.
^{ad} ch. 8. 29.
^{ae} 2 Chr. 27. 6.
^{af} Jehoram.
^{ag} smote.
^{ah} let no escape nor go, etc.

an inner chamber [חֲבֵר בְּתוֹךְ, a chamber within a chamber (see 1 Ki. xx. 30); Septuagint, *eis τὸ ταμείου ἐν ταμείῳ*—both to ensure the safety of the messenger and to prevent all obstruction in the execution of the business. 3. I have anointed thee king over Israel. This was only a part of the message, the full announcement of which is given, *vv.* 7-10. *flee, and tarry not*—for fear of being surprised and overtaken by the spies or servants of the court. 4. So the young man . . . went to Ramoth-gilead. His ready undertaking of this delicate and hazardous mission was an eminent proof of his piety and obedience.
 5. he said, I have an errand to thee, O captain [שָׂרָא, prince, leader; Septuagint, *ὁ ἀρχόν*]. The words used here, both in the Hebrew text and in the Septuagint, are different from what is rendered “captain,” *v.* 25. The act of anointing being done through a commissioned prophet was a divine intimation of his investiture with the sovereign power; but it was sometimes done long prior to the actual possession of the throne (1 Sam. xvi. 13); and in like manner the commission bad in this instance been given also a long time before to Elijah, who, for good reasons, left it in charge to Elisha, and he waited God’s time and command for executing it. 10. in the portion of Jezreel—*i. e.*, that had formerly been the vineyard of Naboth.
 11. Is all well? Jehu’s attendants knew that the stranger belonged to the order of the prophets

by his garb, gestures, and form of address; and soldiers like them very readily concluded such persons to be crack-brained, not only from the sordid negligence of their personal appearance, and their open contempt of the world, but from the religious pursuits in which their whole lives were spent, and the grotesque actions which they frequently performed (cf. 1 Sam. xix. 24; Jer. xxix. 26). 13. hasted, and took every man his garment. The upper cloak, which they spread on the ground as a token of their homage to their distinguished commander (Matt. xxi. 7). top of the stairs—from the room where the prophet had privately anointed Jehu. That general returned to join his brother officers in the public apartment, who, immediately on learning his destined elevation, conducted him to the top of the stairs leading to the roof, and which was the most conspicuous place of an Oriental structure that could be chosen, being at the very top of the gate-building, and fully in view of the people and military in the open ground in front of the building (*Kittō*). The popularity of Jehu with the army thus favoured the designs of Providence in procuring his immediate and enthusiastic proclamation as king; and the top of the stairs was taken as a most convenient substitute for a throne. 14. Joram had kept Ramoth-gilead—rather, was keeping, guarding, or besieging it, with the greater part of the military force of Israel, which, owing to his wounds having compelled the king’s retirement from the scene of action, was left in command of Jehu.

16 out of the city to go to tell *it* in Jezreel. So Jehu rode in a chariot, and went to Jezreel; for Joram lay there. And Ahaziah king of Judah was come down to see Joram. And there stood a watchman on the tower in Jezreel, and he spied the company of Jehu as he came, and said, I see a company. And Joram said, Take an horseman, and send to meet them, and let him say, *Is it* peace? So there went one on horseback to meet him, and said, Thus saith the king, *Is it* peace? And Jehu said, What hast thou to do with peace? turn thee behind me. And the watchman told, saying, The messenger came to them, but he cometh not again. Then he sent out a second on horseback, which came to them, and said, Thus saith the king, *Is it* peace? And Jehu answered, What hast thou to do with peace? turn thee behind me. And the watchman told, saying, He came even unto them, and cometh not again: and the ⁶driving *is* like the driving of Jehu the son of Nimshi; for he driveth ⁷furiously. And Joram said, ⁸Make ready. And his chariot was made ready. And ⁹Joram king of Israel and Ahaziah king of Judah went out, each in his chariot, and they went out against Jehu, and ⁹met him in the portion of Naboth the Jezreelite.

22 And it came to pass, when Joram saw Jehu, that he said, *Is it* peace, Jehu? And he answered, What peace, ²so long as the whoredoms of thy mother Jezebel and her witchcrafts *are so many*? And Joram turned his hands, and fled, and said to Ahaziah, *There is* treachery, O Ahaziah.

24 And Jehu ¹⁰drew a bow with his full strength, and smote Jehoram between his arms, and the arrow went out at his heart, and he ¹¹sunk down in his

B. C. 84.
⁶ Or, marching. Hab 1. 6. Hab 3. 12.
⁷ in madness
⁸ Bind. 1 Ki. 20. 11. ch. 8. 29. ch. 10. 13. 14.
² Chr. 22. 7.
⁹ found Num 23. 14.
⁷ 1 Ki. 16. 20. 23.
 1 Ki. 18. 4. 1 Ki. 19. 1. Isa 47. 9. 12.
 Nah. 3. 4. Rev. 2. 10. Rev. 17. 1-5.
 Rev. 18. 3. 9. 23.
¹⁰ fi led his hand with a bow.
¹¹ bowed.

16. So Jehu rode in a chariot, and went to Jezreel. Full of ambitious designs, he immediately proceeded to cross the Jordan to execute his commission on the house of Ahab. 17. a watchman on the tower in Jezreel [על-המגדל]. The Migdol was distinguished by its elevation; and not only was it frequently connected with towers, but in the East with royal residences. The Hebrew palaces, besides being situated on hills, had usually towers attached to them, not only for the pleasure of a fine prospect, but as posts of useful observation. A sentinel was always stationed there, not only as a guard of honour to the king in time of peace, but to prevent his being surprised in time of war. The ancient watch-tower of Jezreel must have commanded a view of the whole region eastward, nearly down to the Jordan. Beth-shan stands on a rising-ground about six or seven miles distant below it, in a narrow part of the plain; and when Jehu and his retinue reached that point between Gilboa and Beth-shan, they would be fully descried by the watchman on the tower, a report being made to Joram in his palace below. A messenger on horseback is quickly despatched down into the plain to meet the ambiguous host, and question the object of their approach. Is it peace? The appearance of an officer from the camp at Ramoth naturally caused anxiety. We may safely assume that this messenger would meet Jehu at the distance of three miles or more. On the report made of his being detained, and turned into the rear of the still advancing troops, a second messenger is in like manner despatched, who would naturally meet Jehu at the distance of a mile or a mile and a half down on the plain. He also being turned into the rear, the watchman now distinctly perceived 'the driving to be like the driving of Jehu, the son of Nimshi; for he driveth furiously, [in] madness. The Septuagint has εν παραλαλῶν; but Josephus ('Antiquities,' b. ix., ch. vi., sec. 3) says, 'He marched slowly, and in good

order.' He seems to have been attended by an escort of cavalry. The alarmed monarch, now awakened to a sense of his impending danger, quickly summons his forces to meet the crisis, and accompanied by Ahaziah, king of Judah, who had come to enquire respecting his uncle Joram's wound, the two sovereigns ascend their chariots. 21. and they went out against Jehu [נצתו], to meet Jehu; Septuagint, εις ἀπαντην]—to ascertain the cause of his journey, whether it was occasioned by any military disaster, or if he harboured any unlawful design, to take immediate measures for repressing sedition. As the two monarchs were driving out, Jehu, who continued advancing with impetuous onset, quickly ascended from the plain up the steep northern sides of the site on which Jezreel stood, and met [נצתו], found] him (the king) in 'the portion of Naboth the Jezreelite.'

22. When Joram saw Jehu... he said, Is it peace, Jehu? Till that moment Joram had no apprehension of danger; but the defiant tone of Jehu, the obloquy cast upon the king's mother, and the outburst of national indignation against her foul idolatries, which through him was about to discharge itself, showed at once both the nature and the gravity of the crisis [נצתו], whoredoms (spiritually), idolatries; ידעו, sorceries; Septuagint, φαρμακα]. 23. Joram turned his hands—i. e., the reins of his chariot-steed, and exclaiming to his royal companion, 'Treason!' prepared for flight homeward. 24. Jehu drew a bow with his full strength [נצתו], filled his hand with the bow]—i. e., drew it out to its utmost bent, to give greater impetus to the arrow (cf. Zech. ix. 13). and smote Jehoram between his arms [Septuagint, ἀνὰ μέσων τῶν βραχιόνων αὐτοῦ, betwixt the shoulders]. Many of the ancient chariots were open behind. The king was wounded in the heart, and expired immediately.—All well-informed and observant travellers have been impressed with the manifest accuracy of the sacred historian; the loca-

25 chariot. Then said *Jehu* to Bidkar his captain, 'Take up, *and* cast him in the portion of the field of Naboth the Jezreelite: for remember how that, when I and thou rode together after Ahab his father, ²the LORD laid
 26 this burden upon him; surely I have seen yesterday the ¹²blood of Naboth, and the blood of his sons, saith the LORD; and 'I will requite thee in this ¹³plat, saith the LORD. Now therefore take *and* cast him into the plat of ground, according to the word of the LORD.
 27 But when Ahaziah the king of Judah saw *this*, he fled by the way of the garden house. And Jehu followed after him, and said, Smite him also in the chariot. *And they did so* at the going up to Gur, which *is* by
 28 Ibleam: and he fled to ¹⁴Megiddo, and died there. And his servants carried him in a chariot to Jerusalem, and buried him in his sepulchre
 29 with his fathers in the city of David. And in the eleventh year of Joram the son of Ahab began Ahaziah to reign ¹⁴over Judah.
 30 And when Jehu was come to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it; ¹⁵and she ¹⁵painted her face, and tired her head, and looked out at a window.
 31 And as Jehu entered in at the gate, she said, ¹⁶'Had Zimri peace, who slew
 32 his master? And he lifted up his face to the window, and said, Who *is* on my side? who? And there looked out to him two or three ¹⁶eunuchs.
 33 And he said, Throw her down. So they threw her down: and *some* of her blood was sprinkled on the wall, and on the horses: and he trode her
 34 under foot. And when he was come in, he did eat and drink, and said, Go, see now ¹⁷this cursed woman, and bury her; for ¹⁷she *is* a king's
 35 daughter. And they went to bury her; but they found no more of her
 36 than the skull, and the feet, and the palms of *her* hands. Wherefore

B C. 831.
 * 1 Ki 21. 29.
 Nah. 1. 1.
 12 bloods.
 † 1 Ki. 21. 19.
 13 Or,
 portion.
 † 2 Chr 22. 9.
 14 as Viceroy to his
 Father in his sickness,
 2 Chr. 21. 13.
 But in Joram's 14th year he began to reign alone,
 ch. 8. 2;
 † Eze. 27. 43.
 15 put her eyes in painting.
 † 1 Ki. 16. 9-20.
 16 Or,
 chamber-lains.
 † Pro. 10. 7.
 Isa. 65. 15.
 † 1 Ki. 16. 31.

lities and distances being such as seem naturally to be required by the incidents related, affording just time for the transactions to have occurred in the order in which they are recorded. 25. Then said Jehu to Bidkar his captain [בִּדְקָר, contraction for בִּדְקָר בֶּן, son of stabbing; בֶּן, third man (see on Exod. xiv. 7; xv. 1); Septuagint, τὸν τριτοτάτην αὐτοῦ], remember how that, when I and thou rode together after Ahab his father [בְּרִידָה בְּיָמַי, riding in yoke, pair-wise, behind Ahab; Septuagint, ἐπιβεβηκότες ἐπὶ ζεύγη ὀπίσω; Josephus ('Antiquities,' b. ix., ch. vi., sec. 3), as we sat behind in the chariot of Ahab.] cast him in the portion of the field, &c.—according to the doom pronounced by Divine authority on Ahab (1 Ki. xxi. 19), but which on his repentance was deferred, to be executed on his son. 26. the blood of Naboth, and the blood of his sons. Although their death is not expressly mentioned, it is plainly implied in the confiscation of his property (see on 1 Ki. xxi. 16). I will requite thee in this plat. It was not from any preconceived design on the part of Jehu that the descendants of Ahab were killed in the very place where the blood of Naboth had been wickedly shed; for he unexpectedly met Joram in the portion of Naboth. Jehu put his captain in mind of the prophecy, and it seems from his mentioning it, to have remained, at the distance of twenty-five years, as vividly impressed on his own memory as on the day when the denunciation of the prophet was uttered.

27-35.—AHAZIAH IS SLAIN.
 27. Ahaziah—was grand-nephew to king Joram, and great-grandson to king Ahab. Jehu . . . said, Smite him also in the chariot. It is remarkable that the vengeance threatened was brought on the house of Ahab at the very time that the king of Judah was on a visit to Joram, that he might partake of the punishment, as being a descendant of the wicked Ahab. It was by an unexpected

concurrence of circumstances that this took place. Joram having been wounded in fighting against the Syrians at Ramah, it was providentially ordered that he should go to Jezreel rather than to Samaria, to be healed of his wounds. Thither his relative Ahaziah had come to visit him, while lying disabled in that place. There is no evidence that Jehu fixed on this time from a wish to include the king of Judah in the punishment of Ahab's family. It does not even appear that Jehu was aware of Ahaziah's being then at Jezreel. All was the result of God's immutable purpose, and accomplished by a wonderful operation of His providence. Ibleam—near Megiddo, in the tribe of Issachar (Josh. xvii. 11; Judg. i. 27), and Gur was an adjoining hill.

30. Jezebel . . . painted her face [בָּרָמָה, her eyes; בָּרָמָה, in the painting; 'put her eyes in the painting,' according to a custom universal in the East amongst women, of staining the eyelids with stibium, the sulphuret of antimony, a black powder, mixed with oil, called in Syria, Egypt, and Persia, *kohl*, and applied with a small brush or blunt probe of wood, ivory, or silver, on the border, so that by this dark liniment on the edge, the arch of the eyebrow is darkened and elongated, the largeness as well as the lustre of the eye itself was thought to be increased, and the natural beauty of the countenance supposed to be heightened by the effects of contrast. This practice existed in early times, as is proved by the ancient monuments of Egypt and the *kohl* vessels and probes found in the tombs (*Lane's* 'Egypt,' i., 42; cf. Job xlii. 14; Jer. iv. 30; Ezek. xxii. 40; *Xenophon*, 'Cyrop,' i., 15; *Pliny*, 'Natural History,' xi., 37; *Juvenal*, 'Satires,' ii., 93). Jezebel's object was, by her royal attire, not to captivate, but to overawe Jehu. 35. found no more of her than the skull, &c. The dog has a rooted aversion to prey on the human hands and feet. On Jehu's assumption of the royal authority,

- they came again, and told him. And he said, This *is* the word of the LORD, which he spake ¹⁷by his servant Elijah the Tishbite, saying, ²In the portion of Jezreel shall dogs eat the flesh of Jezebel: and the carcase of Jezebel shall be ^aas dung upon the face of the field in the portion of Jezreel; so that they shall not say, This *is* Jezebel.
- 10 AND Ahab had seventy sons in Samaria. And Jehu wrote letters, and sent to Samaria, unto the ^arulers of Jezreel, to the elders, and to ¹them that brought up Ahab's children, saying, Now as ^bsoon as this letter cometh to you, seeing your master's sons *are* with you, and *there are* with you chariots and horses, a fenced city also, and armour; look even out the best and meetest of your master's sons, and set *him* on his father's throne, and fight for your master's house. But they were exceedingly afraid, and said, Behold, ^ctwo kings stood not before him: how then shall we stand? And he that *was* over the house, and he that *was* over the city, the elders also, and the bringers-up of the children, sent to Jehu, saying, We ^dare thy servants, and will do all that thou shalt bid us; we will not make any king: do thou *that which is* good in thine eyes.
- 6 Then he wrote a letter the second time to them, saying, If ye *be* ^emine, and if ye will hearken unto my voice, take ye the heads of the men your master's sons, and come to me to Jezreel by to-morrow this time. Now the king's sons, *being* seventy persons, *were* with the great men of the city,
- 7 which brought them up. And it came to pass, when the letter came to them, that they took the king's sons, and ^fslew seventy persons, and put 8 their heads in baskets, and sent *him them* to Jezreel. And there came a messenger, and told him, saying, They have brought the heads of the king's sons. And he said, Lay ye them in two heaps at the entering in

B. C. 884.

¹⁷ by the hand of.
 Lev. 8 36.
 2 Sam 12. 25.
 ch 11. 1, 55.
 Nah 1. 2.
 Heb. 10. 30.
² 1 Ki. 21. 53.
^a Pa. 83. 10.
 Eccl. 6. 3.
 Isa. 14. 15, 20.
 Jer. 8. 2.
 Jer. 17. 4.
 Jer. 22. 10.
 Jer. 36. 30.

CHAP. 10.
^a Deut. 16. 18.
¹ nourishers.
^b ch. 5. 6.
^c ch. 9. 24, 27.
 Luke 11. 3.
^d Josh. 9, 11, 21, 25.
 1 Ki. 10. 1.
² for me.
^e Ex. 20. 5.
 Josh. 7. 24.
 Job 21. 19.
 Rev. 2. 26-23.
^f 1 Ki. 21. 21.

he commanded the palace attendants of Jezebel to throw her out of the open lattice from which she was observing the entrance of the regicide. Having spent some time in taking refreshments, he began to talk over the events of the day, particularly the tragic end of Jezebel, and apprehending that he had treated her with an indignity unbecoming her royal rank, he gave orders that her remains should receive a burial suitable to the station of one who had been the daughter, wife, and mother of a king. But his servants, on approaching the scene of the fatal catastrophe, "found no more of her than the skull, and the feet, and the palms of her hands." It is evident from the history that Jehu had no design to co-operate in the confirmation of prophecy. For till he received this information, he had no recollection of the sentence pronounced against her. Then, indeed, it occurred to his mind.

36, 37.—JEZEBEL EATEN BY DOGS.
 36. he said, This is the word of the Lord—(see 1 Ki. xxi. 23.) Jehu's statement, however, was not a literal, but a paraphrased quotation of Elijah's prophecy.

CHAP. X. 1-17.—Jehu causes seventy of Ahab's children to be beheaded.

1. Ahab had seventy sons in Samaria. As it appears (v. 13) that grandsons are included, it is probable that this number comprehended the whole posterity of Ahab. Their being all assembled in that capital might arise from their being left there on the king's departure for Ramoth-gilead, or from their taking refuge in some of the strongholds of that city on the news of Jehu's conspiracy. Jehu wrote letters, and sent to Samaria, unto the rulers of Jezreel. [The Septuagint has *πρὸς τοὺς ἀρχοντας Σαμαρείας*, which is probably the correct reading.] It may be inferred from the tenor of Jehu's letters that their first intention was to select the fittest of the royal family and set him up as king; or

perhaps this challenge of Jehu was designed as a stroke of policy on his part to elicit their views, and try whether they were inclined to be pacific or hostile. The bold character of the man, and the rapid success of his conspiracy terrified the civic authorities of Samaria and Jezreel into submission. 5. he that was over the house—the governor or chamberlain of the palace. the bringers-up of the children. Anciently, and still, also, in many Eastern countries, the principal grandees were charged with the support and education of the royal princes. This involved a heavy expense, which they were forced to bear, but for which they endeavoured to find some compensation in the advantages of their connection with the court.

6. take ye the heads of the men your master's sons. The barbarous practice of a successful usurper slaughtering all who may have claim to the throne, has been frequently exemplified in the ancient and modern histories of the East. 8. Lay ye them in two heaps, &c. The exhibition of the heads of enemies in the East in ancient times always was considered a glorious trophy. Sometimes a pile of heads was erected at the gate of the palace, and a head of peculiarly striking appearance selected to grace the summit of the pyramid. On the sculptures at Khorsabad, Kouyunjik, and Nimroud, eunuchs are seen collecting the heads of the slain, and writing down the number ('Nineveh and its Remains,' ii., p. 377). This mode of reckoning the loss of an enemy was long practised in the East; but the Egyptians generally counted by hands, and Saul, at least in one instance, fixed upon another part of the body as a trophy (1 Sam. xviii. 25, 27). The heads of Abaziah's brethren are described as piled up in two heaps at the entrance gate of Samaria; and such trophies are still laid at the gates of Eastern cities. At the principal entrance to the Sultan's palace in Constantinople there are niches appro-

- 9 of the gate until the morning. And it came to pass in the morning, that he went out, and stood, and said to all the people, *Ye be righteous: behold, I conspired against my master, and slew him; but who slew all these?*
- 10 Know now that there shall ^hfall unto the earth nothing of the word of the LORD, which the LORD spake concerning the house of Ahab: for
- 11 the LORD hath done *that* which he spake ³by his servant Elijah. So Jehu slew all that remained of the house of Ahab in Jezreel, and all his great men, and his ⁴kinsfolks, and his ⁴priests, until he left him none remaining.
- 12 And he arose and departed, and came to Samaria: *and* as he *was* at
- 13 the ⁵shearing house in the way, Jehu ⁶met ^jwith the brethren of Ahaziah king of Judah, and said, *Who are ye?* And they answered, *We are the brethren of Ahaziah; and we go down ⁷to salute the children of the king*
- 14 and the children of the queen. And he said, *Take them alive.* And they took them alive, and slew them at the pit of the shearing house, *even* two and forty men; neither left he any of them.
- 15 And when he was departed thence, he ⁸lighted on ^kJehonadab the son of ^lRechab *coming* to meet him; and he ⁹saluted him, and said to him, *Is thine heart right, as my heart is with thy heart?* And Jehonadab answered, *It is. If it be, ^mgive me thine hand.* And he gave *him* his
- 16 hand; and he took him up to him into the chariot. And he said, *Come with me, and see my ⁿzeal for the LORD.* So they made him ride in his chariot.
- 17 And when he came to Samaria, ^ohe slew all that remained unto Ahab in Samaria, till he had ²destroyed him, according to the saying of the LORD, ^awhich he spake to Elijah.

B. C. 84.
^o ch. 9. 14. 24.
 Hos. 1. 4.
^h 1 Sam. 3. 19.
 Ps. 33. 11.
 Ps. 119. 89.
 Isa. 11. 27.
³ by the hand of.
 1 Ki. 21. 19.
 21. 29.
⁴ Or, acquaint-
 -ance.
^l 1 Ki. 18. 19.
⁵ house of shepherds
 binding sheep.
⁶ found.
^j ch. 8. 29
 2 Chr. 22. 8.
⁷ to the p:ace of, etc.
⁸ found.
^k Jer. 31. 6
^l 1 Chr. 2. 15.
^m blessed.
ⁿ Ezra 10. 19.
^o 1 Ki. 19. 10.
^o ch. 9. 8.
^p Mal. 4. 1-7.
^q 1 Ki. 21. 21.

priated to this purpose; but when there is a large number of heads, two pyramids are formed of them at each side of the gate. The same practice prevails extensively throughout Asia, particularly in Persia. Oriental conquerors, ambitious of a permanent monument of glory, sometimes erect pillars, or triumphal arches, which are inlaid at the arches, or other conspicuous parts, with heads of the king or generals of the enemy. Several of these pillars exist in Turkey and Persia, particularly in the gateways of Bagdad, where such monuments were at a comparatively recent period raised with the heads of 200 Khezail Arabs, captured by the pasha. Such barbarous usages are revolting to humanity; but we need not wonder at their prevalence in the ancient and modern East, when we remember that almost down to the beginning of the present century, gibbeting the corpses of criminals was practised in many parts of this country. 9. said to all the people, *Ye be righteous, &c.* A great concourse was assembled to gaze on this novel and ghastly spectacle. The speech which Jehu addressed to the spectators was artfully framed to impress their minds with the idea that so wholesale a massacre, done without his order or connivance, was the secret result of the Divine judgment denounced on the house of Ahab; and the effect of it was to prepare the public mind for hearing, without horror, of a similar revolting tragedy which was soon after perpetrated—viz. the extinction of all the influential friends and supporters of the dynasty of Ahab, including those of the royal house of Judah.

12. at the shearing house [גִּישׁוֹרֵי עֵקֶר דְּרֵיעִים]—house of shepherds binding (shearing) sheep; or it may be a proper name, Beth-heked-rohim. 13. We are the brethren of Ahaziah—i. e., not full, but step-brothers, sons of Jehoram by various concubines. Ignorant of the revolution that had

taken place, they were travelling to Samaria on a visit to their royal relatives of Israel, when they were seized and put to death from the apprehension that they might probably stimulate and strengthen the party that still remained faithful in their allegiance to Ahab's dynasty. children of the queen—i. e., of the queen-mother, or regent, Jezebel. 14. slew them at the pit of the shearing house [בְּיַם־הַבְּרִיחַ]—at the pit (Gen. xxxvii. 20) of Beth-heked-rohim.

15. Jehonadab the son of Rechab—(see on 1 Chr. ii. 55.) A person who, from his piety and simple primitive manner of life (Jer. xxxv.), was highly esteemed, and possessed great influence in the country. Jehu saw in a moment the advantage that his cause would gain from the friendship and countenance of this venerable man in the eyes of the people, and accordingly paid him the distinguished attention of inviting him to a seat in his chariot. give me thine hand—not simply to aid him in getting up, but for a far more significant and important purpose, the giving, or rather joining hands, being the recognized mode of striking a league or covenant (cf. Prov. vi. 1; xi. 15), as well as of testifying fealty to a new sovereign; accordingly, 'it is said' he (Jehonadab) gave him (Jehu) his hand. 16. he said, Come . . . and see my zeal for the Lord. It was Jehu's policy, by extirpating the Baal idolatry, to re-establish the calf-symbols; and he boasts of making him by such a course a zealot for the honour of Jehovah. This is a confirmation of what was said respecting Jeroboam's innovation (see on 1 Ki. xii. 28-30), that 'the defection of Israel did not consist in rejecting Jehovah as a false god, or in renouncing the law of Moses as a false religion, but in joining foreign worship and idolatrous ceremonies to the ritual of the true God' (Warburton, 'Divine Legation,' b. v., sec. 3).

18 And Jehu gathered all the people together, and said unto them, ⁷Ahab
 19 served Baal a little, *but* Jehu shall serve him much. Now therefore call
 unto me all ⁸the prophets of Baal, all his servants, and all his priests;
 let none be wanting; for I have a great sacrifice *to do* to Baal: whosoever
 shall be wanting, he shall not live. But Jehu did *it* in subtilty, to the
 20 intent that he might destroy the worshippers of Baal. And Jehu said,
 21 ¹⁰Proclaim a solemn assembly for Baal. And they proclaimed *it*. And
 Jehu sent through all Israel; and all the worshippers of Baal came, so
 that there was not a man left that came not. And they came into the
⁹house of Baal; and the house of Baal was ¹¹full from one end to another.
 22 And he said unto him that *was* over the vestry, Bring forth vestments
 for all the worshippers of Baal. And he brought them forth vestments.
 23 And Jehu went, and Jehonadab the son of Rechab, into the house of
 Baal, and said unto the worshippers of Baal, Search, and look that there
 be here with you none of the servants of the LORD, but the worshippers
 24 of Baal only. And when they went in to offer sacrifices and burnt offer-
 ings, Jehu appointed fourscore men without, and said, *If* any of the men
 whom I have brought into your hands escape, *he that letteth him go,* ¹²his
 life *shall be* for the life of him.
 25 And it came to pass, as soon as he had made an end of offering the
 burnt offering, that Jehu said to the guard and to the captains, Go in
 and slay them; let none come forth. And they smote them with ¹²the
 edge of the sword; and the guard and the captains cast *them* out,
 26 and went to the city of the house of Baal. And they brought forth the
 27 ¹³images out of the house of Baal, and burned them. And they brake
 down the image of Baal, and brake down the house of Baal, and ¹³made
 it a draught house unto this day.
 28, Thus Jehu destroyed Baal out of Israel. Howbeit *from* the sins of
 29 Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, Jehu departed not
 from after them, *to wit,* ¹⁴the golden calves that *were* in Beth-el, and that
were in Dan.
 30 And the LORD said unto Jehu, Because thou hast done well in execut-
 ing *that which is* right in mine eyes, *and* hast done unto the house of
 Ahab according to all that *was* in mine heart, ¹⁵thy children of the fourth
 31 *generation* shall sit on the throne of Israel. But Jehu ¹⁴took no ¹⁵heed
 to walk in the law of the LORD God of Israel with all his heart; for he
 departed not from ¹⁶the sins of Jeroboam, which made Israel to sin.

B. C. 864.
⁷ 1 Ki. 16. 31,
 32.
⁸ 1 Ki. 18. 19,
 24. 40.
 ch. 3. 2.
⁹ 1 Ki. 22. 6.
 ch. 3. 14.
¹⁰ Sanctify
¹¹ 1 Ki. 16. 31.
¹² Or, so full,
 that they
 stood
 mouth to
 mouth.
¹³ 1 Ki. 20. 39.
¹⁴ the
 mouth.
¹⁵ statues.
¹⁶ 1 Ki. 14. 23.
¹⁷ Ezra 6. 1.
 Dan. 2. 5
 Dan. 3. 23.
¹⁸ Ex. 32. 4.
¹⁹ 1 Ki. 12. 23.
 29.
 Hos. 8. 5,
 6.
 Hos. 10. 5.
 Hos. 13. 2.
²⁰ ch. 13. 1.
 ch. 14. 23.
 ch. 15. 8, 12.
²¹ ob served
 not.
²² Deut. 4. 15,
 23.
²³ 1 Ki. 2. 4.
 Pro. 4. 13.
²⁴ Lev. 26. 14,
 17.
 Deut. 28. 15.
²⁵ 1 Ki. 12. 30.
²⁶ 1 Ki. 13. 34.
²⁷ 1 Ki. 14. 16.
²⁸ 1 Ki. 15. 29,
 30, 34.
²⁹ 1 Ki. 16. 2,
 3, 26.

18-29.—HE DESTROYS THE WORSHIPPERS OF BAAL.

19. call unto me all the prophets of Baal. The votaries of Baal are here classified under the several titles of prophets, priests, and servants, or worshippers generally. They might be easily convened into one spacious temple, as their number had been greatly diminished both by the influential ministrations of Elijah and Elisha, and also from the late king Joram's neglect and discontinuance of the worship. Jehu's appointment of a solemn sacrifice in honour of Baal, and a summons to all his worshippers to join in its celebration, was a deep-laid plot, which he had resolved upon for their extinction. It was done, however, not from religious, but purely political motives, because he believed that the existence and interests of the Baalites were inseparably bound up with the dynasty of Ahab, and because he hoped that by their extermination he would secure the attachment of the far larger and more influential party who worshipped God in Israel. Jehonadab's concurrence must have been given in the belief of his being actuated solely by the highest principles of piety and zeal. 22. Bring forth vestments. The

priests of Baal were clad, probably, in robes of white byssus while they were engaged in the functions of their office, and these were kept under the care of an officer, in a particular wardrobe of Baal's temple. This treacherous massacre, and the means taken to accomplish it, are paralleled by the slaughter of the Janissaries and other terrible tragedies in the modern history of the East.

29. Howbeit from the sins of Jeroboam. Jehu had no intention of carrying his zeal for the Lord beyond a certain point, and as he considered it impolitic to encourage his subjects to travel to Jerusalem, he re-established the symbolic worship of the calves. Had Jehu resolved on putting the law into execution against idolaters (Dent. xvii. 2-5), instead of adopting the deceptive, cruel part he did, he would have acted the part of a constitutional king; and had he, in the integrity of his heart, prosecuted the work of religious reformation thus begun by demolishing images, and restoring the pure worship of Jehovah, it is probable that the national degeneracy might have been arrested, or at least retarded; but he deemed it expedient to follow the policy of Jeroboam in

32 In those days the LORD began ¹⁵ to cut Israel short: and ^a Hazael smote
33 them in all the coasts of Israel; from Jordan ¹⁶ eastward, all the land of
Gilead, the Gadites, and the Reubenites, and the Manassites, from Aroer,
which is by the river Arnon, ¹⁷ even ^b Gilead and Bashan.

34 Now the rest of the acts of Jehu, and all that he did, and all his might,
are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel?

35 And Jehu slept with his fathers: and they buried him in Samaria. And
36 Jehoahaz his son reigned in his stead. And ¹⁸ the time that Jehu reigned
over Israel in Samaria was twenty and eight years.

11 AND when ^a Athaliah ^b the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was
2 dead, she arose and destroyed all the ¹ seed royal. But ² Jehosheba, the
daughter of king Joram, sister of Ahaziah, took ³ Joash the son of Ahaziah,
and stole him from among the king's sons *which were* slain; and they hid
him, *even* him and his nurse, in the bed-chamber from Athaliah, so that
3 he was not slain. And he was with her hid in the house of the LORD six
years: and Athaliah did ^c reign over the land.

4 And ^a the seventh year Jehoiada sent and fetched the rulers over
hundreds, with the captains and the guard, and brought them to him into
the house of the LORD, and made a covenant with them, and took an oath

5 of them in the house of the LORD, and showed them the king's son. And
he commanded them, saying, *This is* the thing that ye shall do; A third
part of you that enter in ^e on the sabbath shall even be keepers of the

B. C. 869.

¹⁵ to cut off
the ends.^a ch. 8. 12.
ch. 13. 22.¹⁶ toward
the rising
of the sun.¹⁷ (r. even
to Gilead
and
Eshan.^b Amos 1. 3.
¹⁸ the days
were.

CHAP. 11.

^a 2 Chr. 22 10.^b ch. 8. 26.¹ seed of the
kingdom.² 2 Chr. 22. 11.
Jehosha-
beth.³ Cr.
Jehoash.^c Ps. 12. 8.^d 2 Chr. 23. 1.^e 1 Chr. 9. 23.

reviving the calf-symbols at Beth-el and Dan, and in so doing, he showed himself unequal to the demands of the time; he failed to realize the ends for which he had been anointed king.

32. In those days the Lord began to cut Israel short. The national calamities to which allusion is made were occasioned, it is supposed, by the cause about to be mentioned. Jehu, shortly after his obtaining possession of the Israelitish throne, thought to strengthen his interests by courting alliance with Assyria; and accordingly he sent presents to Divanubara, who, according to *Sir H. Rawlinson*, was at that time the reigning monarch. This movement of Jehu gave deep umbrage to his northern neighbour, Hazael, the king of Syria, who, jealous of the interference of the Assyrian rulers in his vicinity, declared war against Jehu; and by many successful attacks on the outlying provinces of Israel, made serious inroads on the territory of that kingdom (see on ch. xiv. 25). That the king of Assyria received tribute from Jehu is well known from the black obelisk, where he is called 'son of Khūmri' (Omri). Jehu might have been descended from Omri on the mother's side. But the subsequent discovery of a short inscription of Shalmaneser II., king of Assyria, proves that Jehu sent tribute to Assyria in the eighteenth year of his reign. But whether this was the first time or not is not said. The inscription on the Nimroud obelisk, which contains a representation of Israelites bringing tribute to Shalmaneser II., bears to be from Jehu, 'son of Omri'—i. e., descended from the founder of Samaria; and the tribute consisted of gold and silver specie, together with vases, rings, seals, and other articles of manufacture in the precious metals.

CHAP. XI. 1-3.—JEHOASH SAVED FROM ATHALIAH'S MASSACRE.

1. Athaliah—(see on 2 Chr. xxii. 2.) She had possessed great influence over her son, who, by her counsels, had ruled in the spirit of the house of Ahab. **destroyed all the seed royal**—all connected with the royal family who might have urged a claim on the throne, and who had escaped the murderous hands of Jehu (2 Chr. xxi. 2-4;

xxii. 1; ch. x. 13, 14). This massacre she was incited to perpetrate, partly from a determination not to let David's family outlive her's—partly as a measure of self-defence, to secure herself against the violence of Jehu, who was bent on destroying the whole of Ahab's posterity, to which she belonged (ch. viii. 13-26); but chiefly from personal ambition to rule, and a desire to establish the worship of Baal. Such was the sad fruit of the unequal alliance between the son of the pious Jehoshaphat and a daughter of the idolatrous and wicked house of Ahab. Athaliah's horrid policy of 'destroying all the seed royal' was carried on till lately at Constantinople, and is still practised at Bokhara (*Joseph Wolff's* 'Missionary Labours,' p. 493). 2. **Jehosheba**—or Jehoshabeath (2 Chr. xxii. 11). daughter of king Joram—not by Athaliah, but by a secondary wife. **stole him from among the king's sons which were slain**—either from among the corpses, he being considered dead, or out of the palace nursery. **hid him . . . in the bed-chamber**—for the use of the priests, which was in some part of the temple (v. 3), and of which Jehoiada and his wife had the sole charge. What is called, however, the bed-chamber in the East is not the kind of apartment that we understand by the name, but a small closet, into which are flung during the day the mattresses and other bedding materials spread on the floors or divans of the sitting-rooms at night. Such a 'chamber of beds,' or a lumber-room, was well suited to be a convenient place for the recovery of his wounds, and a hiding-place for the royal infant and his nurse.

4-12.—HE IS MADE KING.

4. **And the seventh year**—viz., of the reign of Athaliah and the rescue of Jehoash. **Jehoiada sent and fetched the rulers, &c.** He could scarcely have obtained such a general convocation except at the time, or on pretext, of a public and solemn festival. Having revealed to them the secret of the young king's preservation, and entered into a covenant with them for the overthrow of the tyrant, he then arranged with them the plan and time of carrying their plot into execution, (see on 2 Chr. xxii. 10-12; xxiii.) The con-

- 6 watch of the king's house; and a third part *shall be* at the gate of Sur; and a third part at the gate behind the guard: so shall ye keep the watch
- 7 of the house, ⁴that it be not broken down. And two ⁵parts of all you that go forth on the sabbath, *even* they shall keep the watch of the house
- 8 of the LORD about the king. And ye shall compass the king round about, every man with his weapons in his hand: and he that cometh within the ranges, let him be slain: and be ye with the king as he goeth out and as he cometh in.
- 9 And ⁶the captains over the hundreds did according to all *things* that Jehoiada the priest commanded: and they took every man his men that were to come in on the sabbath, with them that should go out on the sabbath, and came to Jehoiada the priest. And to the captains over hundreds did the priest give king David's ⁷spears and shields, that *were*
- 11 in the temple of the LORD. And the guard stood, every man with his weapons in his hand, round about the king, from the right ⁸corner of the temple to the left corner of the temple, *along* by the altar and the temple.
- 12 And he brought forth the king's son, and put the crown upon him, and *gave him* the ⁹testimony: and they made him king, and anointed him;
- 13 and they clapped their hands, and said, ¹⁰God save the king. And ¹¹when Athaliah heard the noise of the guard *and* of the people, she came to the
- 14 people into the temple of the LORD. And when she looked, behold, the king stood by ¹²a pillar, as the manner *was*, and the princes and the trumpeters by the king; and all ¹³the people of the land rejoiced, and blew with trumpets: and Athaliah rent her clothes, and cried, ¹⁴"Treason, treason!" But Jehoiada the priest commanded the captains of the hundreds, the officers of the host, and said unto them, Have her forth without the ranges: and him that followeth her kill with the sword. For the priest had said, Let her not be slain in the house of the
- 16 LORD. And they laid hands on her; and she went by the way by the which the horses came into the king's house: ¹⁵and there was she slain.

B. C. 878.

⁴ Or. from breaking up.⁵ ban's or, companies.⁶ 2 Chr. 13. 9.⁷ 2 Sam. 8. 7.

1 Chr 23. 26,

27.

2 Chr. 13. 9,

10.

⁸ shoulder.⁹ Ex. 25. 16.

Deut. 17. 14.

Ps. 19. 7.

Ps. 78. 5.

Isa. 8. 16.

¹⁰ Let the king live.

1 Sam. 10.

24.

¹¹ 2 Chr 23 11.¹² ch. 23. 3.

2 Chr. 6. 13.

2 Chr. 34. 31.

¹³ 1 Ki. 1. 39.

Fro. 29. 2.

Matt 21. 9.

Luke 19. 37.

Rev. 19. 1-7.

¹⁴ 1 Ki. 18. 17,

18.

ch. 9. 23.

¹⁵ Gen. 9. 6.

Ex. 21. 12,

14.

Lev. 21. 17.

Num 35 20.

Judg. 1. 7.

duct of Jehoiada, who acted the leading and chief part in this conspiracy, admits of an easy and full justification; for, while Athaliah was a usurper, and belonged to a race devoted by Divine denunciation to destruction, even his own wife had a better and stronger claim to the throne; the sovereignty of Judah had been divinely appropriated to the family of David, and therefore the young prince on whom it was proposed to confer the crown possessed an inherent right to it, of which a usurper could not deprive him. Moreover, Jehoiada was most probably the high priest, whose official duty it was to watch over the due execution of God's laws, and who, in his present movement, was encouraged and aided by the countenance and support of the chief authorities, both civil and ecclesiastical, in the country. In addition to all these considerations, he seems to have been directed by an impulse of the Divine Spirit, through the counsels and exhortations of the prophets of the time.

13-16.—ATHALIAH SLAIN.

13. Athaliah heard the noise. The profound secrecy with which the conspiracy had been conducted rendered the unusual acclamations of the vast assembled crowd the more startling, and roused the suspicions of the tyrant. into the temple of the Lord—i. e., the courts, which she was permitted to enter by Jehoiada's direction (v. 8), in order that she might be secured. 14. the king stood by a pillar—probably on a platform erected for that purpose (2 Chr. vi. 13). A seat placed near a column was reckoned an honourable

and distinguished position (ch. xxiii. 3; also *Homer*, 'Odyssey,' xxiii., 93,—

'The monarch, by a pillar high enthroned,
His eye withdrew, and fixed it on the ground.'—Porz.

15. without the ranges—i. e., fences, that the sacred place might not be stained with human blood. 16. she went the way by the which the horses came into the king's house. 'This is by no means the king's palace, as is generally supposed, but is evidently the royal stables, quite distant from the palace. The wicked usurper, Athaliah, was put to death at the Horse gate, near this edifice, by order of Jehoiada, the high priest. It would have been strange, indeed, after all the pains taken by Jehoiada to exclude her army from the temple, at the coronation of the young king, had they incurred the hazard of her rescue by sending her back over the bridge to her army, instead of taking her for execution in the opposite direction—to the desecrated valley of Kidron. But that this view is correct, we have the testimony of *Josephus* ("Antiquities," b. ix., ch. vii., sec. 2), who informs us that "Jehoiada called for the captains of hundreds, and commanded them to bring Athaliah to the valley of Kidron, and slay her there . . . Wherefore those that had the charge of her slaughter took hold of her, and led her to the gate of the king's mules, and slew her there." The gate of the king's mules is, no doubt, the Horse gate of the Scripture; and the Hippodrome is probably the king's (horse's) house, though this term, in its largest sense, would in-

- 17 And Jehoiada made ^aa covenant between the LORD and the king and the people, that they should be the LORD's people; ^obetween the king also
- 18 and the people. And all the people of the land went into the ²house of Baal, and brake it down; his altars and his images ²brake they in pieces thoroughly, and slew Mattan the priest of Baal before the altars. And
- 19 ⁷the priest appointed ⁸officers over the house of the LORD. And he took the rulers over hundreds, and the captains, and the guard, and all the people of the land; and they brought down the king from the house of the LORD, and came by the way of the gate of the guard to the king's
- 20 house. And he sat on the throne of the kings. And all ⁸the people of the land rejoiced, and the city was in quiet: and they slew Athaliah with the sword *beside* the king's house.
- 12 Seven years old *was* Jehoash when he began to reign. IN the seventh year of Jehu, ^aJehoash began to reign; and forty years reigned he in
- 2 Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Zibiah of Beer-sheba. And Jehoash did *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD all his days
- 3 wherein Jehoiada the priest instructed him. But ^bthe high places were not taken away; the people still sacrificed and burnt incense in the high places.
- 4 And Jehoash said to the priests, ^cAll the money of the ¹dedicated things that is brought into the house of the LORD, *even* the ^dmoney of every one that passeth *the account*, ²the money that every man is set at, *and* all the money that ³cometh into any man's heart to bring into the
- 5 house of the LORD, let the priests take *it* to them, every man of his acquaintance; and let them repair the breaches of the house, wheresoever any breach shall be found.
- 6 But it was *so, that* in the ⁴three and twentieth year of king Jehoash
- 7 ^ethe priests had not repaired the breaches of the house. Then king Jehoash called for Jehoiada the priest, and the *other* priests, and said unto them, Why repair ye not the breaches of the house? now therefore receive no *more* money of your acquaintance, but deliver it for the breaches of the house.

B. C. 878.
^a Deut. 29. 1.
^o 2 Sam. 5. 3.
^p ch. 10. 25.
^q Deut. 12. 3.
^r Judg. 6. 25. 28.
^s 2 Chr. 12. 17.
^t 2 Chr. 23. 18.
^u offices.
^v Esth. 3. 15. 16.
^w Pro. 11. 10.
^x 1 Pro. 23. 12-28.
 CHAP. 12.
^a 2 Chr. 24. 1.
^b 1 Ki. 15. 14.
^c 1 Ki. 21. 43.
^d ch. 14. 4.
^e ch. 22. 4.
^f holinesses, or, holy things.
^g Ex. 30. 13.
^h the money of the souls of his estimation.
ⁱ Lev. 27. 2.
^j ascendeth upon the heart of a man.
^k Ex. 35. 5.
^l 1 Chr. 29. 9.
^m twentieth year and third year.
ⁿ 2 Chr. 2. 5.

clude the race-ground attached, as well as the royal stables' (*Barclay's 'City of the Great King,' pp. 173, 174.*)

17.—JEHOIADA RESTORES GOD'S WORSHIP. 17. a covenant between the Lord and the king and the people. The covenant with the Lord was a renewal of the national covenant with Israel (Exod. xix.-xxiv.) "to be unto him a people of inheritance" (Deut. iv. 6; xxvii. 9). The covenant between the king and the people was the consequence of this, and by it the king bound himself to rule according to the divine law, while the people engaged to submit to give him allegiance as the Lord's anointed. The immediate fruit of this renewal of the covenant was the destruction of the temple, and the slaughter of the priests of Baal (see on ch. x. 27), the restoration of the pure worship of God in all its ancient integrity, and the establishment of the young king on the hereditary throne of Judah.

CHAP. XII. 1-18. — JEHOASH REIGNS WELL WHILE JEHOIADA LIVED.

2. Jehoash did that which was right in the sight of the Lord—so far as related to his outward actions and the policy of his government. But it is evident from the sequel of his history, that the rectitude of his administration was owing more to the salutary influence of his preserver and tutor, Jehoiada, than to the honest and sincere dictates of his own mind. 3. But the high places were not taken away. The popular fondness for the private and disorderly rites performed in the

groves and recesses of hills was so inveterate, that even the most powerful monarchs had been unable to accomplish their suppression; no wonder that, in the early reign of a young king, and after the gross irregularities that had been allowed during the mal-administration of Athaliah, the difficulty of putting an end to the superstitions associated with "the high places" was greatly increased.

4. Jehoash said to the priests, &c. There is here given an account of the measures which the young king took for repairing the temple by the levying of taxes. There are three sorts of money reckoned:—1. "The money of every one that passeth the account" (our translators have supplemented this word)—viz., half a shekel, as an offering to the Lord (Exod. xxx. 13). This money was destined for the temple, as it had been originally for the tabernacle. 2. "The money that every man (Hebrew, the souls, or persons) is set at"—i. e., the redemption-price of every one who had devoted himself or anything belonging to him to the Lord, and the amount of which was estimated according to certain rules (Lev. xxvii. 1-8). 3. Free-will or voluntary offerings made to the sanctuary. The first two were paid annually (see on 2 Chr. xxiv. 5).

7. Why repair ye not the breaches of the house? This mode of collection not proving so productive as was expected, the dilatoriness of the priests was the chief cause of the failure, and a new arrangement was proposed. A chest was

- 8 And the priests consented to receive no *more* money of the people,
 9 neither to repair the breaches of the house. But Jehoiada the priest
 took ¹a chest, and bored a hole in the lid of it, and set it beside the
 altar, on the right side as one cometh into the house of the LORD: and
 the priests that kept the ⁵door put therein all the money *that was* brought
 into the house of the LORD.
- 10 And it was so, when they saw that *there was* much money in the chest,
 that the king's ⁶scribe and the high priest came up, and they ⁷put up in
 bags, and told the money *that was* found in the house of the LORD.
- 11 And they gave the money, being told, into the hands of them that did
 the work, that had the oversight of the house of the LORD: and they
⁸laid it out to the carpenters and builders that wrought upon the house
 12 of the LORD, and to masons, and hewers of stone, and to buy timber and
 hewed stone to repair the breaches of the house of the LORD, and for all
 13 that ⁹was laid out for the house to repair *it*. Howbeit there were not
 made for the house of the LORD bowls of silver, snuffers, basins, trumpets,
 any vessels of gold, or vessels of silver, of the money *that was* brought
 14 into the house of the LORD: but they gave that to the workmen, and
 15 repaired therewith the house of the LORD. Moreover they reckoned not
 with the men into whose hand they delivered the money to be be-
 16 stowed on workmen; for they dealt ⁹faithfully. The ^htrespass money
 and sin money was not brought into the house of the LORD: ⁱit was the
 priests'.
- 17 Then ^jHazael king of Syria went up, and fought against Gath, and
 18 took it: and Hazael set his face to go up to Jerusalem. And Jehoash
 king of Judah ^ktook all the hallowed things that Jehoshaphat, and
 Jehoram, and Ahaziah, his fathers, kings of Judah, had dedicated, and
 his own hallowed things, and all the gold *that was* found in the treasures
 of the house of the LORD, and in the king's house, and sent *it* to Hazael
 king of Syria: and he ¹⁰went away from Jerusalem.
- 19 And the rest of the acts of Joash, and all that he did, *are* they not
 20 written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah? And his
 servants arose, and made a conspiracy, and slew Joash in ¹¹the house of
 21 Millo, which goeth down to Silla. For ^lJozachar the son of Shimeath,
 and Jehozabad the son of ¹²Shomer, his servants, smote him, and he died;
 and they buried him with his fathers in the city of David: and ^mAmaziah
 his son reigned in his stead.
- 13 IN ¹the three and twentieth year of Joash the son of Ahaziah king of
 Judah, Jehoahaz the son of Jehu began to reign over Israel in Samaria,
 2 and reigned seventeen years. And he did *that which was* evil in the

B. C. 778.
 / 2 Chr. 21 8.
 Mark 12. 41.
 Luke 21. 1.
 5 threshold.
 6 Or,
 secretary.
 7 bound up.
 ch. 5 23.
 8 brought it
 forth
 9 went forth.
 10 2 Chr 31.12.
 11 Neh. 7. 2.
 Matt 21.45.
 Luke 16. 1,
 10, 11.
 1 Cor. 4. 2,
 3.
 2 Cor. 8. 20.
 3 John 5.
 4 Lev 5. 15.
 Num. 5. 8,
 10.
 Hos. 4. 8.
 5 Lev. 7. 7.
 Num. 18. 9.
 6 ch. 8. 12.
 7 1 Ki. 15. 19.
 ch. 16. 8.
 ch. 13. 15,
 16.
 2 Chr. 16. 2.
 10 went up.
 11 Or, Beth-
 millo.
 Judg. 9. 6.
 2 Sam. 5. 9.
 1 Ki. 11. 7.
 12 2 Chr 21.2.
 Zabab.
 13 Or, Shim-
 rith.
 14 2 Chr 24.26,
 27.
 CHAP. 13.
 1 the twen-
 tieth year
 and third
 year.
 ch. 8. 25.
 ch. 10. 26.
 ch. 11. 4-24.

placed by the high priest at the entrance into the temple, into which the money given by the people for the repairs of the temple was to be put by the Levites who kept the door. The object of this chest was to make a separation between the money to be raised for the building from the other moneys destined for the general use of the priests, in the hope that the people would be more liberal in their contributions when it was known that their offerings would be devoted to the special purpose of making the necessary repairs, and that the duty of attending to this work was no longer to devolve on the priests, but to be undertaken by the king.

11. they gave the money, being told, into the hands of them that did the work. The king sent his secretary, along with an agent of the high priest (2 Chr. xxiv. 11), to count the money in the chest from time to time, and deliver the amount to the overseers of the building, who paid the workmen and purchased all necessary materials. The custom of putting sums of certain amount in

bags, which are labelled and sealed by a proper officer, is a common way of using the currency in Turkey and other Eastern countries. 13. Howbeit there were not . . . bowls, &c. When the repairs of the temple had been completed, the surplus was appropriated to the purchase of the temple furniture. The integrity of the overseers of the work being undoubted, no account was exacted of the way in which they applied the money given to them, while other moneys levied at the temple were left to the disposal of the priests, as the law directed (Lev. v. 15, 16; Num. v. 8).

17. Then Hazael . . . fought against Gath—(see on 2 Chr. xxiv. 23, 24).
 19-21.—HE IS SLAIN.

20. his servants arose . . . and slew Joash in the house of Millo—(see on 1 Ki. ix. 24; 2 Chr. xxiv. 25).

CHAP. XIII. 1-7.—JEHOAHAZ'S WICKED REIGN OVER ISRAEL.

1. Jehoahaz . . . reigned seventeen years. Un-

sight of the LORD, and ²followed the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, ³which made Israel to sin; he departed not therefrom. And ^athe anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel; and he delivered them into the hand of ^bHazael king of Syria, and into the hand of Ben-hadad the son of Hazael, ^call their days. And Jehoahaz ^cbesought the LORD, and the LORD hearkened unto him; for ^dhe saw the oppression of Israel, because ^ethe king of Syria oppressed them. (And ^ethe LORD gave Israel a saviour, so that they went out from under the hand of the Syrians: and the ^fchildren of Israel dwelt in their tents, ³as beforetime. Nevertheless they departed not from the sins of the house of Jeroboam, who made Israel sin, ^gbut ⁴walked therein: ^hand there ⁵remained the grove also in ⁷Samaria.) Neither did he leave of the people to Jehoahaz but fifty horsemen, and ten chariots, and ten thousand footmen; for the king of Syria had destroyed them, ⁹and had made them like the dust by threshing.

⁸ Now the rest of the acts of Jehoahaz, and all that he did, and his might, ^{are} they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of ⁹Israel? And Jehoahaz slept with his fathers; and they buried him in Samaria: and Joash his son reigned in his stead.⁶

¹⁰ In the thirty and seventh year of Joash king of Judah began ⁷Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz to reign over Israel in Samaria, ^{and reigned} sixteen ¹¹years. And he did ^{that which was} evil in the sight of the LORD; he departed not from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made ¹²Israel sin: ^{but} he walked therein. And ^hthe rest of the acts of Joash, and all that he did, and ⁱhis might wherewith he fought against Amaziah king of Judah, ^{are} they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the ¹³kings of Israel? And Joash slept with his fathers; and Jeroboam sat upon his throne: and Joash was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel.

B C 854.

² walked after.
^a Lev. 26. 17.
 Judg 2. 14.
 Ps 7. 11.
 Isa 10. 5, 6.
 Isa. 42. 8.
 Nah. 1. 2-3.
^b Gen. 31. 4.
 ch. 8. 12.
^c Num 21. 7.
 Judg. 6. 6, 7.
 Job 41. 10.
 Ps. 78. 34.
^d Ex. 3. 7.
 ch. 14. 20.
 1ro 15. 3.
 Jer. 32. 19.
 ch. 11. 25, 27.
³ as yesterday, and third day.
⁴ he walked.
^f 1 Ki. 16. 33.
 ch. 17. 16.
⁵ stood.
^g Amos 1. 3.
⁶ Alone.
⁷ In consort with his father.
 ch. 14. 1.
^h ch. 14. 15.
ⁱ ch. 14. 9.
 2 Chr. 25. 17.

der his government, which pursued the policy of his predecessors regarding the support of the calf-worship, Israel's apostasy from the true God became greater and more confirmed than in the time of his father Jehu. The national chastisement, when it came, was consequently the more severe; and the instruments employed by the Lord in scourging the revolted nation were Hazael, and his son and general, Ben-hadad, in resisting whose successive invasions the Israelitish army was sadly reduced and weakened. ³ he delivered them into the hand of Hazael... and... Ben-hadad... all their days—rather, 'all his days' (v. 22, 23). In the extremity of his distress Jehoahaz besought the Lord, and was heard, not on his own account (Ps. lxxi. 18; Prov. i. 28; xv. 8), but that of the ancient covenant with the patriarchs (v. 23). ⁴ he saw the oppression of Israel—i. e., commiserated the fallen condition of His chosen people. The Divine honour and the interests of true religion required that deliverance should be granted them to check the triumph of the idolatrous enemy, and put an end to their blasphemous taunts that God had forsaken Israel (Deut. xxxii. 27; Ps. xii. 4). ⁵ a saviour. This refers neither to some patriotic defender nor some signal victory, but to the deliverance obtained for Israel by the two successors of Jehoahaz—viz., Joash, who regained all the cities which the Syrians had taken from his father (v. 25); and Jeroboam II., who restored the former boundaries of Israel (ch. xiv. 25). [The Septuagint has ἔδωκε κύριος σωτηρίαν τῷ Ἰσραὴλ, the Lord gave deliverance to Israel.] This is probably the correct reading (see v. 17, "the Lord's deliverance"). Several critics are of

opinion that v. 7 is out of its proper place, and suggest that it should come immediately after v. 4. ⁶ there remained the grove—Asherah, the idol set up by Ahab (1 Ki. xvi. 33), and which ought to have been demolished (Deut. vii. 5). ⁷ made them like the dust by threshing. Threshing in the East is performed in the open air, upon a level plot of ground daubed over with a covering, to prevent as much as possible the earth, sand, or gravel from rising. A great quantity of them all, notwithstanding this precaution, must unavoidably be taken up with the grain; at the same time, the straw is shattered to pieces. Hence it is a most significant figure, frequently employed by Orientals to describe a state of national suffering little short of extermination (Isa. xxi. 10; Mic. iv. 12; Jer. li. 33). The figure originated in a barbarous war-custom, which Hazael literally followed (Amos i. 3, 4: cf. 2 Sam. viii. 31; Judg. viii. 7).

8-12.—JOASH SUCCEEDS HIM.

⁸ his might. This is particularly noticed, in order to show that the grievous oppression from foreign enemies by which the Israelites were ground down, was not owing to the cowardice or imbecility of their king, but solely to the righteous and terrible judgment of God for their foul apostasy.

¹⁰ In the thirty and seventh year of Joash king of Judah began Jehoash... to reign over Israel. Jehoash was associated with his father in the government three years, otherwise his reign must have been described as commencing in the fortieth year of Joash, king of Judah. ¹² his might wherewith he fought against Amaziah—(see on ch. xiv. 8-14.) The usual summary

- 14 Now Elisha was fallen sick of his sickness whereof he died. And Joash the king of Israel came down unto him, and wept over his face, and said, O my father, my father! ^jthe chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof!
- 15 And Elisha said unto him, Take bow and arrows: and he took unto him bow and arrows. And he said to the king of Israel, ^kPut thine hand upon the bow: and he put his hand *upon it*: and Elisha put his ^lhands upon the king's hands. And he said, Open the window eastward: and he opened *it*. Then Elisha said, Shoot: and he shot. And he said, The arrow of the LORD's deliverance, and the arrow of deliverance from Syria: for thou shalt smite the Syrians in ^m'Aphek, till thou have consumed *them*.
- 18 And he said, Take the arrows: and he took *them*. And he said unto the king of Israel, ⁿSmite upon the ground: and he smote thrice, and stayed.
- 19 And the man of God was wroth with him, and said, Thou shouldest have smitten five or six times; then hadst thou smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed *it*: whereas now thou shalt smite Syria *but* thrice.
- 20 And ^oElisha died, and they buried him. And ^pthe bands of the
- 21 Moabites invaded the land at the coming in of the year. And it came to pass, as they were burying a man, that, behold, they spied a band *of men*; and they cast the man into the sepulchre of Elisha: and when the man ^qwas let down, and touched the bones of Elisha, he ^rrevived, and stood upon his feet.
- 22 But ^sHazael king of Syria oppressed Israel all the days of Jehoahaz.
- 23 And ^tthe LORD was gracious unto them, and had compassion on them, and had ^urespect unto them, ^vbecause of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and would not destroy them, neither cast he them from

B. C. 834.
 j ch. 2. 12.
 Job 22. 30.
 Eza. 14. 14.
 Mark 6. 20.
 k Make thine hand to ride.
 l Gen. 49. 24. ch. 4. 34.
 m 1 Ki. 20. 26.
 n Ex. 17. 11.
 o He prophesied about sixty years.
 p ch. 5. 2.
 q went down.
 r Matt. 27. 52.
 John 5. 25. 2^a, 29.
 Acts 5. 15.
 s ch. 8. 12.
 t Judg. 10. 16. ch. 14. 27.
 Neh. 9. 31.
 Isa. 50. 18, 19.
 Eze. 20. 9.
 u Ex. 2. 24, 25.
 v Ex. 32. 13.

of his life and reign occurs rather early, and is again repeated in the account given of the reign of the king of Judah (ch. xiv. 15).

14. Elisha was fallen sick of his sickness whereof he died. Every man's death is occasioned by some disease, and so was Elisha's. But in intimating it there seems a contrast tacitly made between him and his prophetic predecessor, who did not die. Joash . . . came . . . and wept over his face—visited him where he was lying ill of this mortal sickness, and expressed deep sorrow, not from the personal respect he bore for the prophet, but for the incalculable loss his death would occasion to the kingdom. my father, my father, &c.—(see on ch. ii. 12.) These words seem to have been a complimentary phrase, applied to one who was thought an eminent guardian and deliverer of his country; and the particular application of them to Elisha, who by his counsels and prayers had obtained many glorious victories for Israel, shows that the king possessed some measure of faith and trust, which, though weak, was accepted, and called forth the prophet's dying benediction. 15. Take bow and arrows. Hostilities were usually proclaimed by a herald, sometimes by a king or general making a public and formal discharge of an arrow into the enemy's country. Elisha directed Joash to do this, as a symbolical act designed to intimate more fully and significantly the victories promised to the king of Israel over the Syrians. His laying his hands upon the king's hands was to represent the power imparted to the bow-shot as coming from the Lord through the medium of the prophet. His shooting the first arrow eastward—to that part of his kingdom which the Syrians had taken, and which was east of Samaria—was a declaration of war against them for the invasion. His shooting the other arrows into the ground was in token of the number of victories he was to gain; but his stopping at the third betrayed the weakness of his faith; for as the discharged arrow signified a

victory over the Syrians, it is evident that the more arrows he shot, the more victories he would gain; and as he stopped so soon, his conquests would be incomplete.

20. Elisha died. Enjoying a happier life than Elijah, as he possessed a milder character, and bore a less hard commission, his rough garment was honoured even at the court. the bands of the Moabites invaded the land. The people of Moab and Ammon began at this time to cause constant annoyance to the Israelites: for centuries they made periodical inroads upon the country west of Jordan, devastating the land and driving off the cattle, as the wild Arab tribes do to the peaceful settlers in the present day. The time chosen for these predatory incursions was—at the coming in of the year—i. e., the spring, the usual season of beginning campaigns in ancient times. Predatory bands from Moab generally made incursions at that time on the lands of Israel, because the crops were ripe. The bearers of a corpse, alarmed by the appearance in the distance of one of these bands, hastily deposited, as they passed that way, their load in Elisha's sepulchre, which might be easily done by removing the stone at the mouth of the cave. According to the Jewish and Eastern custom, his body, as well as that of the man who was miraculously restored, was not laid in a coffin, but only swathed, so that the bodies could be brought into contact; and the object of the miracle was to stimulate the king and people of Israel's faith in the still unaccomplished predictions of Elisha respecting the war with the Syrians. Accordingly the historian forthwith records the historical fulfilment of the prediction (*vs.* 22-25), in the defeat of the enemy, in the recovery of the cities that had been taken, and their restoration to the kingdom of Israel.

23. the Lord was gracious unto them . . . neither cast he them from his presence as yet—from the land of Canaan, where the symbols of

24 his ¹¹presence as yet. So Hazael king of Syria died; and Ben-hadad his
 25 son reigned in his stead. And Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz ¹²took again
 out of the hand of Ben-hadad the son of Hazael the cities which he had
 taken out of the hand of Jehoahaz his father by war: 'three times did
 Joash beat him, and recovered the cities of Israel.

14 IN ^athe second year of Joash son of Jehoahaz king of Israel reigned
 2 ^bAmaziah the son of Joash king of Judah. He was twenty and five years
 old when he began to reign, and reigned twenty and nine years in
 3 Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Jehoaddan of Jerusalem. And
 he did *that which was right in the sight of the LORD*, yet not like David
 4 his father: he did according to all things as Joash his father did. How-
 beit ^cthe high places were not taken away; as yet the people did sacrifice
 5 and burnt incense on the high places. And it came to pass, as soon as
 the kingdom was confirmed in his hand, that he slew his servants ^dwhich
 6 had slain the king his father. But the children of the murderers he slew
 not: according unto that which is written in the book of the law of Moses,
 wherein the LORD commanded, saying, The ^efathers shall not be put to
 death for the children, nor the children be put to death for the fathers;
 7 but every man shall be put to death for his own sin. He ^fslew of Edom
 in ^gthe valley of Salt ten thousand, and took ^hSelah by war, and called
 the name of it ⁱJoktheel unto this day.

8 Then ^jAmaziah sent messengers to Jehoash, the son of Jehoahaz, son of
 Jehu, king of Israel, saying, ^kCome, let us look one another in the face.
 9 And Jehoash the king of Israel sent to Amaziah king of Judah, saying,
^lThe thistle that was in Lebanon sent to the cedar ^mthat was in Lebanon,
 saying, Give thy daughter to my son to wife: and there passed by a wild
 10 beast that was in Lebanon, and trode down the thistle. Thou hast

B. C. 830.
¹¹ face.
 Gen. 6. 3.
¹² returned
 and took.
 ch. 14. 25.
 vers. 18. 19.
 CHAP. 14.
^a ch. 13. 10.
^b 1 Chr. 3. 12.
^c 2 Chr. 25. 1.
^d 1 Ki. 16. 14.
^e 1 Ki. 22. 43.
^f ch. 12. 3.
^g ch. 12. 20.
^h 2 Chr. 25. 3.
ⁱ 4.
^j Deut. 24. 16.
^k Eze. 18. 4.
^l 20.
^m ch. 8. 20, 22.
 2 Chr 25. 11.
ⁿ 2 Sam 8. 13.
^o 1 Chr 18. 12.
^p Ps 60.
 title.
^q Or, the
 rock.
^r Josh. 16. 33.
^s 2 Chr. 25. 17.
^t 18.
^u 2 Sam 2. 11.
^v Pro 17. 4.
^w Judg. 9. 8.
^x 1 Ki. 4. 33.

His presence and worship were exclusively mani-
 fested.

CHAP. XIV. 1-6. — AMAZIAH'S GOOD REIGN
 OVER JUDAH.

3. he did that which was right. . . yet not
 like David his father. The beginning of his
 reign was excellent, for he acted the part of a
 constitutional king, according to the law of God,
 yet not with perfect sincerity of heart (cf. 2 Chr.
 xxv. 2); for, as in the case of his father, Joash,
 the early promise was belied by the devious
 course he personally followed in later life (see on
 2 Chr. xx. 14), as well as by the public irregulari-
 ties he tolerated in the kingdom. 5. as soon as
 the kingdom was confirmed in his hand. This
 is regarded as implying that Judah had become
 a tributary dependency of Assyria, and that each
 prince, at his accession, required to be formally
 confirmed in his kingdom by his Assyrian suzerain.
 It was an act of justice, no less than of filial piety,
 to avenge the murder of his father; but it is evident
 that the two assassins must have possessed con-
 siderable weight and influence, as the king was
 obliged to retain them in his service, and durst
 not, for fear of their friends and supporters, in-
 stitute proceedings against them until his power
 had been fully consolidated. 6. But the children
 of the murderers he slew not. This moderation,
 inspired by the Mosaic law (Deut. xxiv. 16), dis-
 plays the good character of this prince, for the
 course thus pursued towards the families of the
 regicides was directly contrary to the prevailing
 customs of antiquity, according to which all con-
 nected with the criminals were doomed to unsp-
 aring destruction.

7.—HE SMITES EDMO.
 7. He slew of Edom in the valley of Salt ten
 thousand. In the reign of Joram the Edomites
 had revolted (see on ch. viii. 20). But Amaziah,

determined to reduce them to their former sub-
 jection, formed a hostile expedition against them,
 in which he routed their army, and made himself
 master of their capital. "The valley of Salt" is
 that part of the Ghor which comprises the salt
 and sandy plain to the south of the Dead Sea.
 Selah [שֵׁלַח], the rock—generally thought to be
 Petra. Joktheel—i. e., given or conquered by God.
 (See the history of this conquest more fully de-
 tailed, 2 Chr. xxv. 6-16.)

8-16.—JOASH DEFEATS HIM.
 8. Amaziah sent messengers to Jehoash . . .
 king of Israel. This bold and haughty challenge,
 which was most probably stimulated by a desire
 of satisfaction for the outrages perpetrated by the
 discharged auxiliaries of Israel (2 Chr. xxv. 13) on
 the towns that lay on their way home, as well as
 by revenge for the massacre of his ancestors by
 Jehu (ch. ix.), sprang, there is little doubt, from
 pride and self-confidence, inspired by his victory
 over the Edomites. let us look one another in
 the face [בְּפָנֵי בְּרִיחַ] (hithpael)—i. e., in a hostile
 sense. Gesenius interprets it, 'fighting hand to
 hand, in close combat,' of course with their res-
 pective armies (cf. v. 11; 2 Chr. xxv. 17-21).
 [Septuagint, ἀφ' ἑωυτοῦ προσώπῳ, let us be seen in
 faces.] 9. Jehoash the king of Israel sent to
 Amaziah. Προλε in the East very often express
 their sentiments in a parabolic form, especially
 when they intend to convey unwelcome truths, or
 a contemptuous sneer. This was the design of
 the admonitory fable related by Joash in his
 reply. The thistle, a low shrub, might be chosen
 to represent Amaziah, a petty prince; the cedar,
 the powerful sovereign of Israel; and the wild
 beast that trode down the thistle, the overwhelm-
 ing army with which Israel could desolate Judah.
 But, perhaps, without making so minute an appli-

indeed smitten Edom, and thine ^m heart hath lifted thee up: *glory of this*, and tarry ² at home; for why shouldest thou ⁿ meddle to *thy* hurt, that
 11 thou shouldest fall, *even* thou, and Judah with thee? But Amaziah would not hear. Therefore Jehoash king of Israel went up; and he and Amaziah king of Judah looked one another in the face at ^o Beth-shemesh,
 12 which *belongeth* to Judah. And Judah ⁵ was put to the worse before Israel; and they fled every man to their tents. And Jehoash king of
 13 Israel took Amaziah king of Judah, the son of Jehoash, the son of Ahaziah, at Beth-shemesh, and came to Jerusalem, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem from ² the gate of Ephraim unto ² the corner gate, four
 14 hundred cubits. And he took all ⁷ the gold and silver, and all the vessels *that were* found in the house of the LORD, and in the treasures of the king's house, and hostages, and returned to Samaria.
 15 Now ⁶ the rest of the acts of Jehoash which he did, and his might, and how he fought with Amaziah king of Judah, *are* they not written in the
 16 book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel? And Jehoash slept with his fathers, and was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel; and Jeroboam his son reigned in his stead.
 17 And ⁷ Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah lived after the death of Jehoash, son of Jehoahaz king of Israel, fifteen years. And the rest of the acts of Amaziah, *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles
 19 of the kings of Judah? Now ⁸ they made a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem: and he fled to ⁸ Lachish; but they sent after him to Lachish, and slew him there. And they brought him on horses; and he was buried at Jerusalem with his fathers in the city of David.
 20 And all the people of Judah ⁹ took Azariah, which *was* sixteen years old, and made him king instead of his father Amaziah. He built ⁹ Elath, and restored it to Judah, after that the king slept with his fathers.
 21 In ⁴ the fifteenth year of Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah, Jeroboam the son of Joash king of Israel began to reign in Samaria, and
 24 *reigned* forty and one years. And he did *that which was* evil in the sight

B C. 826.
^m Deut. 8. 14.
² Chr 32. 26.
 Eze. 28. 2.
 17.
 Hab 2. 4.
² at thy house.
ⁿ 2 Chr. 35. 21.
 Pro 25. 17.
 Luke 14. 31.
 32.
^o Josh. 21. 16.
⁵ was smitten.
^p 2 Chr. 25. 21.
 Neh. 8. 16.
 Neh. 12. 39.
^q Jer. 31. 38.
 Zech 11. 10.
^r 1 Ki. 7. 51.
 ch 21. 13.
^s 1 Ki. 14. 19.
 ch. 10. 34.
 ch. 13. 12.
^t 2 Chr. 25. 21.
^u ch. 12. 20.
 21.
^v 2 Chr. 25. 27.
^w Josh. 10. 31.
^x ch. 15. 13.
^y 2 Chr 21. 1.
 Uzziab.
^z Deut. 2. 8.
¹ Ki. 9. 26.
 ch. 16. 6.
 It was a port on the Red sea.
⁴ Now he begins to reign alone.

cation, the parable may be explained generally, as describing, in a striking manner, the effects of pride and ambition, towering far beyond their natural sphere, and sure to fall with a sudden and ruinous crash. The moral of the fable is contained in v. 10. 11. But Amaziah would not hear. The sarcastic tenor of this reply incited the king of Judah the more; for, being in a state of judicial blindness and infatuation (2 Chr. xxv. 20), he was immovably determined on war. The superior energy of Joash, however, surprised him ere he had completed his military preparations. Pouring a numerous army into the territory of Judah, he encountered Amaziah in a pitched battle, routed his army, took himself prisoner, and having marched to Jerusalem, not only demolished part of the city walls, but plundered the treasures of the palace and temple, and, taking hostages to prevent any further molestation from Judah, terminated the war. Without leaving a garrison in Jerusalem, he returned to his capital with all convenient speed, his presence and whole forces being required to repel the troublesome incursions of the Syrians.

17-20.—HE IS SLAIN IN A CONSPIRACY.
 23. they made a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem. Amaziah's apostasy (2 Chr. xxv. 27) was followed by a general mal-administration, especially the disastrous issue of the war with Israel—the ruinous condition of Jerusalem, the plunder of the temple, and the loss of their children, who were taken as hostages—lost him the

respect and attachment, not of the grandees only, but of his subjects generally, who were in a state of rebellion. The king fled in terror to Lachish, a frontier-town of the Philistines, where, however, he was traced and murdered. His friends had his corpse brought, without any pomp or ceremony, in a chariot to Jerusalem, where he was interred among his royal ancestors.

21-23.—AZARIAH SUCCEEDS HIM.
 21. all the people of Judah took Azariah—or Uzziab (ch. xv. 30; 2 Chr. xxvi. 1). The popular opposition had been personally directed against Amaziah, as the author of their calamities, but it was not extended to his family or heir. 22. He built Elath—fortified that seaport. It had revolted with the rest of Edom, but was now recovered by Uzziab, his father, who did not complete the conquest of Edom, having left him that work to do.

23-29.—JEROBOAM'S WICKED REIGN OVER JUDAH.

23. Jeroboam the son of Joash king of Israel. He had been previously associated with his father for several years in the government, and reigned forty and one years. *Ewald, Thenius*, and others, maintain that an error in the Hebrew numeral letters has occurred here—the duration of Jeroboam's reign having been originally stated at fifty-two or fifty-three instead of forty-one years. But such a supposition is exceedingly improbable, as it implies the mistake to be considered as not limited to one, but to have extended

of the LORD: he departed not from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nubat, who made Israel to sin. He restored the coast of Israel² from the entering of Hamath unto² the sea of the plain, according to the word of the LORD God of Israel, which he spake by the hand of his servant^a Jonah, the son of Amittai, the prophet, which was of^b Gath-hepher. For the LORD^c saw the affliction of Israel, that it was very bitter: for^d there was not any shut up, nor any left, nor any helper for Israel. And the LORD said not that he would blot out the name of Israel from under heaven: but he saved them by the hand of Jeroboam the son of Joash.

Now the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, and all that he did, and his might, how he warred, and how he recovered Damascus, and Hamath, which belonged to Judah, for Israel, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel? And Jeroboam slept with his fathers, even with the kings of Israel; and^e Zachariah his son reigned in his stead.

B. C. 825

² Num 31. 21.
 Num 31. 8.
 Eze. 47. 1-18.
^a Amos 6. 14.
^b Deut. 3. 17.
^c Jon. 1. 1.
^d Matt. 12. 20.
^e Josh. 19. 13.
^f ch. 11. 4.
 Isa 63. 9.
 Deut 32.56.
^g ch 13 5.
^h 2 Sam. 8. 6.
 1 Ki. 11. 24.
ⁱ After an interregnum of 11 years, ch. 15. 8.

to several letters (see on ch. xv. 8). 24. he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord—by adhering to the favourite religious policy of the Israelitish government. 25. He restored the coast of Israel, &c. Recovering the territory lost by the successful border incursions of Hazael (see on ch. x. 32), he re-established the ancient boundaries of the ten tribes. This result had been predicted by Jonah, of whom the only account transmitted to us is contained in this passage, and in the book called by his name. The prophecies by which he animated the patriotism of Jeroboam II. in his long and severe struggles against the kings of Syria have not been recorded; for, although there was an unbroken series of prophets in Israel, none of them committed their predictions to writing; and Hosca, who lived after Jonah, in the latter end of the reign of this Jeroboam, was the first whose prophecies, receiving a permanent form, were afterwards admitted into the sacred canon. As to Jonah's supposed parentage, see on 1 Ki. xvii. 17-23. His father's name was Amittai [אַמִּיטַי, true]—a name given him, according to Jewish tradition, in reference to his mother's saying (v. 24), "Now I know that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth;" hence, they say, Jonah was called the son of Amittai—i. e., the son of truth. Amittai is supposed to have been a prophet himself. If this Jewish tradition have any foundation, the family must have removed from Zarephath, or, at all events, Jonah himself, to Gath-hepher, a town of Zebulun, in lower Galilee. 26. For the Lord saw the affliction of Israel, that it was very bitter [כִּי רַב—אִי]—that the affliction of Israel was very perverse; i. e., stubborn, or incurable. [The Septuagint has τὰ πεινῶσιον Ἰσραὴλ πικρὰν σφόδρα, the affliction of Israel very bitter; apparently reading πικρὸν (adjective), instead of the word in the present Hebrew text, כִּי, (verb). for there was not any shut up, nor any left. This phrase, the import of which is quite plain, has been variously explained. Some consider 'none shut up,' as meaning, there were none secure in their strong cities, or hiding-places (Judg. vii. 2; 1 Sam. xiv. 11), whence there might be some hope of their coming out. And 'none left,' as referring to the poor and contemptible people who were neglected, and allowed to continue as a remnant by the conquerors of a vanquished country (see on ch. xxv. 12). Grotius understands by "shut up," captives; Gesenius interprets the phrase [צָרָה צָרָה]

כִּי רַב], the shut up, and the let go free—i. e., the bond and the free—all, every one, in the districts desolated by Hazael, were cut off, and the people destroyed (see the phrase used ch. ix. 8; Deut. xxxii. 36; 1 Ki. xiv. 10; xxi. 21; and other explanations are given. [Gesenius, p. 27]. 27. the Lord said not that he would blot out the name of Israel. As the purposes of the Divine covenant forbade as yet the overthrow of the kingdom of the ten tribes (see on ch. xiii. 23), God was pleased to show a token of mercy to Israel. he saved them by the hand of Jeroboam the son of Joash. He was the last king by whom Jehovah sent deliverance to Israel; and He granted to this king a remarkable measure of national prosperity, enabling him to extend the borders of his kingdom even to the Euphrates and the Dead Sea (Sea of the Plain [הַיַּרְדֵּן], the Arabah). The reign of this king, which was distinguished by so extraordinary a flow of prosperity, increased the religious apostasy, and by consequence the moral degeneracy of Israel. Under him, the corruption of manners became extreme, and laid the foundation for those public calamities which befell the kingdom soon after his demise, and quickly accomplished the destruction of the nation. In fact, as Henzenberg well observes, 'the prosperity only confirmed the people still more in their security. Instead of being led to repentance by the unmerited mercy of God, they considered this prosperity as a reward of their apostasy, as the seal by which Jehovah-Baal confirmed the rectitude of their ways. The false prophets, too, did what was in their power to strengthen them in their delusion, whilst the true prophets preached to deaf ears' ('Christology,' i., p. 172). Henzenberg refers in this last sentence to the emphatic warnings addressed to Jeroboam by Hosea and Amos. Although his whole reign was marked by signal successes, notwithstanding that apostasy, which was usually punished by war and loss of national independence, the wrath of God was denounced against Israel, as well as the future destruction of the house of Jeroboam by the two named prophets, whose writings sufficiently attest the faithful execution of their mission.

28. the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, and all that he did, and his might, &c. This is the usual formula, intimating that the chief incidents of his reign were chronicled in the national annals. But particular mention is made of "his might" [בְּקָרָתוֹ], personal prowess, valiant deeds].

- 15 IN the ¹twenty and seventh year of Jeroboam king of Israel ^abegan
 2 Azariah son of Amaziah king of Judah to reign. Sixteen years old was
 he when he began to reign; and he reigned two and fifty years in Jeru-
 3 salem. And his mother's name was Jecoliah of Jerusalem. And he did
 that which was right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his
 4 father Amaziah had done; save ^bthat the high places were not removed:
 the people sacrificed and burnt incense still on the high places.
 5 And the LORD ^csmote the king, so that he was a leper unto the day
 of his death, and ^ddwelt in a several house. And Jotham the king's son
 was over the house, judging the people of the land.
 6 And the rest of the acts of Azariah, and all that he did, *are* they not
 7 written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah? So Azariah
 slept with his fathers; and ^ethey buried him with his fathers in the city of
 David: and Jotham his son reigned in his stead.
 8 In the thirty and eighth year of Azariah king of Judah did Zachariah
 9 the son of Jeroboam reign over Israel in Samaria six months. And he did
 that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, as his fathers had done: he
 departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel
 10 to sin. And Shallum the son of Jabesh conspired against him, and ^fsmote
 him before the people, and slew him, and reigned in his stead.

B. C. 810.

CHAP. 15.
 1 This is the
 27th year
 of Jeroboam's
 partnership in the
 kingdom
 with his
 father, who
 made him
 consort at
 his going
 to the
 Syrian
 wars.

^a ch. 14. 21.
^b ch. 12. 3.
^c 2 Chr. 20 19.
^d Lev. 13. 46.
^e 2 Chr. 26. 23.
^f As prophesied,
 Hos. 1. 4.
 Amos 7. 9.

CHAP. XV. 1-4. — AZARIAH'S REIGN OVER JUDAH.

1. In the twenty and seventh year of Jeroboam. As Amaziah, the father of Azariah, lived only till the fifteenth year of Jeroboam II. (cf. ch. xiv. 17, 23), there is a difficulty in reconciling that fact with the chronological statement in the first verse of this chapter. It may be removed, however, and a satisfactory explanation given, by assuming, what seems exceedingly probable, that Jeroboam had reigned in conjunction with his father for eleven or twelve years, and on the demise of his father, reigned alone. Thus his reign would have a double commencement. According to the former view, this would be his twenty-seventh year; according to the latter, his fifteenth year. Or, it is thought that the throne of Judah continued vacant eleven or twelve years, between the death of Amaziah and the inauguration of his son Azariah, who, being a boy four years old when his father was murdered, a regency was, by the popular will, appointed during his minority, for he was not formally inaugurated into the kingdom till he was sixteen. His reign was the longest, with the exception of Manasseh's, in the sacred history, extending to fifty-two years; but chronologists are not agreed as to the period from which this term is to be computed, whether the date of his father's death, or from the time of his actual accession. began Azariah . . . to reign [אָזָרְיָהוּ וְיָהוָה, might of Jehovah; אָזָרְיָהוּ is probably a clerical error]. He is called Azariah here, *vs.* 6, 7, 8, 23, 27; but Uziah, *vs.* 13, 32, 34, &c. [Septuagint, Ὀζίας]. The character of his reign is described by the brief formula employed by the inspired historian in recording the religious policy of the later kings. But his reign was a very active as well as eventful one, and is fully related, 2 Chr. xxvi. Elated by the possession of great power, and presumptuously arrogating to himself, as the heathen kings, the functions both of the regal and sacerdotal offices, he was punished with leprosy, which, as the offence was capital (Num. viii. 7), was equivalent to death; for this disease excluded him from all society (Lev. xiii. 46); and while Jotham, his son, as his viceroy, administered the affairs of the kingdom, devoting fixed portions of his time (like Solomon, 1 Ki. vii. 7) to

the judicial duties—being about fifteen years of age (cf. *v.* 33)—he had to dwell in a place apart by himself (see on ch. vii. 3). After a long reign he died, and was buried in the royal burying-field, though not in the royal cemetery of "the city of David" (2 Chr. xxvi. 33).

8 16.—ZACHARIAH'S REIGN OVER ISRAEL.

8. In the thirty and eighth year of Azariah king of Judah did Zachariah . . . reign over Israel. It has been supposed, on the ground of the recorded duration of his father's reign (see on ch. xiv. 21), where the Hebrew numerals are probably corrupt, that there was an interregnum, from some unknown cause, between the reign of Jeroboam and the accession of his son, which lasted, according to some, for ten or twelve years, according to others, for twenty-two years, or more. This prince, who was a weak, facile, grovelling sot (Hos. v.), pursued the religious policy of the calf-worship, and his reign was short, being abruptly terminated by the hand of violence. There is nothing, however, said in the history as to an interregnum arising from anarchy or faction, and the idea might seem to be improbable after so vigorous a reign as Jeroboam's. But that objection has no weight in the minds of many chronologists, who maintain that on the death of Jeroboam, his kingdom fell rapidly into confusion and decay. The sacred books are exceedingly short as regards the history of the last times of the kingdom of Israel. Sacred historiography has no interest in the details of this process of decay, which began with the death of Jeroboam, and which is represented by Amos as it were the day of Israel's death (Amos vii. 11), although a bare existence is still for sometime spared. By the rejection of this interregnum, Hosea's ministry would be shortened by twelve years; but this gain, if gain it be, can be purchased only at the expense of a most improbable extension of the duration of Jeroboam's reign' (*Hengstenberg's* 'Christology,' i., p. 173). 10. Shallum the son of Jabesh conspired against him—one of his generals. and smote him before the people. He must have been aware of a deep and wide-spread disaffection before he ventured to perform the daring part of a regicide. In the fate of Zachariah was fulfilled the prophecy addressed to Jehu (ch. x. 30; also Hos. i. 4), that his family

- 11 And the rest of the acts of Zachariah, behold, they *are* written in the
 12 book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel. This *was* ⁹the word of the
 LORD which he spake unto Jehu, saying, Thy sons shall sit on the throne
 of Israel unto the fourth *generation*. And so it came to pass.
- 13 Shallum the son of Jabesh began to reign in the nine and thirtieth year
 14 of Uzziah ¹king of Judah; and he reigned ²a full month in Samaria. For
 Menahem the son of Gadi went up from ¹Tirzah, and came to Samaria,
 and smote Shallum the son of Jabesh in Samaria, and slew him, and reigned
 in his stead.
- 15 And the rest of the acts of Shallum, and his conspiracy which he
 made, behold, they *are* written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings
 of Israel.
- 16 Then Menahem smote ³Tiphshah, and all that *were* therein, and the
 coasts thereof from Tirzah: because they opened not *to him*, therefore he
 smote *it*; and all ⁴the women therein that were with child he ripped up.
- 17 In the nine and thirtieth year of Azariah king of Judah began Menahem
 the son of Gadi to reign over Israel, and *reigned* ten years in Samaria.
- 18 And he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD: he departed not
 all his days from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel
 to sin. And ¹Pul the king of Assyria came against the land: and Menahem
 gave Pul a thousand talents of silver, that his hand might be with
 19 him to ²confirm the kingdom in his hand. And Menahem ³exacted
 the money of Israel, *even* of all the mighty men of wealth, of each man
 fifty shekels of silver, to give to the king of Assyria: so the king of Assyria
 turned back, and stayed not there in the land.

B. C. 772.

⁹ ch. 10. 3.
 Job 23. 13.
 Ps. 33. 11.
 Ps. 119. 89.
 Isa. 14. 27.
 Isa. 40. 8.
 Matt. 21. 35.
¹ Matt. 1. 8.
 Ozias.
 ver. 1.
 Azariah.
² a month of
 days.
³ Josh. 12. 21.
 1 Ki. 14. 17.
 Song 6. 4.
⁴ 1 Ki. 4. 24.
⁵ ch. 8. 12.
 Hos. 13. 16.
 2 Chr. 26. 17.
 Isa. 13. 16.
 13.
¹ 1 Chr. 5. 26.
 Isa. 9. 1.
 Hos. 8. 9.
² ch. 14. 5.
 Ps. 146. 3. 4.
 Isa. 2. 22.
 Jer. 17. 5.
³ caused to
 come
 forth.

would possess the throne of Israel for four generations; and accordingly Jehoahaz, Joash, Jehoram, and Zachariah were his successors—but there his dynasty terminated; and perhaps it was the public knowledge of this prediction that prompted the murderous design of Shallum (Hos. i. 4; Amos vii. 9).

13. Shallum . . . reigned a full month. This usurper enjoyed a very brief reign, for he occupied the throne only for one month, being opposed and slain by Menahem, who, according to *Josephus* ('Antiquities,' b. ix., ch. ii., sec. 1), was commander of the forces. On the report of the king's murder, he was besieging Tirzah, a town twelve miles east of Samaria, and formerly a seat of the kings of Israel. Raising the siege, he marched directly against the usurper, slew him, and reigned in his stead.

16. Menahem smote Tiphshah. Thapsacus, on the western bank of the Euphrates, formed the border city of Solomon's kingdom (1 Ki. iv. 24), and having been taken by Hazael, it was regained by the arms of Jeroboam, who justly ranked this important city amongst his most valuable conquests. The inhabitants refusing to open their gates to him, Menahem took it by storm, and having spoiled it, committed the most barbarous excesses, without regard either to age or sex—excesses, the report of which is supposed to have attracted the notice of the Assyrian monarch, and led to that invasion of Israel which terminated in its destruction.

17-21.—MENAHEM'S REIGN.

17. reigned ten years in Samaria. His government was conducted on the religious policy of his predecessors. 19. Pul the king of Assyria came against the land [פּוּל]; Septuagint, Φουά, probably from the error of a copyist in mistaking the final Α for a capital Α elsewhere (1 Chr. v. 26); Vatican, Φαλώχ; Alexandrine, Φαλώς. In the passage just cited, it is said, conformably to

the statement here, that "the God of Israel stirred up the spirit of Pul king of Assyria." But Hosea (ch. v. 13) referring to this crisis says, "Ephraim (Israel) went to the Assyrian." These different statements may be reconciled thus,—Pul, of his own motion, resolved to chastise Menahem, induced, perhaps, by the double motive of crushing a bold rebel, whose ambition had led him to usurp the throne of a kingdom which from the time of Jehu had been an Assyrian dependency, and of avenging the expedition of Menahem against Thapsacus. Then Menahem, on his part, sent Pul 1,000 talents, in order not only to divert him from his hostile purpose, but at the same time to purchase his friendship and aid for the establishment of his own precarious sovereignty ("to confirm the kingdom in his hand;" cf. ch. xiv. 5). According to this view, which seems the proper order of events, Menahem did not make the first overture to Assyria, but on "Pul the king of Assyria coming against the land," he took measures to change the enemy when marching against the country, by the offer of a bribe, into a patron or protector for the security of his usurped dominion, which the prophet Hosea, less concerned about the historical fact than the disposition betrayed therein, might very well censure as a going of Ephraim to the Assyrian (Hos. v. 13; vii. 11; viii. 9), and a covenant-making with Asshur (ch. xii. 1). a thousand talents of silver = £62,200. This tribute, which Menahem raised by a poll-tax imposed on the wealthier classes of the people in Israel, bribed Pul to return to his own country (1 Chr. v. 26). It was an oppressive exaction, and seems to form the subject of a strong prophetic interdict, proclaimed at the time of the return from the Babylonish captivity (Ezek. xlv. 8; xlvi. 18).—A special interest is attached to Pul as the first mentioned in Scripture of the great northern sovereigns who invaded Palestine, and exercised a political influence in that country. The identification of this conqueror, however, with any of the Assyrian or

- 21 And the rest of the acts of Menahem, ² and all that he did, *are* they 22 not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel? And Menahem slept with his fathers; and Pekahiah his son reigned in his stead.
- 23 In the fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah, Pekahiah the son of Menahem began to reign over Israel in Samaria, and reigned ^o two years.
- 24 And he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD: he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.
- 25 But Pekah the son of Remaliah, a captain ^p of his, ^q conspired against him, and smote him in Samaria, in the palace of the king's house, with Argob and Arich, and with him fifty men of the Gileadites: and he killed him, and reigned in his room.
- 26 And the rest of the acts of Pekahiah, and all that he did, behold, they *are* written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel.
- 27 In the two and fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah, ^r Pekah the son of Remaliah began to reign over Israel in Samaria, and reigned twenty 28 years. And he did *that which was* ^s evil in the sight of the LORD: he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.
- 29 In the days of Pekah king of Israel came ^t Tiglath-pileser king of

B. C. 711.

^a 1 Ki. 14. 19, 2.
¹ Ki. 22. 39.
^o 1 Ki. 15. 25.
¹ Ki. 16. 8.
¹ Ki. 22. 51, ch 21. 19, Job 20. 5.
^p ch 9. 5.
¹ Ki. 16. 9.
^q ch. 9. 14.
^r 2 Chr. 25. 6. Isa. 7. 1, 4, 9.
^s ch 13. 6, ch. 21. 2.
^t ch. 16. 7.
¹ Chr. 6. 9, 26
² Chr. 29. 20, 21.
¹sa. 9. 1.

Babylonian monarchs has not been established; for the various conjectures of *Sir H. Rawlinson* and the late *Dr. Hincks* in the early days of cuneiform studies—such as that the native appellation of Pul was Phallukha—that he was identical with Iva-lush—and that he was the last of the old or upper dynasty of Assyria, have been successively abandoned; nay, even the idea of a close connection between Pul and Tiglath-pileser, which the tenor of the sacred narrative appeared to suggest, has been given up since the discovery of the Assyrian canon, which has shown that three reigns, extending over a period of thirty-two years, intervened between Iva-lush IV. and Tiglath-pileser II. But what has most of all tended to overthrow the many hypotheses at one time advanced and zealously supported by eminent explorers of cuneiform monuments, is that the name of Pul is not found in the list of Assyrian kings, nor can admit of being identified with that of any sovereign in the catalogue. The consequence is, that scholars in the present day are now divided in opinion as to whether Pul was not another name of Tiglath-pileser, or whether he was an Assyrian king at all. The grounds on which the supposed identification rests are briefly these. The sacred history records that Menahem paid tribute to Pul, and the Ninevite monuments expressly record that he made such payment to Tiglath-pileser in the eighth year of his reign; whence the conclusion is drawn, that, as it is not very likely two Assyrian monarchs would successively undertake so distant an expedition as an invasion of Israel within the short space of ten years—which was the duration of Menahem's reign—the tribute must have been offered to one and the same sovereign. Also, it is alleged that Pul and Tiglath-pileser are spoken of (2 Chr. v. 26) in such a manner as to create an impression that they were identical—an impression which receives additional strength from the circumstance that in the passage just cited the Syriac and Arabic versions have one name only, not two. These arguments, which are all that can be adduced in support of the theory of identification, are far from being satisfactory: for it must appear to the mind of every candid and unbiassed reader that the language of the sacred history, both in this book and in Chronicles, points to two different sovereigns. The present

views entertained upon this obscure point are thus summarized by *Rev. G. Rawlinson* ('Ancient Monarchies,' ii., p. 388):—'The most probable supposition is, that he was a pretender to the Assyrian crown, never acknowledged at Nineveh, but established in the western and southern provinces so firmly that he could venture to conduct an expedition into lower Syria, and to claim there the fealty of Assyria's vassals. Or, possibly, he may have been a Babylonian monarch, who, in the troublous times that had now come upon the northern empire, possessed himself of the Euphrates valley, and thence descended upon Syria and Palestine. *Berosus* represented Pul as a Chaldean king; and the name itself, which is wholly alien to the ordinary Assyrian type—being all compound words—has at least one counterpart among known Babylonian names.'

22-24.—PEKAHIAH'S REIGN.

23. Pekahiah the son of Menahem began to reign. On comparing the date given with Azariah's reign, it seems that several months had intervened between the death of Menahem and the accession of Pekahiah; probably owing to a contest about the throne. 25. with Argob and Arich, &c. Many commentators view these as the captain's accomplices. But it is more probable that they were influential friends of the king's, who were murdered along with him.

27-31.—PEKAH'S REIGN.

29. In the days of Pekah . . . came Tiglath-pileser [תִּגְלַת־פִּלְעֶזֶר or תִּגְלַת־פִּלְעָזֶר, Tilgath-pilneser (2 Chr. xxviii. 20); Septuagint, Θαλαγαφελασαρ]. Scholars are not agreed as to the import of this name. This monarch, who succeeded Pul on the throne of Assyria, is the only one of all the kings who does not give his genealogy, and is therefore supposed to have been a usurper. His annals have been discovered in the Nimroud Mound, describing this expedition into Syria. The places taken are here mentioned as they occurred, and were conquered in the progress of an invasion. From the Assyrian monuments, it appears that Tiglath-pileser II. commenced his expedition against Syria in the fourth year of his reign, and that, as it lasted several years, he penetrated to the southern extremities of Palestine, reducing Damascus, Tyre, Samaria, and the Arabs bordering

- Assyria, and took "Ijon, and Abel-beth-maachah, and Janoah, and Kedesh, and Hazor, and Gilead, and Galilee, all the land of Naphtali, and carried them captive to Assyria.
- 30 And Hoshea the son of Elah made a conspiracy against Pekah the son of Remaliah, and smote him, and slew him, and reigned "in his stead," in the twentieth year of Jotham the son of Uzziah.
- 31 And the rest of the acts of Pekah, and all that he did, behold, they *are* written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel.
- 32 In the second year of Pekah the son of Remaliah king of Israel began
- 33 "Jotham the son of Uzziah king of Judah to reign. Five and twenty years old was he when he began to reign; and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Jerusha, the daughter of Zadok.
- 34 And he did *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD: he did
- 35 according to all that his father Uzziah had done. Howbeit "the high places were not removed: the people sacrificed and burnt incense still in the high places. "He built the higher gate of the house of the LORD.
- 36 Now the rest of the acts of Jotham, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah?
- 37 In "those days the LORD began to send against Judah "Rezin the king
- 38 of Syria, and Pekah the son of Remaliah. And Jotham slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father: and Ahaz his son reigned in his stead.
- 16 IN the seventeenth year of Pekah the son of Remaliah, "Ahaz the son 2 of Jotham king of Judah began to reign. Twenty years old *was* Ahaz when he began to reign, and reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem, and did

B. C. 740.
 " 1 Ki. 15. 20
 " After an anarchy for some years, ch. 17. 1. Hos. 10. 3.
 " In the fourth year of Ahaz, in the twentieth year after Jotham had begun to reign.
 " 1 Chr. 3. 12.
 " 2 Chr. 27. 1. Matt. 1. 9.
 " Ver. 4.
 " 2 Chr. 27. 3.
 " 2 Chr. 25. 6.
 At the end of Jotham's reign.
 " ch. 16. 5.
 " 2 Chr. 23. 6. Isa. 7. 1.

CHAP. 16.
 " 2 Chr. .8.1.

upon Egypt, but without touching upon Judæa, Philistia, or the Phœnician cities. It was during this invasion that Menahem purchased submission by the payment of tribute, which, as already stated, is recorded on the Assyrian monuments to have been brought to him by Israelitish messengers in the eighth year of his reign. In consequence of the incompleteness of this Syrian war, and more immediately of the rebellion of Pekah, who, having seized possession of a tributary kingdom, had set up as an independent prince, he in a few years renewed the campaign by an attack upon Samaria, the capital of the Israelitish king, and it was in the course of this second expedition he "lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali" (Isa. ix. 1)—*i. e.*, the northern districts of Palestine—principally the portion that lay from the lake Merom to that of Gennesareth. The inhabitants of the whole country and the most important cities became a prey to the conqueror. Ijon—now Merj 'Ayûn, near lake Hâleh. Abel-beth-maachah—or Abel-maim, now Abel, classed with Dan and Ijon (see 1 Ki. xv. 16-20: cf. 2 Chr. xvi. 4). Janoah. Its site has not been identified. Kedesh—commonly called Kedesh-naphtali, now Kedes, an ancient royal city, occupying a most picturesque situation, (see on Josh. xii. 22; xx. 7; Judg. iv.) Hazor. According to *Josephus* ('Antiquities,' b. v., ch. i.), "it lay over the lake Samochonites," and probably south of Kedesh (see on Josh. xix. 35-37). It was long the principal city in that northern region. Gilead—now Jil'ad, an extensive region on the east of Jordan, abounding in excellent pasturage, and well peopled. Galilee. This name, from a root denoting a circle or circuit, was originally applied to a small region round Kedesh (see on Josh. xx. 7; 1 Ki. ix. 11), comprehending the twenty cities presented by Solomon to Hiram (cf. Isa. ix. 1; Matt. iv. 15). all the land of Naphtali. This district, which comprised some of the most beautiful scenery and the most fertile soil in Palestine, extended over the plain of

the Hâleh to the northern shores of the sea of Galilee.

30. Hoshea the son of Elah made a conspiracy against Pekah the son of Remaliah, and smote him, and slew him. It is highly probable that the discontent and disorders consequent upon the sufferings of the people, through so extensive a portion of the kingdom of Israel, originated the conspiracy by which, in the year following, Pekah's throne became vacant. and reigned in his stead, in the twentieth year of Jotham the son of Uzziah. The murder of Pekah introduced a period of anarchy, which lasted nine years, and was terminated by Hoshea's success in establishing himself on the throne (see further on ch. xvii. 1). Jotham's reign having lasted only sixteen years, the meaning is, that the reign of Hoshea began in the twentieth year after the beginning of Jotham's reign: the sacred historian, having not yet introduced the name of Ahaz, reckoned the date by Jotham, whom he had already mentioned (see on 2 Chr. xxviii. 8).

33-38.—JOTHAM'S REIGN OVER JUDAH.

33. Five and twenty years old was he when he began to reign—*i. e.*, alone, for he had ruled as his father's viceroy. 35. the higher gate of the house of the Lord—not the temple itself, but one of its courts; probably that which led into the palace (2 Chr. xxiii. 20).

37. the Lord began to send against Judah, &c. This is the first intimation of the hostile feelings of the kings of Israel and Syria to Judah, which led them to form an alliance and make joint preparations for war, which, however, was not actually waged till the reign of Ahaz.

CHAP. XVI. 1-16.—AHAZ'S WICKED REIGN OVER JUDAH.

2. Twenty years old was Ahaz when he began to reign. What kind of education this young king had received, and to what unhappy influences he had been subjected, was soon made apparent after he assumed the sole power of government.

- not that which was right in the sight of the LORD his God, like David his
 3 father. But he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, yea, ^band made
 his son to pass through the fire, according to the ^cabominations of the
 heathen, whom the LORD cast out from before the children of Israel.
 4 And he sacrificed and burnt incense in the high places, and ^don the hills,
 and under every green tree.
 5 Then ^eRezin king of Syria and Pekah son of Remaliah king of Israel
 came up to Jerusalem to war: and they besieged Ahaz, but could not
 6 overcome him. At that time Rezin king of Syria ^frecovered Elath to
 Syria, and drave the Jews from ^gElath: and the Syrians came to Elath,
 7 and dwelt there unto this day. So Ahaz sent messengers ^hto ⁱTiglath-

B. C. 742.

^b Lev. 18. 21.
^c Deut. 12. 31.
^d 1 Ki. 14. 23.
^e Isa. 7. 1.
^f ch. 14. 22.
^g 1loth.
^h ch. 16. 29.
ⁱ Tiglath-
 pileser.
 1 Chr. 6. 26.
 2 Chr. 28. 10.
 Tiglath-
 pileser.

At the time of his accession the nation do not seem to have generally apostatized with their king to the worship of false gods. In the whole account given in this chapter of the idolatries of Ahaz, not the slightest hint is thrown out respecting the co-operation of his subjects. But the seeds of corruption were sown, and the baneful influence of royal example rapidly spread the contagion of idolatry, and did not that which was right in the sight of the Lord. The character of this king's reign, the voluptuousness and religious degeneracy of all classes of the people, are graphically portrayed in the writings of Isaiah, who prophesied at that period. The great increase of worldly wealth and luxury in the reigns of Azariah and Jotham had introduced a host of corruptions, which, during the reign and by the influence of Ahaz, bore fruit in the idolatrous practices of every kind which prevailed in all parts of the kingdom (see on 2 Chr. xxviii. 24). 3. walked in the way of the kings of Israel. This is descriptive of the early part of his reign, when, like the kings of Israel, he patronized the symbolic worship of God by images, but he gradually went further into gross idolatry (2 Chr. xxviii. 2). made his son to pass through the fire (ch. xxiii. 10). The hands of the idol Moloch, or Baal, being red-hot, the children were passed through between them, which was considered a form of lustration; but there is reason to believe that in certain circumstances the children were burnt to death (Deut. xii. 31; Ps. cvi. 37; Jer. vii. 31; Ezek. xvi. 20, 21; xxiii. 37-39). It was the former of these practices Ahaz observed—that of purifying or sanctifying his children, by letting or 'making them pass through the fire,' and thereby dedicating them to that heathen divinity. It was a simple and quick operation, merely placing the child between the glowing arms of the idol; but the rite was considered symbolical of purity. And something like this is observed still in Persia by the king of Persia, who sends his son, seated on a black horse, to ride through the flames, in order to prove the sacredness of his character, and to show to the crowd that fire will not hurt him. The practice, however, of making children pass through the fire was strongly prohibited in the law (Lev. xviii. 21; xx. 25; Deut. xviii. 10), although there is no evidence that it was practised in Israel till the time of Ahaz.

5. Then Rezin . . . and Pekah . . . came up to Jerusalem to war. Notwithstanding their great efforts and military preparations, they failed to take it, and, being disappointed, raised the siege and returned home (cf. Isa. vii. 1). It appears from Isa. vii. 6 that the invasion of Judah by the confederate kings (confederate in one sense; but Rezin was the superior, and Pekah a tributary vassal, bound to follow his master) was not a mere predatory expedition, but that it was the permanent reduction of the country, the destruc-

tion of the whole family of David, and the establishment of another tributary prince, that they had in view. A close examination of the seventh and eighth chapters in the book of that prophet will furnish clear proof that there was in Jerusalem itself a powerful faction who were actively favouring the designs of the northern allies. [The word פִּזְזָה, rendered (v. 12) a confederacy, is used throughout the history of the kings to signify a conspiracy only (ch. xi. 14; xii. 21; xiv. 19; xv. 30).] At the head of this conspiracy was the son of Tabcal, whom the invaders intended to set, as their vassal, on the throne of Judah, as the geographical position of Syria excluded the possibility of dividing the former country, and annexing any part of it to the dominions of Rezin. Their ultimate object was to bring Judah as well as Israel under vassalage to Syria, that by the union of the three kingdoms (and it is probable, cf. ch. xvii. 4, that Egypt secretly favoured this policy) a broad, compact phalanx of opposition might be presented to the overwhelming power of Assyria. The extirpation of whole dynasties was familiar to those who were connected with Oriental courts; and the older a dynasty was, the more venerated and beloved by the people, the more necessary it was that no survivor should be left to claim back the crown from its usurper. But the unconditional promise given to David, that his seed should for ever sit on the throne of Israel, irrespective of the conduct of his descendants (2 Sam. vii. 12-16), prevented such dynastic changes in Judah, and occasioned the purpose of the allied kings being defeated, in spite of Ahaz. This result was all the more striking, that at another time, and in other circumstances, he was left to himself under incomparably greater calamities, when his kingdom was all but annihilated (see on 2 Chr. xxviii. 5, 8, 17, 18) (see 'Jewish Intelligence,' March, 1867.) 6. Rezin . . . recovered Elath—which Azariah had got into his possession (ch. xiv. 22). and drave the Jews from Elath. This is the first passage in which the name has occurred. It was only in an advanced period of their history that the Hebrews were called "Jews," from the tribe of Judah, which was honoured to furnish the name, both because it returned in great prosperity from Babylon, while the other tribes were hopelessly dispersed, and because from it was to spring the king Messiah. the Syrians . . . dwelt there unto this day [אָרָמִים]. It is most improbable that the Syrians came from Elath. The Keri and very many ancient MSS. have אֲרָמִים, Edomites. The Septuagint version has 'the Edomites,' which the most judicious commentators and travellers prefer.] 7. So Ahaz sent messengers to Tiglath-pileser. In spite of the assurance given him by Isaiah by two signs—the one immediate, the other remote (Isa. vii. 14; viii. 4)—that the confederate kings would not prevail against him,

pileser king of Assyria, saying, I am thy servant, and thy son; come up, and save me out of the hand of the king of Syria, and out of the hand of the king of Israel, which rise up against me. And Ahaz ^a took the silver and gold *that was* found in the house of the LORD, and in the treasures of the king's house, and sent *it for* a present to the king of Assyria. And the king of Assyria hearkened unto him: for the king of Assyria went up against ^b Damascus, and ^c took it, and carried *the people of it* captive to ^d Kir, and slew Rezin.

10 And king Ahaz went to Damascus to meet Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, and saw an altar that *was* at Damascus: and king Ahaz sent to Urijah the priest the fashion of the altar, and the pattern of it, according to all the workmanship thereof. And Urijah the priest built an altar according to all that king Ahaz had sent from Damascus: so Urijah the priest made *it* against king Ahaz came from Damascus. And when the king was come from Damascus, the king saw the altar: and ^e the king approached to the altar, and offered thereon. And he burnt his burnt offering and his meat offering, and poured his drink offering, and sprinkled the blood of ^f his peace offerings, upon the altar. And he brought also ^g the brasen altar, which *was* before the LORD, from the fore front of the house, from between the altar and the house of the LORD, and put it on the north side of the altar. And king Ahaz commanded Urijah the priest, saying, Upon the great altar burn the ^h morning burnt offering, and the evening meat offering, and the king's burnt sacrifice, and his meat offering, with the burnt offering of all the people of the land, and their meat offering, and their drink offerings; and sprinkle upon it all the blood of the burnt offering, and all the blood of the sacrifice: and the brasen altar shall be for me to ⁱ enquire by. Thus did Urijah the priest, according to all that king Ahaz commanded. And ^j king Ahaz cut off ^k the borders of the bases, and removed the laver from off them; and took down ^l the sea from off the brasen oxen that *were* under it, and put it

B. C. 740.
^a ch. 12. 12, 18.
 ch. 18. 15,
 16.
 2 Chr. 16. 2.
 2 Chr. 28. 20.
^b Dam-
 mesek.
^c Foretold.
^d Amos 1. 5.
^e That is,
 Media.
 Isa. 22. 7.
^f 1 Ki. 13. 1.
 2 Chr. 26. 16,
 19.
 2 Chr. 28. 23.
 25.
^g which
 were his.
^h Ex. 40. 6,
 29.
 2 Chr. 4. 1.
ⁱ Ex. 29. 39-
 41.
 Num. 28. 2-
 10.
 ch. 3. 20.
 Dan. 12. 11.
^j Gen. 44. 5.
 ch. 13. 4.
 2 Chr. 33. 6.
 Isa. 2. 6.
 Hos. 4. 12.
^k 2 Chr. 28. 21.
^l 1 Ki. 7. 27.
^m 1 Ki. 7. 23.
 ch. 25. 13-
 16.
 2 Chr. 4. 15.

Ahaz sought aid from the Assyrian monarch, saying, I am thy servant, and thy son. This was a plain acknowledgment of his dependent position upon the Assyrian king (cf. ch. xvii. 4). The same fact may be inferred from various passages, both in Kings and Chronicles; and it can now be proved from the Assyrian monuments, which record the payment of tribute by the tribes of Israel at a much earlier period than any passage of Scripture intimates (see 'Nineveh and Babylon'). To procure an adequate sum for purchasing the succour of the protector's power, Ahaz ransacked the treasures both of the palace and the temple. 9. the king of Assyria hearkened unto him. Thus Ahaz and his people were delivered from impending danger; but it was at an immense sacrifice, as they found afterwards (see on 2 Chr. xxviii. 20). [The Septuagint, Alexandrine, has Κυρομένη; but Cyrene was in Africa.]

10. Ahaz went to Damascus to meet Tiglath-pileser. This was a visit of respect, and perhaps of gratitude. It was the first time, in all probability, that Ahaz and his courtiers had come into contact with the mighty lord-paramount, and yet, although many scenes must have been witnessed in the Assyrian camp, betokening the pomp and circumstance of the great conqueror, one incident only has been put on record, evidently from its being regarded by the sacred historian as being of an idolatrous character. This is expressly stated in the parallel passage (2 Chr. xxviii. 3). Besides, the Assyrian conquerors required all their tributaries to set up in their capitals altars to the great gods, as a token of gratitude, on the part of the victor, to the deities by whose

favour he had triumphed, and a badge of subjection to their suzerain on the part of the dependents. During his stay in that heathen city, Ahaz saw an altar with which he was greatly captivated. Forthwith a sketch of it was transmitted to Jerusalem, with orders to Urijah the priest to get one constructed according to the Damascus model, and to let this new altar supersede the old one in the temple. 15. the brasen altar shall be for me to enquire by. Urijah, with culpable complaisance, acted according to his instructions (v. 16). The sin in this affair consisted in meddling with, and improving, according to human taste and fancy, the altars of the temple, the patterns of which had been furnished by Divine authority (Exod. xxv. 40; xxvi. 30; xxvii. 1; 1 Chr. xxviii. 19). Urijah was one of the witnesses taken by Isaiah to bear his prediction against Syria and Israel (Isa. viii. 2). But neither the king nor Urijah would have dared to commit such gross sacrilege had not a fondness for idolatry prevailed to a wide extent in Jerusalem at the time when those incidents occurred (cf. Isa. chs. i. and ii.) [קָרָבָה, to look at mentally, to think upon (cf. Prov. xx. 25) — i. e., to worship at; and so the Syriac and Arabic versions render it. The Septuagint has εἰς τὸ πρῶτον, for the morning; having evidently read קָרָבָה].

17-19.—HE SPOILS THE TEMPLE.

17. cut off the borders of the bases, &c. It is thought that he did this to employ the elaborate sculpture in adorning his palace. Many writers have supposed that the design of Ahaz in 'cutting off the borders of the bases,' and removing the

- 18 upon a pavement of stones: and the covert for the sabbath that they had built in the house, and the king's entry without, turned he from the house of the LORD for the king of Assyria.
- 19 Now the rest of the acts of Ahaz which he did, *are* they not written in
- 20 the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah? And Ahaz slept with his fathers, and was ²buried with his fathers in the city of David: and Hezekiah his son reigned in his stead.
- 17 IN the twelfth year of Ahaz king of Judah began ^aHoshea the son of 2 Elah to reign in Samaria over Israel nine years. And he did *that which was evil* in the sight of the LORD, but ^bnot as the kings of Israel that were 3 before him. Against him came up ^cShalmaneser king of Assyria; and Hoshea became his servant, and ¹gave him ²presents.
- 4 And the king of Assyria found conspiracy in Hoshea: for he had sent messengers to So king of Egypt, and brought no present to the king of Assyria, as *he had done* year by year; therefore the king of Assyria shut

B. C. 749.
² ch. 21. 18-26.
 2 Chr 28.²⁷.
 CHAP. 17.
^a After an interregnum, ch. 15. 30, ch. 18. 9.
^b ch. 15. 9.
^c ch 18. 9.
 Hos. 10. 14, Shalman.
¹ rendered.
 2 Sam. 5. 2.
² Or, tribute.

laver from off them, 'was to melt them down, and apply them to some idolatrous uses; and as the temple was closed, it is highly probable that he did pervert them to such purposes, as we know that he did with the bronze altar (c. 15) and many of the vessels abstracted from the Lord's house (see on 2 Chr. xxviii. 24). But that the brazen oxen were excepted from this process of fusion and transmutation, appears from the record of Jeremiah, who describes them as preserved in their entrenchment, and enumerates them amongst other articles removed to Babylon (Jer. lii. 17-20). 18. And the covert for the sabbath that they had built in the house [קִרְיָה, cheth. קִרְיָה, kerî, *Gesenius* renders it, 'a covered walk, a portico.' The Septuagint has τὸν θεμέλιον τῆς καθέδρας, the base, or foundation of the chair. The Syriac and Arabic versions call it, 'the house of the Sabbath'. Some think it was the bronze scaffold which Solomon erected in the temple, and on which he stood on the Sabbath or festival days (cf. 2 Chr. vi. 13); while others take it to have been a canopy drawn over the courts of the temple, to screen the worshippers. Whatever it was, and it is not easy to attach a definite meaning to the original word, it seems to have been formed of costly materials, and decorated with rich ornaments, from the anxiety of Ahaz to secrete it from the cupidity of the Assyrian monarch. the king's entry without—a private external entrance for the king into the temple. The change made by Ahaz consisted in removing both of these into the temple, from fear of the king of Assyria, that, in case of a siege, he might secure the entrance of the temple from him.

CHAP. XVII. 1-4.—HOSHEA'S WICKED REIGN.

1. In the twelfth year of Ahaz . . . began Hoshea . . . to reign. The statement in ch. xv. 30 may be reconciled with the present passage in the following manner:—Hoshea conspired against Pekah in the twentieth year of the latter, which was the eighteenth of Jotham's reign. There was an interregnum or period of anarchy, for it was two years before Hoshea was acknowledged king of Israel—i. e., in the fourth year of Ahaz and twentieth of Jotham. In the twelfth year of Ahaz his reign began to be tranquil and prosperous. This general statement describes the characteristic policy of his reign. 2. he did . . . evil . . . but not as the kings of Israel—*or*, as *Sir H. Rawlinson* expresses it ('Outlines of Assyrian History,' p. xxviii.), 'the second accession of Hoshea dated from the period when he threw off the yoke of Assyria.' Unlike his predecessors from the time of Jeroboam, he neither established the rites of

Baal nor compelled the people to adhere to the symbolic worship of the calves. But although in these respects Hoshea acted as became a constitutional king of Israel, yet, through the influence of the nineteen princes who had swayed the sceptre before him, all of whom had been zealous patrons of idolatry, and many of whom had been also infamous for personal crimes, the whole nation had become so completely demoralized that the righteous judgment of an angry Providence impended over it. This seems to be the just view of the case (*Prideaux*, 'Connection'). At the same time, *Josephus* ('Antiquities,' b. ix., ch. xiii.) describes Hoshea as a 'wicked man, and a despiser of the Divine worship.' Accordingly many in the present day have taken up the opinion that he who was the last was the worst and most wicked of all the kings. Through his irreligious character and influence the national depravity was consummated; and the covenant having been completely violated, Jehovah permitted the Assyrian conqueror to overthrow the kingdom of the ten tribes. 3. *Shalmaneser*—or *Shalman* (Hos. x. 14) [Septuagint, Σαλαμανασσάρ, the immediate successor of Tiglath-pileser]. The name of this Assyrian king has been traced on the Ninevite monuments as concerned in an expedition against a king of Samaria, whose name, though mutilated, *Sir H. Rawlinson* reads as Hoshea. It seems to have been soon after he ascended the throne, that, suspecting the fidelity of his Samaritan vassal, he "came up" against Hoshea, king of Israel, and so terrified him with menaces of summary vengeance that he succumbed, and promised the payment of his customary tribute. Satisfied with the submission and promises of Hoshea, the Assyrian withdrew, in order to chastise the cities of Phœnicia, who had joined in the revolt of Israel, and, overrunning the country, he succeeded in reducing them all to a state of dependence, except the island of Tyre.

4 the king of Assyria found conspiracy in Hoshea. *Shalmaneser* had not been long re-established in his capital when he learned that Hoshea, notwithstanding his assurances of devoted allegiance, was meditating defection, and had actually made overtures to a neighbouring power, which might be called the rival and hereditary enemy of Assyria. This was in the sixth year of Hoshea's reign. sent messengers to So king of Egypt [שֹׁבַע; Septuagint, Σηγάβωρ, the Sabac of the classic historians, the Shebek of the monuments, of the twenty-fifth dynasty, and the Sevechus of Manetho (*Kenrick's* 'Egypt,' ii., p. 369). The figure and name of this monarch, *Sebek I.* (see 'Introduction'), have been discovered on the ancient

5 him up, and bound him in prison. Then ^athe king of Assyria came up throughout all the land, and went up to Samaria, and besieged it three 6 years. In ^cthe ninth year of Hoshea the king of Assyria took Samaria, and ^dcarried Israel away into Assyria, ^eand placed them in Halah and in Habor ^fby the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.

E. C. 7:5.
^a ch. 1:9.
^b Hos. 13:16, foretold.
^c Lev. 23:12.
^d 1 Chr. 5:23.

monuments, and they are accurately represented between the colonnade of Philæ and the temple of Abou-Simbel, in the Egyptian court of the Crystal Palace at Sydenham. This famous Ethiopian, having conquered or slain Bocchoris, king of Egypt, of the twenty-fourth dynasty, who was blind, added Upper Egypt to his kingdom of Ethiopia, precisely about that time, as is admitted by all historians. Being a person distinguished for wisdom as well as energy, he for fifty years occupied the Egyptian throne in Memphis; and regarding him as the natural rival and opponent of Assyria, Hoshea cherished the hope that through his aid he might succeed in resisting the threatened attempts of the Assyrian conqueror. To this new sovereign of Egypt Hoshea "sent messengers," with proposals for a friendly alliance between the kingdoms, chiefly with a view to defensive purposes against the grasping despot of the north; and those overtures made to So seem to have been favourably received, since Hoshea raised once more the standard of revolt, and withheld the remittance of his yearly tribute. But Shalmaneser, marching against him in a second expedition, scoured the whole country, and having "shut him up," took the king himself, and imprisoned him for life. A concurrence of many circumstances at this time had led to frequent and easy communication with Egypt. The relaxation of the laws relating to the admission of foreigners into that country, the sailing of trading vessels from Palestine, which could anchor opposite Zoan and Memphis, and the caravans, by the Gaza route across the desert, kept up a continual intercourse with Egypt. From these sources Hoshea could obtain accurate intelligence of the temper and views of the Egyptian court; and its rulers, on their part, did not fail to urge upon him the importance, or rather the absolute necessity, of making a vigorous resistance to the grasping policy of Assyria, together with the superior advantages he could derive from a closer connection with his southern neighbour (see this well brought out by *Drew*, 'Scripture Lands,' p. 197.) 5. Then the king of Assyria came up throughout all the land. This was the third and final expedition of Shalmaneser against the whole of Syria, and it seems to have been after the lapse of a year or two from his second expedition. What new offence had excited his wrath has not been recorded; but as a determined resistance was made by his refractory vassal, Shalmaneser prepared for a regular siege of Samaria, which, through the stubborn valour of the Israelites themselves, or with the aid of Egyptian troops, lasted for nearly three years. At length the city capitulated; or, if *Josephus* is correct ('Antiquities,' b. ix., ch. xiv.), was taken by storm. But the glory of this conquest was not enjoyed by Shalmaneser, who had been suddenly recalled by the outbreak of a domestic revolution, occasioned, or at least encouraged, by his protracted absences from his capital. He was dethroned by the insurrection of an ambitious subject, and he seems to have died also before the fall of Samaria. 6. In the ninth year of Hoshea the king of Assyria took Samaria. Shalmaneser is not named as the conqueror (cf. ch. xviii. 10), for he had been com-

elled to hasten to Assyria on account of a formidable rebellion at home; but he left a portion of his army before the walls of Samaria, intending, as soon as he had suppressed the revolt, to return and prosecute the war in Israel. But these hopes were disappointed by the success of the usurper, who, having by his audacity, vigour, or popular influence, established himself on the Assyrian throne, determined, amongst other military expeditions he planned, to employ his turbulent subjects to march into Syria, and complete the siege of Samaria, which Shalmaneser had not been able to accomplish. The event fulfilled the prophecy of Hosea (xiii. 16), and terminated the actual existence of Israel as a kingdom. "The king of Assyria" who "took Samaria" was Sargon (Isa. xx. 1), or Sargina, as it stands on the monumental inscriptions—a name which signifies 'king *de facto*;' and by assuming that title, he virtually and publicly proclaimed himself a usurper. It was the invariable custom of the Assyrian monarchs at their accession to parade in their annals their name and royal pedigree. But Sargon had no ancestry to boast of; and while of course the absence of any such customary allusions to his personal descent plainly shows that he possessed no hereditary or legal title to the throne, the small number of monuments relating to his predecessor's reign that have been discovered, furnish an inferential argument to the same purport, having probably been destroyed by Sargon (*Oppert*, 'Inscriptions,' quoted *Rawlinson's* 'Ancient Monarchies' ii., p. 408). On the fall of Samaria, which Sargon says he took in his first year, the conqueror adopted a policy which consisted of two very different measures: one was the deportation to Assyria of the major portion of the inhabitants, and the other, the establishment in the depopulated districts of Israel of an Assyrian colony with a deputy governor to rule them, and exact the tribute which had been imposed on that dependent province. Such was the end of the kingdom of Israel. The fall of Samaria and Damascus was, according to the prediction of the prophet, synchronous (Isa. vii. 7-9); and the devastation both of Syria and Israel was foretold at a time and in circumstances when no human sagacity could have anticipated it, (Amos i.) and carried Israel away into Assyria—*i. e.*, the remaining tribes (see *oh* ch. xv. 29). From inscriptions in the palace at Khorsabad (*Layard's* 'Nineveh and Babylon,' p. 618), which record the number of Israelitish captives, it appears that 27,280 were transported into Assyria from Samaria and other parts of the kingdom of Israel. The removal of entire populations from vanquished countries to some other portion of the conqueror's dominions had not been adopted, so far as reliable history testifies, as the policy of any ancient sovereigns in the East, until it was introduced and acted upon by the later Assyrian kings. Soldiers when taken captive in battle, women and children belonging to the conquered enemy, it had, indeed, for ages, been the custom to carry into the land of the victor; and even numerous tribes of foreigners, resident within the territory, and reduced to a state of bondage, like the Israelites in Egypt, had frequently, by the arbitrary will of ancient kings, been dragged to different quarters of their king-

7 For so it was, that the children of Israel had sinned against the LORD their God, which had brought them up out of the land of Egypt, from
 8 under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and had feared other gods, and
 9 walked in the statutes of the heathen, whom the LORD cast out from before the children of Israel, and of the kings of Israel, which they had made. And the children of Israel did secretly those things that were
 10 not right against the LORD their God, and they built them high places in all their cities, from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city. And they set them up images and groves in every high hill, and under

B. C. 721.
 A Lev. 18 3.
 ch 16. 3.
 Eze. 8. 12.
 J ch. 18. 8.
 K 1 Ki. 14. 23.
 Isa 67. 5.
 S statues.
 I Ex 34. 13.
 Deut 16. 21.
 10 Deut. 12. 2.

dom to labour on their public works. But such removals, compulsory though they were, were totally different in character and design from the wholesale transportations which became the policy of the later Assyrians, the Babylonians, the Persians, and even to some extent the Romans—the policy of *refoulement*, or deporting *en masse* the inhabitants of a conquered country. The exhumation of the Ninevite relics, followed by the decipherment of the cuneiform inscriptions, has put us in full possession of the annals of ancient Assyria; and in the minute legends on the walls of the palaces we find details, registered by the authority and under the direction of the conquerors themselves, of the quantity and quality of the spoil—the amount of oxen and sheep—of the number, rank, and treatment of the captives—with the horrid tortures inflicted upon the fallen chiefs. But few traces have been found, though there are some in the times of the old Assyrian empire, of the removal of an entire nation. Tiglath-pileser appears to have been the introducer of this novel experiment for ensuring the submission of a vanquished people (*Josephus* 'Antiquities,' b. ix., ch. xii.); and as it proved successful, it was followed on a large scale by Sargon, Sennacherib, Esarhaddon in Assyria, as well as by the great despots of the succeeding old-world empires—Nebuchadnezzar in Babylon (cf. Jer. xxxix. 8, 9; Daniel), Darins, Artaxerxes in Persia (Esther), &c. This policy of transplanting a conquered people into a foreign land was founded on the idea, that among a mixed multitude, differing in language and religion, they would be kept in better subjection, and have less opportunity of combining to recover their lost independence. The rulers of those vast empires became convinced from experience, that it was difficult or impossible to keep together the heterogeneous masses of people under their sway, especially the people of newly conquered provinces, while they remained in their own country and amid their old associations; and hence political expediency suggested the scheme of transporting the vanquished to some remote part of their dominions, and stocking the land thus left vacant by a colony of strangers (see *Layard* 'Nineveh and its Remains,' ii., pp. 374, 375; *Rawlinson's* 'Ancient Monarchies,' ii., pp. 326, 343, 397, 398, 423, 523, 529; *Fox Talbot's* 'Assyrian Texts,' pp. 3, 4, 7, 11, 17; *Rawlinson's* 'Herodotus,' ii., pp. 563, 564). The practice is continued still in the East (*Chardin's* 'Voyage en Perse,' iii., p. 292), and placed them, &c. This passage should stand thus, omitting the particle *by*, which is printed in italics, to show it is not in the original—and placed them in Halah, and on the Chabor, a river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.' Halah—the same as Calah (Gen. x. 11, 12), in the region of the Laycus or Zab river, about a day's journey from the ruins of Nineveh. Chabor—is a river, and it is remarkable that there is a river rising in the central highlands of Assyria which retains this name, Khabour, unchanged to the present day. Gozan (pasture), or Zozan, are the high-

lands of Assyria, which afford pasturage. The region in which the Chabour and the Zab rise, and through which they flow, is peculiarly of this character. The Nestorians repair to it with their numerous flocks, spending the summer on the banks or in the highlands of the Chabour or the Zab. Considering the high authority we possess for regarding Gozan and Zozan as one name, there can be no doubt that this is the Gozan referred to in this passage. [The Septuagint makes both of these rivers, *ἐν Ἀλαῖ καὶ ἐν Ἀβωρ ποταμοῖς*.] cities of the Medes—villages, according to the Syriac and Vulgate versions. [The Septuagint has *καὶ ὄρη Μηδῶν*, and mountains of the Medes.] This was the second and last deportation of the Israelites (cf. ch. xv. 29). It was accomplished by Sargon, of course not all at once, but progressively, perhaps extending over weeks; and the conqueror has recorded the event on the walls of his palace at Khorsabad, in the following terms:—'Samaria I looked at, I captured . . . 27,280 men who dwell in it I carried away . . . I appointed a governor over the country, and continued upon them the tribute of the former people' (see *Rawlinson's* 'Herodotus,' i., 493). The Medish inhabitants of Gozan, having revolted, had been destroyed by the kings of Assyria, and nothing was more natural than that they should wish to place in it an industrious people, like the captive Israelites, while it was well suited to their pastoral life. This is the view that has been generally taken of the geographical position of those localities to which the last portion of the Israelites was transported (*Bochart's* 'Geog. Sac.,' iii., 14; *Keil*, in loco; *Kitto's* 'Cyclopaedia,' article 'Gozan:' cf. *Grant's* 'Nestorians'), *Rev. G. Rawlinson* (in 'Bampton Lectures,' p. 425, and in his article 'Gozan,' *Smith's* 'Dictionary') advocates the theory that these places were all, excepting those mentioned in the last clause, to be found in Mesopotamia,—that Halah was a district called *Chalcitis*, the modern *Gla*; *Habor*, the *Aborrhah*, or *Chaboras*; *Gozan*, which (ch. xix. 12) is coupled with *Haran*, stood in a district which was anciently called *Gauzanitis*, or Gozan (*Mygdonia*; *Ptolemy*, v., 18). *Hara* is added, 1 Chr. v. 26, which is evidently Haran or Charran. 'Undoubtedly,' he adds, 'the bulk of the Israelites were settled in this country (Mesopotamia), while Sargon selected a certain number to colonize his new cities in Media.'

5-23.—SAMARIA TAKEN, AND ISRAEL FOR THEIR SINS CARRIED CAPTIVE.

7. For so it was, that the children of Israel had sinned. There is here given a very full and impressive vindication of the Divine procedure in punishing his highly privileged but rebellious and apostate people (*Hävernick*, 'Old Testament,' p. 51; *Graves*, ii., p. 171). No wonder that, amid so gross a perversion of the worship of the true God, and the national propensity to do reverence to idols, the Divine patience was exhausted, and that the God whom they had forsaken, by violating the national covenant, an adherence to which

11 every green tree: and there they burnt incense in all the high places, as *did* the heathen whom the LORD carried away before them; and wrought
 12 wicked things to provoke the LORD to anger: for they served idols, ^owhereof the LORD had said unto them, ^oYe shall not do this thing.
 13 Yet the LORD testified against Israel and against Judah ⁴by all the prophets, *and by all* ²the seers, saying, ²Turn ye from your evil ways, and keep my commandments *and* my statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by my servants the
 14 prophets. Notwithstanding they would not hear, but ⁷hardened their necks, like to the neck of their fathers, that did not believe in the LORD
 15 their God. And they rejected his statutes, ⁴and his covenant that he made with their fathers, and his testimonies which he testified against them; and they followed ⁴vanity, and ⁴became vain, and went after the heathen that *were* round about them, *concerning* whom the LORD had
 16 charged them, that they should ²not do like them. And they left all the commandments of the LORD their God, and ²made them molten images, *even* two calves, ²and made a grove, and worshipped all the host of
 17 heaven, ²and served Baal. And ²they caused their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire, and used ²divination and enchantments, and sold ²themselves to do evil in the sight of the LORD, to
 18 provoke him to anger. Therefore the LORD was very angry with Israel, and removed them out of his sight: there was none left ⁶but the tribe of
 19 Judah only. Also ⁴Judah kept not the commandments of the LORD their God, but walked in the statutes of Israel which they made.
 20 And the LORD rejected all the seed of Israel, and afflicted them, and ⁶delivered them into the hand of spoilers, until he had cast them out
 21 of his sight. For ⁷he rent Israel from the house of David; and ⁷they made Jeroboam the son of Nebat king: and Jeroboam drave Israel
 22 from following the LORD, and made them sin a great sin. For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they
 23 departed not from them, until the LORD removed Israel out of his sight, ²as he had said by all his servants the prophets. So was Israel carried away out of their own land to Assyria unto this day.
 24 And ¹the king of Assyria brought *men* from Babylon, and from Cuthah, and from ¹Ava, and from Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed *them* in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel: and they
 25 possessed Samaria, and dwelt in the cities thereof. And so it was at the

B. C. 721.
^a Ex. 10. 3.
^b Lev. 26. 1.
^c Deut. 5. 7.
^d Deut. 4. 19.
^e by the hand of all.
^f 1 Sam. 9. 9.
^g Isa. 1. 16-20.
^h Jer. 18. 11.
ⁱ Jer. 25. 5.
^j Deut. 31. 27.
^k Pro. 29. 1.
^l Ex. 24 6-7.
^m Deut. 29:5.
ⁿ Deut. 32. 21.
^o 1 Ki. 16. 13.
^p 1 Cor. 8. 4.
^q Ps. 115. 8.
^r Jer. 2. 5.
^s Rom. 1. 21.
^t Deut. 12. 30.
^u Ex. 32. 8.
^v 1 Ki. 12. 29.
^w 1 Ki. 14. 15.
^x 1 Ki. 15. 13.
^y 1 Ki. 22. 53.
^z ch. 11. 19.
^{aa} Lev. 18. :1.
^{ab} Lev. 21. 2.
^{ac} ch. 16. 3.
^{ad} Isa. 67. 5.
^{ae} Jer. 7. 31.
^{af} Eze. 23. 37.
^{ag} Deut. 18. 10.
^{ah} Isa. 2. 6.
^{ai} 1 Ki. 21. 20.
^{aj} Isa. 50. 1.
^{ak} 1 Ki. 11. 13.
^{al} Jer. 3. 8.
^{am} ch. 13. 3.
^{an} ch. 15. 29.
^{ao} 1 Ki. 11. 11.
^{ap} 1 Ki. 12. 20.
^{aq} 1 Ki. 14. 16.
^{ar} Ezra 4. 2.
^{as} ch. 18. 34.

formed their title to the occupation of Canaan, permitted them to go into captivity, that they might learn the difference between His service and that of their despotic conquerors.

24. the king of Assyria brought men from Babylon, &c. The places vacated by the captive Israelites he ordered to be occupied by several colonies of his own subjects from Babylon and other provinces. from Cuthah—or Tiggaba, a city about fifteen miles north-east from Babylon, now Ibrahim, specially dedicated to Nergal, the deified Nimrod (*Rawlinson's* 'Herodotus,' i., p. 632; also ii., p. 587), and uniformly designated his city in the ancient inscriptions (see on v. 30). Josephus places Cuthah in Persia ('Antiquities,' b. ix., ch. xiv.; see also 'Journal of Royal Asiatic Society,' vol. x., 15, 23, note. and from Ava—or Ahava (Ezra viii. 15, 21), now Hit, situated on the Euphrates, in the northern extremity of Babylon (see *Rawlinson's* 'Herodotus,' i., p. 602). and from Hamath—the chief city of Upper Syria, which, on the conquest and death of Rezin, fell into the hands of the Assyrian conqueror (ch. xviii. 34; xix. 13). and from Sepharvaim. The name has a dual termination, because there were

two places so called, on either side of the Euphrates. It is now Sippara, at Surra, near Mosaih, about twenty miles directly above Babylon (see on ch. xix. 13) (*Rawlinson*, 'Bampton Lectures,' pp. 406, 407; and 'Ancient Monarchies,' i., pp. 20, 27, 172). and placed them in the cities of Samaria, &c. It must not be supposed that the Israelites were universally removed to a man. A remnant was left, chiefly, however, of the poor and lower classes, with whom these foreign colonists mingled, so that the prevailing character of society about Samaria was heathen, not Israelite; for the Assyrian colonists became masters of the land, and forming partial intermarriages with the remnant Jews, the inhabitants became a mongrel race, no longer a people of Ephraim (Isa. vii. 6), who, imperfectly instructed in the creed of the Jews, acquired also a mongrel doctrine. Being too few to replenish the land, lions, by which the land had been infested (Judg. xiv. 5; 1 Sam. xvii. 34; 1 Ki. xiii. 24; xx. 36; Song iv. 8), multiplied, and committed frequent ravages upon them. Recognizing in these attacks a judgment from the God of the land, whom they had not worshipped, they petitioned the Assyrian court to send them some

beginning of their dwelling there, *that* they feared not the LORD: there-
 23 fore the LORD sent lions among them, which slew *some* of them. Where-
 fore they spake to the king of Assyria, saying, The nations which thou
 hast removed, and placed in the cities of Samaria, know not the manner
 of the God of the land: therefore he hath sent lions among them, and,
 behold, they slay them, because they know not the manner of the God
 27 of the land. Then the king of Assyria commanded, saying, Carry
 thither one of the priests whom ye brought from thence; and let them
 go and dwell there, and let him teach them the manner of the God of
 28 the land. Then one of the priests, whom they had carried away from
 Samaria, came and dwelt in Beth-el, and taught them how they should
 fear the LORD.
 29 Howbeit every nation made ^m gods of their own, and put *them* in the
 houses of the high places which the Samaritans had made, every nation
 30 in their cities wherein they dwelt. And the men of Babylon made
 Succoth-benoth, and the men of Cuth made Nergal, and the men of
 31 Hamath made Ashima, and ⁿ the Avites made Nibhaz and Tartak, and
 the Sepharvites ^o burnt their children in fire to Adrammelech and
 32 Anammelech, the gods of Sepharvaim. So they feared the LORD, ^p and
 made unto themselves of the lowest of them priests of the high places,
 33 which sacrificed for them in the houses of the high places. They ^q feared
 the LORD, and serve their own gods, after the manner of the nations
^r whom they carried away from thence.
 34 Unto this day they do after the former manners: they fear not the

B. C. 678.

* Josh. 22. 25.
 Jer. 10. 7.
 Dan. 6. 26.
 Eph. 2. 12.
 † Judg. 17. 13.
 1 Ki. 12. 31.
 1 Ki. 13. 2.
 2 Chr. 11. 15.
 †† Ps. 115. 4.
 Ps. 135. 15.
 Isa. 44. 9.
 Jer. 10. 3.
 Hos. 8. 5.
 Mic. 4. 5.
 ††† Ezra 4. 9.
 †††† Lev. 18. 21.
 Deut. 12. 31.
 ††††† 1 Ki. 12. 31.
 1 Ki. 13. 32.
 †††††† 1 Ki. 18. 21.
 Isa. 29. 13.
 Hos. 10. 2.
 Zeph. 1. 5.
 Matt. 6. 21.
 Luke 16. 17.
 ††††††† Or, who
 carr.ed
 them away
 from
 thence.

Jewish priests, who might instruct them in the right way of serving Him. The king, in compliance with their request, sent them one of the exiled priests of Israel, who established his headquarters at Beth-el, and taught them how they should fear the Lord. It is not said that he took a copy of the Pentateuch with him, out of which he might teach them. *Oral teaching* was much better fitted for the superstitious people than instruction out of a written book. He could teach them more effectually by word of mouth. Believing that he would adopt the best and simplest method for them, it is unlikely that he took the written law with him, and so gave origin to the Samaritan copy of the Pentateuch (*Davidson's 'Criticisms'*). Besides, it is evident from his being one of the exiled priests, and from his settlement at Beth-el, that he was not a Levite, but one of the calf-worshipping priests, and, consequently, that his instructions would be neither sound nor efficient.

29. Howbeit every nation made gods of their own. These Assyrian colonists, however, though instructed in the worship and acknowledging the being of the God of Israel, did not suppose Him to be the only God. Like other heathens, they combined His worship with that of their own gods; and as they formed a promiscuous society from different nations or provinces, a variety of idols were acknowledged among them. 30. Succoth-benoth—i. e., the 'tents or booths of the daughters,' similar to those in which the Babylonian damsels celebrated impure rites (Amos ii. 8). *Hävernich*, however, ('Introduction,' p. 86: cf. *Hengstenberg*, 'Beitr.,' sec. 160) considers this an anomalous and as yet unexplained form of expression, which must have not a Hebrew, but an Assyrian origin. Nergal. The Jewish writers say this idol was in the form of a cock; and it is certain that a cock is often seen associated with a priest on the Assyrian monuments (*Layard*, 'Nineveh and Babylon,' p. 538). But modern critics, looking to the astrological character of Assyrian idolatry, generally consider Nergal as

the planet Mars, the god of war. It was most natural that "the men of Cuth," when transplanted to Samaria, should carry the worship of their favourite deity with them into their new country. The name of this idol formed part of the appellation of two of the king of Babylon's princes (Jer. xxxix. 3). Ashima—an idol under the form of an entirely bald he-goat. 31. Nibhaz—under that of a dog; that Egyptian form of animal worship having prevailed in ancient Syria, as is evident from the image of a large dog at the mouth of the Nahr el-Kelb, or Dog river. Tartak—according to the Rabbis, was in the form of an ass; but others understand it as a planet of ill-omen; probably Saturn. Adrammelech—the 'fire king,' or, it may be, 'the royal arranger,' 'the arranger and benefactor.' The sun-god is not unfrequently mentioned in the Assyrian inscriptions. Although no temple was specially reared to the sun, that deity appears to have been worshipped in Assyria under three different forms—as 'the rising sun,' 'the meridian sun,' and 'the setting sun.' The male and female powers of the sun, whose worship at Shepharvaim (Sippara) was celebrated throughout the East, were identified by the Greeks and Romans with the Apollo and Diana of classical mythology. It was worshipped in the form of a mule; others maintain, in that of a peacock. Sippara is called *Tsipar sha Shama*, 'Sippara of the sun,' in various inscriptions, and possessed a temple of the god, which was repaired and adorned by many of the ancient Chaldean kings, as well as by Nebuchadnezzar, &c. (*Rawlinson*, 'Ancient Monarchies,' i., p. 161). Anammelech—worshipped in the form of a hare; others say, in that of a goat. 'No satisfactory explanation has yet been given of this name. If it represents the female power of the sun, we must suppose that *Ana* is an abbreviated form of *Annuit*, and that *Melek* is for *Malcah*, the Jews, from contempt, not caring to be correct in their names of false gods' (*Rawlinson*, 'Ancient Monarchies,' i., p. 163).

34. Unto this day.—the time of the Babylonian

LORD, neither do they after their statutes, or after their ordinances, or after the law and commandment which the LORD commanded the children of Jacob, whom he named Israel; with whom the LORD had made a covenant, and charged them, saying, "Ye shall not fear other gods, nor bow yourselves to them, nor serve them, nor sacrifice to them: but the LORD, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt with great power, and a stretched-out arm, him shall ye fear, and him shall ye worship, and to him shall ye do sacrifice. And the statutes, and the ordinances, and the law, and the commandment, which he wrote for you, ye shall observe to do for evermore; and ye shall not fear other gods. And the covenant that I have made with you ye shall not forget; neither shall ye fear other gods. But the LORD your God ye shall fear; and he shall deliver you out of the hand of all your enemies. Howbeit they did not hearken, but they did after their former manner.

So these nations feared the LORD, and served their graven images, both their children, and their children's children: as did their fathers, so do they unto this day.

NOW it came to pass, in the third year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, that Hezekiah the son of Ahaz king of Judah began to reign. Twenty and five years old was he when he began to reign; and he reigned twenty and nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also was Abi, the daughter of Zachariah. And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that David his father did.

He removed the high places, and brake the images, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brassen serpent that Moses had made:

B. C. 678.
 Gen. 32. 28.
 Gen. 35. 0.
 1 Ki 11. 31.
 Judg 6 10.
 Ex. 20. 5.
 Ex. 6. 6.
 Lev. 10 32.
 Deut. 0.20.
 Deut. 12. 5.
 6, 11, 12.
 Matt. 10. 3.
 Rev. 15. 4.
 Deut 5 32.
 Deut 4. 23.
 Deut. 6. 12.
 Deut. 8. 11.
 Josh. 24 11.
 1 Ki. 18. 21.
 Zeph. 1. 5.
 Matt 6. 21.
 Luke 16. 13.
 John 4. 24.
 Rev. 3. 15.
 CHAP. 18.
 2 Chr 25 27.
 2 Chr. 29. 1.
 2 Chr. 29. 1.
 Abijah.
 2 Chr 31. 1.
 1 statutes.
 Num. 21 9.

exile, when this book was composed. Their religion was a strange medley or compound of the service of God and the service of idols. Such was the first settlement of the people, afterwards called Samaritans, who were sent from Assyria to colonize the land, when the kingdom of Israel, after having continued 256 years, was overthrown.

CHAP. XVIII. 1-3.—HEZEKIAH'S GOOD REIGN.

1. Hezekiah [הֶזְקִיָּא] (see *vv.* 9, 10), and הֶזְקִיָּא, Jehzekiah (see similar variations of other proper names: cf. Jer. xxii. 24; xxxvii. 1 with Jer. xxiv. 1; xxvii. 20: cf. 1 Chr. xv. 20 with 1 Chr. xv. 18: cf. Zech. i. 1 with Isa. viii. 2]) began to reign. 2. Twenty and five years old. According to this statement (cf. ch. xvi. 2), he must have been born when his father Ahaz was no more than eleven years old. Paternity at an age so early is not unprecedented in the warm climates of the south, where the human frame is matured sooner than in our northern regions. But the case admits of solution in a different way. It was customary for the later kings of Israel to assume their son and heir into partnership in the government during their lives; and as Hezekiah began to reign in the third year of Hoshea (*v.* 1), and Hoshea in the twelfth year of Ahaz (ch. xvii. 1), it is evident that Hezekiah began to reign in the fourteenth year of Ahaz his father, and so reigned two or three years before his father's death. So that at the beginning of his reign in conjunction with his father, he might be only twenty-two or twenty-three, and Ahaz a few years older than the common calculation makes him. Or the case may be solved thus,—As the ancient writers in the computation of time take notice of the year they mention, whether finished or newly begun, so Ahaz might be near twenty-one years old at the beginning of his reign, and near seventeen years older at his death; while, on the other hand, Hezekiah, when he began to reign, might be just entering into his twenty-fifth year, and so Ahaz would be nearly fourteen years old when his son

Hezekiah was born—no uncommon age for a young man to become a father in southern latitudes. his mother's name also was Abi [אֲבִי], אֲבִי (2 Chr. xxix. 1), Abijah; Septuagint, "Αβου]. the daughter of Zachariah [זַכַּרְיָהּ=זַכְרִיָּהּ, Zechariah (2 Chr. xxix. 1); probably the person mentioned, Isa. viii. 2; Septuagint, Vatican, Συγάτηρ Ζαχαριῶν; Alexandrine, Ζαχαριῶν].

4-7.—HE DESTROYS IDOLATRY.

4. He removed the high places, &c.—i. e., pillars or altars of stone (Deut. vii. 5; xii. 3; xvi. 22) erected on the summit of hills or any kind of eminence for unlawful and frequently idolatrous purposes (ch. xii. 3; xiv. 4; Ezek. vi. 6). There were high places at Beth-el (ch. xxiii. 15), Beersheba (Amos viii. 14), Moriah (2 Sam. xxiv. 8), Gilead (Hos. xii. 11; v. 1; vi. 8), Ramah, Olivet (ch. xxiii. 13), Carmel (1 Ki. xviii. 30), Gibeon (1 Ki. iii. 4). Although Hezekiah seems to have sent his royal proclamations through the northern kingdom of Israel, now desolate, and retaining but a small remnant of people (see 2 Chr. xxx.), it was only "the high places" in Judah his royal authority could be effective in removing. The great extent to which idolatry on high places was carried in the reign of his father Ahaz appears from ch. xvi. 4: cf. Jer. xxxii. 35. The methods adopted by this good king for extirpating idolatry, and accomplishing a thorough reformation in religion, are fully detailed, 2 Chr. xxix. 3; xxxi. 19. But they are here indicated very briefly, and in a sort of passing allusion. cut down the groves [הַיַּעֲרִים] (singular)—the Asherah, probably a wooden statue of Ashtoreth, or Astarte. When the image is spoken of as to be destroyed or burned, the word used is always "cut down." brake in pieces the brassen serpent. The preservation of this remarkable relic of antiquity (Num. xxi. 5-9) might, like the pot of manna and Aaron's rod, have remained an interesting and instructive monument of the Divine goodness and mercy to the Israelites in

for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it; and
 5 he called it ²Nehushtan. He ^ctrusted in the LORD God of Israel; so
^fthat after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor
 6 *any* that were before him. For he ^gclave to the LORD, and departed not
³from following him, but kept his commandments, which the LORD com-
 7 manded Moses. And the LORD ^hwas with him; and he prospered
 whithersoever he went forth: and he rebelled against the king of
 8 Assyria, and served him not. He smote the Philistines, *even* unto ⁴Gaza,
 and the borders thereof, from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city.

E. C. 726.

² That is,
 A piece of
 brass.
^c ch. 19. 10.
^f ch. 21. 25.
^g Deut. 10. 20.
³ from after
 him.
^h 2 Chr. 15. 2.
⁴ Azzah.

the wilderness; and it must have required the exercise of no small courage and resolution to destroy it. But in the progress of degeneracy it had become an object of idolatrous worship; and as the interests of true religion rendered its demolition necessary, Hezekiah, by taking this bold step, consulted both the glory of God and the good of his country. unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it. It is not to be supposed that this superstitious reverence had been paid to it ever since the time of Moses—for such idolatry would not have been tolerated either by David or by Solomon in the early part of his reign; by Asa or by Jehoshaphat, had they been aware of such a folly. But the probability is, that the introduction of this superstition does not date earlier than the time when the family of Ahab, by their alliance with the throne of Judah, exercised a pernicious influence in paving the way for all kinds of idolatry. Hence it is said, “the children of Israel did burn incense to it”—i. e., the people of the northern as well as the southern kingdom. It is possible, however, as some think, that its origin may have arisen out of a misapprehension of Moses’ language (Num. xxi. 8) Serpent-worship, how revolting soever it may appear, was an extensively diffused form of idolatry, and it would obtain an easier reception in Israel, that many of the neighbouring nations, such as the Egyptians and Phœnicians, adored idol gods in the form of serpents as the emblems of health and immortality. Amongst the numerous hypotheses advanced to account for the origin of this singular reverence, not the least likely is, that it arose from vague and distorted rumours of the miraculous healing of the Israelites in the wilderness; and the image of a serpent became the deified symbol of something good and beneficent. Thus *cerastes* (horned snake) was sacred to Ammon, an Egyptian deity; and the venomous *naiia-huj* was regarded as an emblem of Onep, their good deity. The Phœnicians, too, considered the serpent a good demon; and so did the Romans, amongst whom the sign of *Æsculapius* was a serpent. Besides, the tutelary protectors of countries and cities were worshipped under the figure of serpents; and the sculptured representation or picture of two serpents at the entrance was a sign that a place was consecrated (*Tit. Livii*, ‘*Epitome*,’ lib. xi.: *Ovid*, ‘*Metamorph.*,’ lib. xv.; ‘*Fab.*,’ l.; *Persius*, ‘*Satir.*,’ i., v. 113; *Eusebius*, ‘*De Præp. Evang.*,’ lib. i., cap. x.; *Wilkinson’s* ‘*Antient Egyptians*,’ ii., 134; iv., 395; v., 64, 238; *Marsham*, ‘*Canonical Chronology*,’ pp. 143, 149; *Witsius*, ‘*Ægyptiaca*,’ i., 852). The prevalence of ophiolatry in Egypt, Phœnicia, Syria, and Assyria, could scarcely fail to arrest the attention and impress the minds of the Hebrew people, till in times of ignorance and idolatry, they adopted the same superstition; and although the brasn serpent in the wilderness had no symbolic import, but was merely an external sign, selected probably for the general ground of removing all ideas of the natural accomplishment of the cure, yet the tradition concerning the animal the sight

of which had restored the wounded Hebrews, and the reverence felt for it by the neighbouring nations, naturally produced similar sentiments in the minds of the Israelites, till admiration for a venerable relic of antiquity, combined with the contagion of contemporary usages, had, in the degenerate times of the monarchy, gradually led to the worship of the brasn serpent. and he called it *Nehushtan*—i. e., a mere piece of brass [נְהוּשְׁטָן, brass, copper; Septuagint, *Νεοσάψ*]. 5. He trusted in the Lord God of Israel—without invoking the aid or purchasing the succour of foreign auxiliaries, like Asa (1 Ki. xv. 18, 19) and Ahaz, (ch. xvi. 17; Isa. vii.) was none like him among all the kings of Judah—of course, David and Solomon are excepted, they having had the sovereignty of the whole country. In the petty kingdom of Judah, Josiah alone had a similar testimony borne to him (ch. xxiii. 25). But even he was surpassed by Hezekiah, who set about a national reformation at the beginning of his reign, which Josiah did not. The pious character and the excellent course of Hezekiah were prompted, amongst other secondary influences, by a sense of the calamities his father’s wicked career had brought on the country, as well as by the counsels of *Isaiah*. *Dean Stanley* (‘*Lectures on the Jewish Church*,’ xxxviii.) says (on the authority of *Justin*, ‘*Dial. c. Tryph.*,’ *Tertull.*, ‘*Adv. Marc.*,’ v., 9; *Pearson*, ‘*On the Creed*,’ p. 112) that ‘there is a strong Jewish tradition that Hezekiah applied to himself not only the predictions of *Isaiah*, foretelling the birth of a Divine heir to the throne, but the 20th and 110th Psalms.’ 7. The Lord was with him; and he prospered whithersoever he went forth. Since the inglorious reign of Ahaz, Judah had continued to groan under the Assyrian yoke, when, consequent upon the religious reformation Hezekiah inaugurated, the physical as well as the moral energies of the people were roused, and in particular the agricultural prosperity of the country returned (see on 2 Chr. xxx. 12; xxxi. 5-11), which was only interrupted for a brief space in the fourteenth year of his reign. His subjects enjoyed undisturbed, the fruit of the vine only excepted (Isa. v. 11, 12), the abundant produce of the country (Isa. vii. 15, 21-25). he rebelled against the king of Assyria, and served him not—i. e., the yearly tribute his father had stipulated to pay, he, with imprudent haste withheld. Pursuing the policy of a truly theocratic sovereign, he was, through the Divine blessing which rested on his government, raised to a position of great public and national strength. *Salmanser* had withdrawn from Palestine, being engaged in a war with Tyre, or probably was dead; and assuming, consequently, that full independent sovereignty which God had settled on the house of David, he both shook off the Assyrian yoke, and, by an energetic movement against the Philistines, recovered from that people the territory which they had taken from his father Ahaz (2 Chr. xxviii. 18). Besides the revived activity and moral vigour of

- 9 And ⁱit came to pass in the fourth year of king Hezekiah, which was
 the seventh year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, *that* Shalmaneser
 10 king of Assyria came up against Samaria, and besieged it. And at the
 end of three years they took it; *even* in the sixth year of Hezekiah, that
 11 *is* ^jthe ninth year of Hoshea king of Israel, Samaria was taken. And
 the king of Assyria did carry away Israel unto Assyria, and put them ^kin
 Halah and in Habor *by* the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes;
 12 because ^lthey obeyed not the voice of the LORD their God, but trans-
 gressed his covenant, *and* all that Moses the servant of the LORD com-
 manded, and would not hear *them*, nor do *them*.
 13 Now ^min the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah did ⁿSennacherib king

B. C. 723.
ⁱ ch. 17. 3.
^j ch. 17. 6.
^k 1 Chr. 5. 26.
^l Deut. 8. 20.
Deut. 11. 28.
Deut. :9. 24.
1 Ki. 9. 6.
ch. 7. 7.
Dan. 9. 6.
10.
^m 2 Chr. 32. 1.
Isa. 36. 1.
ⁿ Sannherib.

the people of Judah, connected with the material prosperity of the country, and the religious reforms carried on by Hezekiah, and which, doubtless, was the primary motive that encouraged him to shake off the Assyrian yoke, it is necessary to take into account the secret influence of Egypt upon the councils of that king. It must have appeared an object of the greatest importance to the Egyptian monarchs to fortify their country against the encroachments of Assyria, by securing the aid of an allied power on their Asiatic frontier; and it must have pressed itself on the mind of the Hebrew ruler as no less desirable for his interests to be supported on the south by the friendly co-operation of so potent and so contiguous a kingdom as Egypt. As such an alliance seemed, in a political view, subservient to their mutual advantage, there is abundant evidence that the idea was earnestly and repeatedly advocated by the emissaries of Egypt in the court of Hezekiah, and so favourably entertained by a large and influential party of his councillors, that at length the policy was adopted at Jerusalem. Hezekiah, from the intermediate position of his small kingdom, could not hope, humanly speaking, to maintain an absolute independence; but he resolved to change his master, and on a comparative estimate of the benefits derivable from a connection with one of the great rival powers, expediency dictated a preference of Egypt. It was a hazardous step,—one sure to be resented by the haughty despot of Assyria as an insult as well as rebellion, and to be followed by an invasion of Judah, which, as the debatable land between the antagonistic kingdoms of the north and the south would henceforth be the continual scene of war and calamitous desolation. The time appeared favourable, for Sargon, the conqueror of Samaria, was dead, and his son, Sennacherib, a young untried prince, had recently ascended the throne of Assyria. Against this resolution of the king and court of Judah, Isaiah all along raised a decided and earnest protest (Isa. xxx. 1-5; xxxi. 1-3). Whether he doubted that Egypt was capable, in her then distracted state, so soon after the usurpation of the Ethiopian So, or Shebek, to be a useful ally to his country, and was inclined therefore to prefer a continued submission to Assyria, cannot be gathered from his writings. In counselling Hezekiah, he did not advocate either revolt or submission; he proceeded upon a principle entirely different from that of ordinary politics—that of urging an unwavering faith in the protection of the Divine King and Head of the nation, by an immediate and universal re-establishment of the worship and law of God. This step he recommended to the king as in the first instance the most becoming a theocratic ruler, and the most certain of realizing the fulfilment of the promises made to his people. Acting in this way, the prophet assured him he

would find that, with the Divine favour, "one would chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight;" whereas, without help from above, all his military preparations and strategic manoeuvres would not secure the deliverance of his kingdom. The remonstrances of Isaiah were unavailing: for though Hezekiah was a good and pious, he was a weak man, liable to be swayed by powerful councils, and through their ascendant influence he not only revolted from Assyria, but formed a defensive league with Egypt. All the consequences which Isaiah had predicted followed, when "he rebelled against the king of Assyria, and served him not."

9. Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against Samaria, and besieged it—(see on ch. xvii. 6.) 10. at the end of three years they took it—not *he, i. e.*, Shalmaneser. The change of expression is remarkable, and can only be accounted for by the circumstance that Shalmaneser, having been called to Assyria by a rebellion in his capital, left his army before the walls of Samaria, intending to return; but he having died, the successful usurper, Sargon, who became king, repaired to Syria, and prosecuting the siege of Samaria with new vigour, reduced it at the end of the third year (see on ch. xvii. 6). Standing on a steep eminence in an extensive plain, environed by hills, it possessed advantages for resisting a siege, and holding out against vigorous assaults three times as long as that which exhausted the resources of Jerusalem (see *Stanley*, 'Sinai and Palestine,' p. 241; *Van de Velde*, i., pp. 376, 377).

13. in the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah. The numerals, it is thought, are corrupt in the present Hebrew text. *Dr. Hinck's* ('Chronological Appendix to his Paper on the Assyrio-Babylonian Characters,' vol. xxii., 'Transactions Royal Irish Academy') proposes to read, 'the fifth,' instead of "the fourteenth year" of Hezekiah, as the date of Sennacherib's invasion. *Rev. G. Rawlinson*, on the other hand ('Ancient Monarchies,' ii., p. 434), is of opinion that if Sargon took Samaria in the sixth year of Hezekiah's reign, he must now have been in his twenty-seventh year, and suggests that the verse should run thus,— 'Now in the twenty-seventh year of king Hezekiah,' instead of, "in the fourteenth year." **Sennacherib**—the son and successor of Shalmaneser. This warlike prince, among the many expeditions in which he engaged, invaded Syria with an immense army, directing his attack in the first instance upon Phœnicia, many of the petty sovereigns of which had revolted at the time of his accession. Having reduced them all in succession, and received tribute from their cities, he pressed southward against Egypt; and the first place at which he stopped in this southern route was the Philistine city of Ekron, the inhabitants of which, having allied themselves with

of Assyria come up against all the fenced cities of Judah, and took 14 them. And Hezekiah king of Judah sent to the king of Assyria to Lachish, saying, I have offended; return from me: that which thou puttest on me will I bear. And the king of Assyria appointed unto Hezekiah king of Judah three hundred talents of silver, and thirty 15 talents of gold. And Hezekiah gave him all the silver that was found

B. C. 713.

" ch. 12. 18.
ch. 16. 8.
2 Chr. 12. 9.
2 Chr. 16. 2.
2 Chr. 28. 21.
1 ro. 20. 23.

Shebek of Egypt, had expelled their king, Padi, who was rather inclined to lean upon Assyria. The Ekronites invoked the aid of Hezekiah, who, acceding to their request, involved himself in the responsibilities of the revolt, and took Padi a prisoner to Jerusalem. Sennacherib determined to support his faithful dependent; and it was partly to liberate and restore Padi to his royal position in Ekron, partly to punish Hezekiah, that, after having reduced the Ekronite rebels, the Assyrian king prepared to invade Judæa. all the fenced cities of Judah—not absolutely the whole of them, for besides the capital, some strong fortresses held out against the invader (v. 17; ch. xix. 8). The following account of Sennacherib's invasion of Judah, and the remarkable destruction of his army, is repeated almost verbatim in 2 Chr. xxxii. and Isa. xxxvi. 37. Whether engrossed by domestic affairs, or influenced by contempt for the ruler of so petty a kingdom as Judah, the king of Assyria bore the revolt of Hezekiah for a long time, all the while, however, nursing his wrath to keep it warm. In the fourteenth year of Hezekiah's reign he resolved to avenge the insult of the rebellious vassal in Judah. The expedition seems to have been directed against Egypt, the conquest of which was long a leading object of ambition with the Assyrian monarchs; but the invasion of Judah necessarily preceded, that country being the key to Egypt, the highway through which the conquerors from Upper Asia had to pass, and having at this time formed a league of mutual defence with Egypt (v. 24). Moreover, it was now laid completely open by the transplantation of Israel to Assyria, the whole of Galilee and Samaria having become provinces of the empire. The names of the principal of these cities are enumerated by Micah (i. 11-16)—viz., Saphir, lying between Ashdod and Eleutheropolis (Eusebius and Jerome, 'Onomast.' Saphir: cf. Robinson, 'Biblical Researches,' ii., p. 370); Zaan-an, or Zenan (Josh. xv. 37) [Septuagint, Σενωάπ]; Beth-esel, or azel (Zech. xiv. 5), near Shaphir and Zaan-an; Maroth, or Maarath (Josh. xv. 50), between these towns and Jerusalem; Lachish (Um Lâkis); Moreshoth, situated in the direction of Gath; Ach-zib, between Keilah and Maresbah (Josh. xv. 44); Maresbah, situated in the low country of Judah (Josh. xv. 44); Adullam, near Maresbah (cf. Isa. xxiv. 1-12). Overrunning Palestine, Sennacherib laid siege to the fortress of Lachish, which lay seven Roman miles from Eleutheropolis, and therefore south-west of Jerusalem on the way to Egypt. Amongst the interesting illustrations of sacred history furnished by the recent Assyrian excavations, is a series of bas-reliefs, representing the siege of a town ['a fenced town,' among 'the uttermost cities of Judah' (Josh. xv. 39) (Robinson's 'Biblical Researches,' ii., p. 388; also 'Outlines of Assyrian History,' p. 36). Sir H. Rawlinson there maintains that the Lachish intended was a place called Al...ku in the inscriptions, situated on the shore of the Mediterranean between Gaza and Rhinocolura; but his opinion has no supporters], which the inscription on the sculpture shows to be Lachish, and the figure of a king, whose name is given on the same inscription as Sennacherib, seated on his throne, in royal

attire, surrounded by the principal officers of his army, and some prisoners of note before him being tortured; others, according to the barbarous usages of heathendom, being flayed alive. The legend sculptured over the head of the king ran thus:—'Sennacherib, the mighty king, king of the country of Assyria, sitting on the throne of Judgment before the city of Lachish (Lakhisha), I give permission for its slaughter' ('Nineveh and Babylon,' pp. 149, 152, 153). This is Mr. Layard's translation. Dr. Hincks's varies a little from it; and though not essentially different, is considered to express more truly the meaning of the inscription over the king's head,—'Sennacherib, king of men, king of Assyria, having sat down on a throne . . . the suppliants of Lachish before him.' This minute confirmation of the truth of the Bible narrative is given not only by the name Lachish, which is contained in the inscription, but from the physiognomy of the captives brought before the king, which is unmistakably Jewish. 14. Judah sent to . . . Lachish, saying . . . that which thou puttest on me will I bear. Disappointed in his expectations of aid from Egypt, and feeling himself unable to resist so mighty a conqueror, who was menacing Jerusalem itself, Hezekiah made his submission. The payment of 300 talents of silver and 30 talents of gold (£351,000), brought a temporary respite; but in raising the imposed tribute, which he appears to have been under great pressure to pay at once, he was obliged not only to drain all the treasures of the palace and temple, but even to strip the doors and pillars of the sacred edifice of the gold that adorned them. A most important inscription, being the annals of Sennacherib (Sanki-rib), was discovered by Mr. Layard upon a bull at the grand entrance of the palace of Kouyunjik. Amongst other military expeditions he undertook, he describes minutely his invasion of Syria, mentioning the towns of Phœnicia and Judah he reduced and made tributary. Then follows an account of his attack on Hezekiah, which is recorded in the following terms:—'Because Hezekiah, king of Judah, would not submit to my yoke, I came up against him, and by force of arms, and by the might of my power, I took forty-six of his strong fenced cities; and of the smaller towns which were scattered about, I took and plundered a countless number. And from these places I captured and carried off as spoil 200,150 people, old and young, male and female, together with horses and mares, asses and camels, oxen and sheep, a countless multitude. And Hezekiah himself I shut up in Jerusalem, his capital city, like a bird in a cage, building towers round the city to hem him in, and raising banks of earth against the gates, so as to prevent escape. Then upon this Hezekiah there fell the fear of the power of my arms, and he sent out to me the chiefs and the elders of Jerusalem, with thirty talents of gold and eight hundred talents of silver, and divers treasures, a rich and immense booty [the treasures of his palace, his sons and daughters, his men-servants and maid-servants, I carried captive]. All these things were brought to me at Nineveh, the seat of my government, Hezekiah having sent them by way of tribute, and as a

- 16 in the house of the LORD, and in the treasures of the king's house. At that time did Hezekiah cut off the ^ogold from the doors of the temple of the LORD, and from the pillars which Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid, and gave ⁶it to the king of Assyria.
- 17 And the ^pking of Assyria sent Tartan, and Rabsaris, and Rab-shakeh,

B. C. 713
^o 1 Ki. 6. 31.
² 2 Chr. 29. 3.
⁶ them.
^p 2 Chr. 32. 9.
 Isa. 20. 1.

token of submission to my power.' This is the translation of *Sir H. Rawlinson*. It had been translated at the same time by other three Assyrian scholars, whose translations, executed independently, were all of them found to be substantially the same. This record, which is written in the boastful style of the Assyrian monarchs, is given in full, in order that it may be compared with the narrative of the sacred historian; and it is interesting, as well as instructive, to observe how closely the register of the conqueror approaches to the account of Scripture; the few points of divergence, which can be satisfactorily accounted for, serving only to increase the weight and value of its testimony. The same amount of gold is stated in both, while that of the silver, as given in Sennacherib's register, exceeds the sum stated in the sacred narrative by five hundred talents. But this difference may be reconciled by supposing that the inspired historian recorded the actual amount of silver *coinage*, while Sennacherib included the additional weight of silver that Hezekiah gave from 'the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king's house.' In the characteristic manner of these royal inscriptions, which were designed for the glorification of the king's military prowess, Sennacherib represents this large amount of treasure as spoil taken from the enemy, instead of tribute received in accordance with a treaty of peace. The mention of 'casting banks and building towers' against the walls of the city; the close imprisonment of the king and his people in the beleaguered city, as birds in a cage; the great and general consternation and tumult of the inhabitants; and the reckless despair of some, together with the misgivings of Hezekiah, and his eventual resolution to send an embassy to the Assyrian monarch at Lachish, suing for terms of submission—these and other points which are specified in Sennacherib's inscription, are all alluded to by Isaiah in his historical account of the crisis (xxii. 1-13; xxix. 1-4; xxxvi. 2; xxxvii. 8). As to the sons and daughters of Hezekiah, and the servants of his palace, which are said to have been carried captive to Nineveh, in a clause of the inscription, which, though omitted by *Sir H. Rawlinson*, is contained in the translation of *Mr. Fox Talbot*, it may have been a loose statement of the Ninevite historiographer; or, if it have any foundation, it may be accounted for on the supposition that, having been sojourning in some of the fenced cities at the time of the siege, they were involved in the general fate of the inhabitants. In short, the native annals of Sennacherib, so far as they relate to his famous expedition against Hezekiah, accord in all essential points, even down to the most important of the details, with the Scriptural record of the event. It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of such a discovery, which is not only full of interest, as being, to use the words of *Mr. Layard*, 'one of the most remarkable coincidences of historic testimony on record,' but which, in this instance, as in several analogous ones, has furnished a most welcome corroborative, because independent, proof of the truth and accuracy of the sacred narrative (see *Layard's* 'Nineveh and Babylon,' pp. 143-145; *Rawlinson's* 'Ancient Monarchies,' ii., p. 434; also his 'Bampton Lectures,'

p. 141; *Gosse*, 'Assyria,' pp. 37, 60, 61; *Bonom* 'Nineveh and its Palaces,' p. 71).

17-19.—SENNACHERIB BESIEGES JERUSALEM.

17. And the king of Assyria sent. The Hebrew copulative does not always indicate that the sentence which it commences records events that follow in immediate succession. There is sometimes a long interval of time between the subjects described in verses connected by this conjunction (see on Gen. i. 2; Exod. iii. 1, &c.) Here it serves to introduce the expedition of Sennacherib into Syria, which took place some years—two or more—after the first. It is, indeed, denied (*Vance Smith*, 'Prophecies on Nineveh and the Assyrians,' General Introduction, sec. 4) that there were two invasions; and the theory has been pronounced inconsistent with the sacred narrative. But the first expedition was marked by circumstances peculiar and distinctive. 1. Hezekiah was sore pressed, and prompted by overwhelming fears to make his submission. 2. He sent an embassy to Lachish to Sennacherib, to solicit terms of forgiveness; and on promise of paying a largely increased tribute to the Assyrian monarch as his lord-paramount, he was received as a dependent vassal. 3. It cannot be supposed that immediately after having publicly condoned the king of Judah, Sennacherib could be so base and perfidious as to invest Jerusalem with an army. 4. Sennacherib himself says in his record of this campaign, that the tribute was sent by Hezekiah to *him at Nineveh*. To that city, therefore, he had returned. In the second expedition there was no collision between the Assyrians and the Jews. The events related in the following verses took place during Sennacherib's second campaign in Syria. Intelligence having reached him that Hezekiah had negotiated a new league with Egypt, he determined to treat Jerusalem as his father had done to Samaria. But his principal object was to weaken or crush Egypt, as the more formidable enemy (*Herodotus*, b. ii., ch. cxli.), and therefore he marched directly southward through Palestine, along the coast route, without turning aside to attack Jerusalem, to Lachish and Libnah, which belonged apparently at that time to Egypt. Lachish—(see on v. 14.) It was a town in Judah (ch. x. 3), and strongly fortified (2 Chr. xi. 5-9; Jer. xxxiv. 7). Its site has not been ascertained; but assuming it to have been near Libnah, it was at the south-western extremity of Palestine. Sennacherib himself laid siege against Lachish, and all his power with him (2 Chr. xxxii. 9). He had probably lain encamped there with his army for a considerable time, and had made advanced progress with the works, preparatory to the regular siege of that fortress (see reference to the operations on Ninevite slab, v. 14), when, finding that Hezekiah did not send to tender his homage as formerly, he despatched a large force (cf. Isa. xxxvi. 2), under the command of three superior officers, against Jerusalem and its rebellious sovereign. Tartan—general (Isa. xx. 1). Rabsaris—chief of the eunuchs. Rab-shakeh—chief cup-bearer. The office of cup-bearer is one of great dignity, and according to Oriental usages, has often been held by a person of high military command. רַב־שָׁכֶה, chief butler; Σακας, the Persian name for butler, adopted by Xenophon; Septuagint,

from Lachish to king Hezekiah with a ⁷ great host against Jerusalem: and they went up, and came to Jerusalem. And when they were come up, they came and stood by the conduit of the upper pool, ⁹ which is in the high way of the fuller's field. And when they had called to the king, there came out to them Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, which was over the household, and Shebna the ⁸ scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph the recorder.

19 And Rab-shakeh said unto them, Speak ye now to Hezekiah, Thus saith the great king, the king of Assyria, ⁷ What confidence is this wherein thou trustest? Thou ⁹ sayest, (but they are but ¹⁰ vain words.) ¹¹ I have counsel and strength for the war. Now on whom dost thou trust, that thou rebellest against me? Now, behold, thou ¹² trustest upon the staff of this bruised reed, even upon Egypt, on which if a man lean, it will go

B. C. 710.
⁷ heavy.
⁹ Isa. 7. 3.
⁸ Or, secretary.
⁷ 2 Chr. 32. 10.
⁹ Or, talkest.
¹⁰ word of the lips.
¹¹ Or, But counsel and strength are for the war.
¹² trustest thee.

Ῥαβσάκης. He is the only Assyrian officer mentioned by Isaiah (xxxvi. 2), because he was the only speaker. So רַב־שָׁקֵי, chief of the Magi (Jer. xxxix. 3). These were the great officers employed in delivering Sennacherib's insulting message to Hezekiah. On the walls of the palace of Sennacherib, at Khorsabad, certain figures have been identified with the officers of that sovereign mentioned in Scripture. In particular, the figures of Rab-shakeh, Rabsaris, and Tartan appear as full-length portraits of the persons holding those offices in the reign of Sennacherib, and probably the very individuals sent on this embassy. with a great host against Jerusalem. Engaged in a campaign of three years in Egypt, Sennacherib was forced by the king of Ethiopia to retreat, and discharging his rage against Jerusalem, sent an immense army to summon it to surrender (see on 2 Chr. xxxii. 3). they went up, and came to Jerusalem. From the southern boundary of the Holy Land the march to Jerusalem must have been a continuous ascent. they came and stood by the conduit of the upper pool, &c.—the conduit which went from the reservoir of the Upper Gihon (Birket el-Mamilla) to the lower pool—the Birket es-Sultan. the high way of the fuller's field—the public road which passed by that district which had been assigned them for carrying on their business without the city, on account of the unpleasant smell. The Assyrian troops, having come from the south-west, would approach Jerusalem by the upper pool (cf. Isa. vii. 3). 18. when they had called to the king—Hezekiah did not make a personal appearance, but commissioned his three principal ministers to meet the Assyrian deputies at a conference outside the city walls. Eliakim—lately promoted to be master of the royal household, prefect or chamberlain of the palace (Isa. xxii. 20-24). Shebna—removed for his pride, presumption, and unconstitutional politics,—for a contrast is evidently implied between him and his predecessor, who is called “a servant of Jehovah” (Isa. xxii. 15),—through the influence of Isaiah, from that office, though still [רַב־שָׁקֵי] the private royal secretary. Joah . . . the recorder [רַב־שָׁקֵי]—i. e., the keeper of the chronicles—an important office in Eastern countries.

19. Rab-shakeh said. It appears from *vr.* 23, 25 that this man spoke in the Hebrew tongue, whence, as well as from the tenor of some remarks that he made, several eminent writers have supposed that he was a renegade Jew, an apostate captive of Israel. The insolent tone he assumed appears surprising. But this boasting, both as to matter and manner, his highly coloured picture of his master's powers, and the impossibility of Hezekiah making any effective resistance, heightened by

all the arguments and figures which an Oriental imagination could suggest, has been paralleled in all, except the blasphemy, by other messages of defiance sent on similar occasions in the history of the East. Thus saith the great king, the king of Assyria. This title (cf. Isa. xxxvi. 4; also Josephus, 'Antiquities,' b. x., ch. i., sec. 2; Rawlinson's 'Ancient Monarchies,' ii., p. 328) was given to the king of Assyria not only from the vast extent of his empire, but because he was king of princes or viceroys (Isa. x. 8; Hos. viii. 10), and king of kings (Ezek. xxvii. 8; Dan. ii. 37). “The king of Assyria” [אַשּׁוּר]. Assyria proper was bounded on the north by Armenia, the Gordiean mountains, and especially by mount Niphates; on the south by Persia; on the east by Media, particularly mount Choatres and Zagros; and on the west by Mesopotamia and the river Tigris. It corresponded nearly to the modern Koordistan. But the Assyrian empire was vastly more extensive; and though its limits varied at different periods, it may be described as embracing all the nations and countries between the Mediterranean on the west and the Indus on the east—between the steppes of Scythia on the north and the Indian Ocean on the south. [The Septuagint has here βασιλεὺς Ἀσσυρίων, king of the Assyrians; Herodotus styles him, Σαυαχέρβος βασιλεὺς Ἀραβίων τε καὶ Ἀσσυρίων, referring to the extensive range of the Assyrian power.] What confidence is this wherein thou trustest? [מַה]—What, used to express contempt (cf. 1 Ki. ix. 13), ‘What is this confidence?’ i. e., the ground of confidence, referring tauntingly to the fortifications Hezekiah had erected round Jerusalem (2 Chr. xxxii. 6), and to his expectations of aid from Egypt (cf. Isa. xxx. 7). 20. Thou sayest (but they are . . . vain words) דָּבַר אִפְתָּיָה—but it is a word of lips, mere lip-talk or rhodomontade, an empty, foolish bluster, which in the relative circumstances of Judah versus Assyria is ridiculous arrogance. I have counsel and strength for the war—I have adequate resources for a war, both in military force and military skill to use it. Now on whom dost thou trust, that thou rebellest against me? If this scene had occurred immediately after Hezekiah's submission, the accusation must have been groundless, or founded on vague suspicion of his Egyptian leanings. But from the course of Rab-shakeh's upbraiding charges, it appears that the Assyrians must have had spies who furnished them with secret intelligence as to the nature of the frequent communications that passed between the courts of Jerusalem and Memphis, and that it was in consequence of such information the second expedition was resolved upon. 21. Now, behold, thou trustest upon the staff of this bruised

into his hand, and pierce it: so is Pharaoh king of Egypt unto all that
 22 trust on him. But if ye say unto me, We trust in the LORD our God: is
 not that he whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah hath taken
 away, and hath said to Judah and Jerusalem, Ye shall worship before this
 23 altar in Jerusalem? Now therefore, I pray thee, give ¹³pledges to my
 lord the king of Assyria, and I will deliver thee two thousand horses, if
 24 thou be able on thy part to set riders upon them. How then wilt thou
 turn away the face of one captain of the least of my master's servants,
 25 and put thy trust on Egypt for chariots and for horsemen? Am I now
 come up without the LORD against this place to destroy it? The LORD
 'said to me, Go up against this land, and destroy it.
 26 Then said Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, and Shebna, and Joah, unto
 Rab-shakeh, Speak, I pray thee, to thy servants in the "Syrian language;

B. C. 710.
 * 2 Chr. 31. 1.
 2 Chr. 32. 12.
 Isa. 36. 7.
 1 Cor. 2. 15.
 13 Or.
 hostages.
 † 1 Ki. 3. 18.
 ch. 19. 6.
 22.
 2 Chr. 35. 21.
 Isa. 7. 17.
 Isa. 0. -
 19.
 † Ezra 4. 7.
 Isa. 36. 11.
 Dan 2. 4.

reed, even upon Egypt [רִבְשֵׁקֶה בְּרִבְשֵׁקֶה, broken papyrus; Septuagint, τὴν καλαμίνην τὴν τεθλασμένην, bruised, shattered reed; Vulgate, quassatus calamus]. The metaphor is founded upon the nature of a reed, which being slender and brittle, is liable to be easily broken, while the sharp jagged point of the stump is apt to pierce the hand of one that leans upon it. The metaphor admirably represents the idea which Rab-shakeh wished to convey, of an ally who was not only weak and unable to contribute much substantial succour, but would prove eventually "a thorn in the flesh" of the king who joined in a friendly league with him; and it was all the more appropriate and significant in this case, as the papyrus reeds, which grew so luxuriantly on the banks of the Nile, formed a characteristic production of Egypt, rendering the reference to that country unmistakable, even had the name of Pharaoh not been expressly mentioned at the close of the sentence. Moreover, Egypt had been weakened by Sargon, father of Sennacherib, (Isa. xx.) 22. But if ye say unto me, We trust in the Lord our God. In the former the address was directed to Hezekiah, through his deputies. Here they or the people generally are spoken to. [But the Septuagint has the singular, ὅτι εἶπας πρὸς ἐμέ.] is not that he whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah hath taken away, &c. The meaning of the Assyrian diplomatist was, that in carrying out his meditated scheme of rebellion against his liege lord, Hezekiah could not expect any aid or protection from Jehovah, the national Guardian or tutelary Deity of the Hebrews, having forfeited all claims to His favour by the sacrilegious demolition of His sanctuaries. Rab-shakeh alluded, in this part of his speech, to the measures of religious reform which Hezekiah had prosecuted, erroneously supposing, however, that these had been designed to exterminate, rather than to promote, the worship of Jehovah (v. 4; 2 Chr. xxix. 16). 23. Now therefore, I pray thee, give pledges [הִרְשִׁיתִי] רִבְשֵׁקֶה, has, amongst other significations, that of giving security, or a pledge. But in Hithpael, with רָשׁ following, it denotes—to enter into a contest.' That is the meaning here—'enter the lists with my lord the king of Assyria;' and so the Septuagint has μὴ εἰσέλθῃς τῷ κυρίῳ μου βασιλεὶ Ἀσσυρίῳ, and I will deliver thee two thousand horses, if thou be able . . . to set riders upon them. The challenge referred to Hezekiah's competency to furnish not two thousand fighting men—that he might readily have done—but two thousand cavalry soldiers. The Jews were deficient in this 'arm,' their mountainous country not being suited to the use of war-chariots, and a

constitutional king was bound by the Mosaic law not to multiply horses for himself (Deut. xvii. 16), nor to traffic with Egypt for the purchase of those animals for war, to which purpose the Jews would have almost exclusively applied them. In Egypt, a flat and fertile country, horses were, we learn from sacred as well as from classical writers, extensively bred and employed in war-chariots (cf. Exod. xiv. 9; xv. 19; 1 Ki. x. 26, 28). But they were prohibited to the Jews as symbolical of military prowess and self-confidence (Ps. xx. 7; xxxiii. 17; Prov. xxi. 31). Nevertheless that people frequently evinced a strong desire to obtain horses; perhaps the numerous and influential party in the court of Jerusalem who advocated the Egyptian alliance might have been solicitous at that crisis to procure a stock of them from Egypt, in order to cope on equal terms with an Assyrian army, which was always strong in this department (Isa. xxxi. 1; Hos. xvi. 3); but the commerce seems to have been discouraged or absolutely prohibited by the good king Hezekiah, thus affording some foundation for the taunt of Rab-shakeh, that the Jews had neither horses nor horsemen. 24. How then wilt thou turn away the face of one captain of the least of my master's servants [פְּתִיחַ אֶחָד מֵאֲדָרְתֵי]—one officer or sub-lieutenant (see on this foreign word [פְּתִיחַ], 1 Ki. x. 15; xx. 24; cf. 2 Chr. ix. 14; Ezek. xxiii. 6, 12, 23). It is difficult to determine whether *Pechah* here denotes, in its proper Syrian sense, one of the tributary princes who brought his contingent of troops to the immense army of Sennacherib, or it is used in a loose, general way, as a name for a military officer of any grade. Perhaps the latter is the correct view. 25. Am I now come up without the Lord against this place to destroy it? &c. This particular remark forms the foundation on which the Jewish writers, followed by *Procopius*, rest their conjecture that Rab-shakeh was a renegade Israelite, as it seems to imply that he was acquainted with the predictions of Isaiah respecting the judgments which God was about to inflict upon the Hebrews through the instrumentality of the Assyrians. But there is no certain evidence of the truth of this hypothesis. The language of Rab-shakeh might have been only bluster. Perhaps he may have been encouraged by some false prophet, who pretended to have had a revelation to him upon this matter; or he might have inferred that he was sent on a mission of judicial punishment to the Hebrews from the successes he had met with. 26. Then said Eliakim . . . Speak, I pray thee, to thy servants in the Syrian language [בְּלִשׁוֹן אַרְמִי]—the Aramaic, the language spoken in the country north and east of Palestine, and also the common

for we understand *it*; and talk not with us in the Jews' language in the
 27 ears of the people that *are* on the wall. But Rab-shakeh said unto them,
 Hath my master sent me to thy master, and to thee, to speak these words?
hath he not sent me to the men which sit on the wall, that they may eat
their own dung, and drink ¹⁴ *their own piss with you?*
 28 Then Rab-shakeh stood, and cried with a loud voice in the Jews'
 language, and spake, saying, Hear the word of the great king, the king of
 29 Assyria: thus saith the king, ^v Let not Hezekiah deceive you; for he shall
 30 not be able to deliver you out of his hand: neither let Hezekiah make
 you trust in the LORD, saying, The LORD will surely deliver us, and this
 31 city shall not be delivered into the hand of the king of Assyria. Harken
 not to Hezekiah: for thus saith the king of Assyria, ¹⁵ *Make an agreement*
with me by a present, and come out to me, and then eat ye every man of
his own vine, and every one of his fig tree, and drink ye every one the
 32 *waters of his* ¹⁶ *cistern; until I come and take you away to a land like*
your own land; ^w a land of corn and wine, a land of bread and vineyards,
a land of oil olive and of honey, that ye may live, and not die: and
hearken not unto Hezekiah, when he ¹⁷ *persuadeth you, saying, The LORD*
 33 *will deliver us. Hath* ^v *any of the gods of the nations delivered at all his*
 34 *land out of the hand of the king of Assyria? Where* ^v *are the gods of*
Hamath, and of Arpad? where are the gods of Sepharvaim, Hena, and

B. C. 710.
 14 the water of their feet.
 v 2 Chr. 32. 15. Job 5. 19. Dan. 3. 15-17.
 15 Make with me a blessing, or, seek my fav. ur. Gen. 32. 10. Gen. 31. 11. Pro 13. 16.
 16 Or, pit.
 w Ex. 3. 8. Num. 13. 26. Deut. 8. 7, 8.
 17 Or, deceiveth.
 v ch. 19. 12. 2 (hr. 32. 14. Isa 10, 10, 11.
 v ch 19. 13. Jer 49. 21.

dialect of Mesopotamia. It must, therefore, have been known to the Assyrian officers. Besides, it had a close affinity to their own language (cf. ch. v. 5-7), and to the Hebrew also, although it was an unknown tongue to the common people. In the Old Testament, this north Semitic or Aramaean tongue is called in our version Syrian (see on Gen. xxxi. 47), and but rarely Chaldee (ch. i. 4). From the narrative before us, it appears that this language was the medium of communication between the Assyrians and the Jews, as in later times the Persians employed it in their public edicts (Ezra iv. 7). **talk not with us in the Jews' language** [יְהוּדִית]—the Jewish language, because the ten tribes, who also spoke Hebrew, had been transplanted to Assyria, and none were left who spoke that language but the people of Judah. Apprehending that this blaspheming harangue would produce the effect of exciting alarm and tumult amongst the people, they made the mild and reasonable suggestion that, since the conference was exclusively with the heads of the Jewish government, Rab-shakeh would communicate his proposals in the Syrian language. **27. But Rab-shakeh said unto them, Hath my master sent me to thy master? &c.** His object was to stir and terrify the populace into immediate submission, and with that view, turning to the crowd which was congregated on the walls, he represented to them, by coarse, but graphic terms, in their own Hebrew tongue, the extreme privations to which, in spite of the delusive assurances of Hezekiah, they would inevitably be reduced by Sennacherib during a protracted siege (2 Chr. xxxii. 11). The result is mentioned as if it had been the purpose and design of the siege.

30. Neither let Hezekiah make you trust in the Lord, saying, &c.—(see on 2 Chr. xxxii. 3, &c.) The measures adopted to fortify Jerusalem were subsequent to Hezekiah's miraculous recovery, as well as the Divine promise of deliverance he then received. Both of these circumstances seem to have been reported to the Assyrians, and there is a direct allusion to them in these words of Rab-shakeh. **31. Make an agreement with me by a present** [עָשׂוּ אִתִּי בְרִית]—Make to me a blessing; i. e., make peace with me, **and come out to me**—issue from your

barricaded walls, and surrender your city, **and then eat ye every man of his own vine, &c.** After capitulating, you shall be allowed to enjoy liberty and the comforts of home, until the return of the Assyrian army from Egypt, when you shall be removed, conformably to the favourite policy pursued in ancient times towards a vanquished nation, to the region beyond the Tigris and the Euphrates, the pleasant and fertile land of the conqueror. **32. a land like your own.** The elevated table-lands of Iran, the extensive highlands of Western Asia, are marked by very different degrees of climate, so that as the soil is naturally rich, the produce is consequently as varied as it is abundant. While in the plains and lowlands, which languish under an almost tropical heat, a vast variety of aromatic herbs are grown, besides the vine, the olive, the fig tree, in the cooler temperature of the hills there is raised corn, and grain of various kinds, with cotton and flax, &c. Accordingly, 'amongst the objects of tribute brought to the Egyptians from the Nabarraina, are represented on the monuments, corn, bread, palm-wine, wine, honey, incense, and conserve of dates' ('Nineveh and its Remains,' ii., p. 425). *Herodotus* (b. i., ch. cxciii.) says that the fig, the grape, and the oil-olive are not produced in Assyria; but his account refers to the plains and low country, which belongs rather to Babylonia than Assyria (*Rawlinson*, 'Ancient Monarchies,' ii., pp. 210, 213; *Gosse*, 'Assyria,' pp. 1, 2). Thus it appears that there was a really good ground for likening the climate and produce of Assyria to that of Palestine. **hearken not unto Hezekiah . . . The Lord will deliver us.** It is evident from the strain of the following interrogations that Rab-shakeh regarded Jehovah as a mere local deity, possessing no higher title to honour, and no greater extent of power, than the tutelary deities of the countries and cities which had fallen before the victorious sword of the Assyrians. **34. Where are the gods of Hamath** [חַמַּת]; Septuagint, *Ποῦ εἰσιν ὁ Θεὸς Ἀμαθῶ*—now Hamah, a large city of Syria, lying on both sides of the Orontes, a little beyond the northern boundary of Palestine. It is one of the oldest cities in the world, being founded by the Phœni-

- 35 ^aIvah? have they delivered Samaria out of mine hand? Who *are* they among all the gods of the countries, that have delivered their country out of mine hand, ^athat the LORD should deliver Jerusalem out of mine hand?
- 36 But the people held their peace, and answered him not a word: for the king's commandment was, saying, Answer him not.
- 37 Then came Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, which *was* over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph the recorder, to Hezekiah, ^bwith *their* clothes rent, and told him the words of Rabshakeh.
- 19 AND it ^acame to pass, when king Hezekiah heard *it*, that he rent his clothes, and covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of
- 2 the LORD. And he sent Eliakim, which *was* over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and the elders of the priests, covered with sackcloth,
- 3 to Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz. And they said unto him, Thus saith Hezekiah, This day *is* a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and ¹blasphemy: for the children are come to the birth, and *there is* not strength
- 4 to bring forth. It ^bmay be the LORD thy God will hear all the words of

B. C. 710.
² ch. 17. 24,
 Ava,
^a 1st Es. 60. 21.
 Ps. 13 8, 9.
 1^a. 10. 5-15.
 Isa. 42. 8.
 Dan. 3. 15.
 Rom. 1. 21-23.
^b Job 1. 20.
 Isa. 33. 7.
 Isa. 56. 21.
 CHAP. 19.
^a Pro 16. 3.
 Isa 57. 1.
 Phil. 4. 6.
 1 Pet. 5. 6.
¹ Cr, provoc-
 ca'tion.
^b 2 Sam. 13.
 12.

cians (Gen. x. 18; Num. xiii. 21; xxxiv. 8; Josh. xiii. 5; Judg. iii. 3), called by the Greeks Epiphania. It was the populous and flourishing metropolis of a petty kingdom of the same name, extending over the whole valley of the Orontes, from the source of that river to Antioch, with the great plain eastward (Amos vi. 2). Arpad [אֲרַפַּד; Septuagint, Vatican, Ἀρφαδ; Alexandria, Ἀρφαρ; also a Syrian city not far from Hamath; and hence they are generally mentioned in conjunction (ch. xix. 13; Jer. xlix. 23). But the site of Arpad has not been identified.] where are the gods of Sepharvaim—(see on ch. xvii. 24.) Hena [חֵנָא; Septuagint, Ἀνὰ]—a town of Northern Syria, or, as some say, of Mesopotamia, on a ford of the Euphrates; site unascertained. Ivah—or Ava (ch. xvii. 24; xix. 13; Isa. xxxvii. 13) [יָבָה; Septuagint, Ἀβὰ; unknown. Its inhabitants were transplanted to colonize Samaria. 35. Who are they among all the gods. . . that have delivered their country. The boastful and blasphemous tone of this caittif's speech, which, in the concluding part of it, is an artful piece of mob oratory, here reaches its climax. He spoke of Jehovah as a heathen, and as the representative of a despot whose head was turned by his hitherto unbroken course of brilliant conquests. A towering pride exalted him in his own estimation above all other power, divine as well as human. that the Lord should deliver Jerusalem out of mine hand. If the tutelary deities of those extensive and powerful kingdoms have not been able to defend them from the overwhelming might of my arms, how very improbable is it that Jehovah, the god of so small a state, should deliver his people! It has been pertinently observed that the speaker, in this vaunting conclusion, contradicts what he had said, v. 25, as to his having been commissioned to "go up against the land" of the Hebrews, "and destroy it."

36. But the people held their peace—i. e., the people on the walls, to whom the speech of Rabshakeh was addressed. and answered him not a word—lest they should have been drawn into an altercation, and words or arguments might have been used which would have exasperated the Assyrians and afforded to Sennacherib a pretext, upon which he was too ready to seize, for provoking immediate hostilities. for the king's commandment was, saying, Answer him not. It was

a most prudent counsel; for had they entered into a discussion of the topics embraced in Rabshakeh's speech, the Jews might have betrayed their fears, or afforded the wily enemy some advantage; while, by their calm and steady obedience to the command of Hezekiah, they would demonstrate, in presence of their Assyrian invaders, their devoted allegiance to their sovereign, and the hopelessness of all attempts to seduce them into defection from the cause of their king and country.

37. Then came Eliakim . . . to Hezekiah, with their clothes rent. The rending of a portion of the outer garment was a common and very significant token of grief and dismay amongst the Jews, as other Eastern people. On the present occasion the act was expressive of both these emotions—grief at the gravity of the national crisis, dismay at the daring blasphemies of the Assyrian.

CHAP. XIX. 1-5.—HEZEKIAH IN DEEP AFFLICTION.

1. Hezekiah . . . rent his clothes, &c. The rending of his clothes was a mode of expressing horror at the daring blasphemy—the assumption of sackcloth, a sign of his mental distress—his entrance into the temple to pray, the refuge of a pious man in affliction—and the forwarding an account of the Assyrian's speech to Isaiah was to obtain the prophet's counsel and comfort. This mission, consisting of some of the most important members of the court and the priesthood, shows the great influence which Isaiah, by his prophetic character and sage counsels, exercised over the proceedings of Hezekiah, and no circumstances could evince that monarch's wisdom and habitual piety more strikingly than his solicitude for Isaiah's advice and aid, as the servant of Jehovah, in that critical juncture. 3. the children are come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth. The image is that of a parturient woman, whose strength is exhausted, whose powers are paralyzed, at the moment when she required to put forth a vigorous effort. The expression in which the message was conveyed to the prophet described, by a strong figure, the desperate condition of the kingdom, together with their own inability to help themselves; and it intimated also a hope that the blasphemous defiance of Jehovah's power by the impious Assyrian might lead to some direct interposition for the vindica-

B. C. 710.
o ch 18. 35.
d 1 Sam. 17.
45.
Ps. 50. 21.
o Jas. 5. 15.
2 found.
f Isa. 37. 6.
o Ex. 14. 13.
ch. 6 16.
2 Chr 20. 15.
17.
A Job 1. 9.
1's. 11. 6.
Jer. 51. 1.
ch. 18. 11.
j 1 Sam 23.
27.
Isa. 37. 9.
k ch. 18. 5.
2 Chr 32. 15-
17.
Isa. 37. 10-
14.
l Gen 11. 31.

Rab-shakeh, ^cwhom the king of Assyria his master hath sent to reproach the living God; and will ^dreprove the words which the LORD thy God hath heard: wherefore ^elift up *thy* prayer for the remnant that are ²left.

5, So the servants of king Hezekiah came to Isaiah. And ^fIsaiah said 6 unto them, Thus shall ye say to your master, Thus saith the LORD, ^gBe not afraid of the words which thou hast heard, with which the servants 7 of the king of Assyria have blasphemed me. Behold, I will send ^ha blast upon him, and he shall hear a rumour, and shall return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.

8 So Rab-shakeh returned, and found the king of Assyria warring against 9 Libnah: for he had heard that he was departed from ⁱLachish. And ^jwhen he heard say of Tirhakah king of Ethiopia, Behold, he is come out to fight against thee; he sent messengers again unto Hezekiah, saying, 10 Thus shall ye speak to Hezekiah king of Judah, saying, Let not thy God ^kin whom thou trustest deceive thee, saying, Jerusalem shall not be 11 delivered into the hand of the king of Assyria. Behold, thou hast heard 12 utterly: and shalt thou be delivered? Have the gods of the nations delivered them which my fathers have destroyed; as Gozan, and ^lHaran,

tion of his honour and supremacy to all heathen gods. 4. the living God—is a most significant expression, taken in connection with the senseless deities that Rab-shakeh boasted were unable to resist his master's victorious arms. wherefore—i. e., on account of Rab-shakeh's blasphemy. lift up thy prayer for the remnant that are left (Hebrew, found)—i. e., for the people of Judah, and especially the inhabitants of Jerusalem, placed in imminent jeopardy, and who now form but a small remnant of the chosen people in the land that was given them by "covenant" to which, though they had unhappily broken it, the king of Judah and his subjects faithfully adhere.

6. 7.—COMFORTED BY ISAIAH. 6. Isaiah said . . . Be not afraid. The prophet's answer was most cheering, as it held out the prospect of a speedy deliverance from the invader. of the words which thou hast heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed me [עַבְדֵי, young men, different from עַבְדֵי, servants, used, v. 5. The former word implies something like contempt for the indiscretion and levity of young and thoughtless lads. The Septuagint has τὰ παῖδαρια]. 7. Behold, I will send a blast upon him. The usual way of interpreting this clause is by considering it the first announcement in the series of divine judgments which were to befall the haughty blasphemer. The blast, the rumour, the fall by the sword, contained a brief prediction that was soon fulfilled in all the three particulars—viz., the alarm that hastened his retreat, the destruction that overtook his army, and the violent death that suddenly ended his career. "I will send a blast" [אֶשְׁלַח בָּרוּחַ]. The word *ruach* does sometimes signify a blast, a violent wind (ch. ii. 16; Job i. 19; xxx. 15; Isa. xxvii. 8; xl. 7; Hos. xiii. 15; Jon. i. 4); and what is here called a *spirit*, is called (v. 35, 37) "an angel," according to Ps. civ. 4. But it cannot bear such a meaning in its present connection. The import of this clause, rendered literally, is, 'I will put a spirit in him.' And so also Septuagint, ἐγὼ δίδωμι ἐν αὐτῷ πνεῦμα, 'I will infuse a spirit into him; πνεῦμα δειλίας, a spirit of timidity, misgiving (Secker, quoted by Lowth). In this sense of imagination, affection, or state of mind, the word occurs frequently,—the spirit of jealousy (Num. v. 14), the spirit of slumber (Rom. xi. 8),

the spirit of fear (2 Tim. i. 7) (Many attach this meaning to it here, thinking the reference is to a sudden panic, which drove the foe hurriedly back to Assyria), and the spirit of courage, energy, fortitude (Josh. ii. 11; v. 1; 1 Ki. x. 5). This last view is advocated by Henderson (Isa. xxxvii. 7). Gesenius thinks it denotes the *spirit, mind, resolution* of a person to do a thing, and accordingly translates the clause, 'I will inspire him with a purpose'—viz., to prosecute his expedition into Egypt, instead of coming in person to besiege Jerusalem.] and he shall hear a rumour—the report of the destruction of a large portion of his army, or the intelligence that Tirhakah, king of Ethiopia, was to join his forces with those of Lower Egypt, in opposing his invasion. This news, immediately consequent upon the awful disaster that had befallen his army, would be sufficient, in his disabled state, to urge upon him the necessity of a hasty retreat.

8-13. — SENNACHERIB SENDS A BLASPHEMOUS LETTER TO HEZEKIAH.

8. Rab-shakeh . . . found the king of Assyria warring against Libnah. Whether Lachish had fallen or not, is not said. But Sennacherib had transferred his battering-rams against the apparently neighbouring fortress of Libnah (Josh. x. 29: cf. v. 31; xv. 42), where the chief cup-bearer reported the execution of his mission. 9. when he heard say of Tirhakah, &c. This was the "rumour" to which Isaiah referred. Tirhakah reigned in Upper Egypt, while So, or Sabaco, ruled in Lower Egypt. He was a powerful monarch—another Sesostris; and both he and Sabaco have left many monuments of their greatness. The name and figure of Tirhakah receiving war-captives are still seen in the Egyptian temple of Medinet 'Abou. This was the expected succour which was sneered at (ch. xviii. 21) by Rab-shakeh as a "bruised reed." Rage against Hezekiah for allying himself with Egypt, or the hope of being better able to meet this attack from the south, induced him, after hearing the rumour of Tirhakah's advance, to send a menacing letter to Hezekiah, in order that he might force the king of Judah to an immediate surrender of his capital. This letter, couched in the same vaunting and imperious style as the speech of Rab-shakeh, exceeded it in blasphemy, and contained a larger enumeration of conquered places, with the view

- 13 and Rezech, and the children of ^mEden which *were* in Thelasar? Where ⁿis the king of Hamath, and the king of Arpad, and the king of the city of Sepharvaim, of Hena, and ^oIvah?
- 14 And ^pHezekiah received the letter of the hand of the messengers, and read it: and Hezekiah went up into the house of the LORD, and spread it before the LORD. And Hezekiah prayed before the LORD, and said, O LORD God of Israel, ^qwhich dwellest *between* the cherubim, ^rthou art the God, *even* thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; thou hast made heaven and earth. LORD, ^sbow down thine ear, and hear; open, 'LORD, thine eyes, and see; and hear the words of Sennacherib, which hath sent him to reproach the living God. Of a truth, LORD, the kings of Assyria have destroyed the nations and their lands, and have ^tcast their gods into the fire; for they *were* no gods, but ^uthe work of men's hands, wood and stone; therefore they have destroyed them. Now therefore, O LORD our God, I beseech thee, save thou us out of his hand, that ^vall the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou *art* the LORD God, *even* thou only.
- 20 Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying, 'Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, *That* which thou hast prayed to me against Sennacherib king of Assyria I ^whave heard. *This is* the word that the LORD hath spoken concerning him;
- The virgin, ^xthe daughter of Zion, hath despised thee, *and* laughed thee to scorn;
- The daughter of Jerusalem ^yhath shaken her head at thee.
- 22 Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed?
And against whom hast thou exalted *thy* voice,
And lifted up thine eyes on high?
Even against ^zthe Holy One of Israel.
- 23 ^aBy thy messengers thou hast reproached the LORD, and hast said,
^b'With the multitude of my chariots I am come up
To the height of the mountains, to the sides of Lebanon,
And will cut down ^cthe tall cedar trees thereof, *and* the choice fir trees thereof:

B. C. 719.
^m Gen. 2. 8.
 Eze. 27 23.
ⁿ ch. 18. 31.
^o ch 17. 24.
^p Isa 37. 14.
^q Ex 25. 22.
 1 Sam. 4. 4.
 Ps. 50. 1.
 Ps 99. 1.
^r 1 Ki 18. '9.
 Ps. 96. 5.
 Isa. 44. 6.
 Jer 10. 6-12.
^s Ps. 31. 2
^t 2 Chr. 6. 40.
^u 3 given.
^v Ps. 115. 4.
 Isa. 37. 15, 19.
^w Ps. 83. 18.
^x ch. 20. 5.
 2 Chr 32:5, 21.
 Ps 61. 2.
^y Lam. 2. 13.
^z Job 16. 4.
 Ps. 22. 7, 8.
 Lam. 2. 15.
^a Ps. 71. 22.
 Isa. 5. 21.
 Isa. 50. 11, 12, 15.
 Jer. 51. 5.
^b by the hand of
 ch. 18. 17.
^c Ps. 20. 7.
^d the
 tal'ness,
 etc.

of terrifying Hezekiah, and showing him the utter hopelessness of all attempts at resistance. Tirhakah's name appears on the monuments of Egypt (*Loftus*, p. 336; *Rawlinson's* 'Herodotus,' i., p. 436; *Wilson's* 'Lands of the Bible,' i., p. 91).

14-34.—HEZEKIAH'S PRAYER.
 14. Hezekiah received the letter . . . and . . . went up into the house of the Lord. Hezekiah, after reading it, hastened into the temple, spread it, in the child-like confidence of faith, before the Lord, as containing taunts deeply affecting the Divine honour, and implored deliverance from this proud defier of God and man. The devout spirit of this prayer, the recognition of the Divine Being in the plenitude of His Majesty—so strikingly contrasted with the fancy of the Assyrians as to his merely local power; his acknowledgment of the conquests obtained over other lands, and of the destruction of their wooden idols, which, according to the Assyrian practice, were committed to the flames, because their tutelary deities were no gods; and the object for which he supplicated the Divine interposition, that all the kingdoms of the earth might know that the Lord was the only God,—this was an attitude worthy to be assumed by a pious theocratic king of the chosen people.

20. Then Isaiah . . . sent. A revelation having been made to Isaiah, the prophet announced to the king that his prayer was heard. The prophetic message consisted of three different portions:—*First*, Sennacherib is apostrophized (*vv.* 21-28) in a highly poetical strain, admirably descriptive of the

turgid vanity, haughty pretensions, and presumptuous impiety of the Assyrian despot. *Secondly*, Hezekiah is addressed (*vv.* 29-31), and a sign given him of the promised deliverance—viz., that for two years the presence of the enemy would interrupt the peaceful pursuits of husbandry, but on the third year the people would be in circumstances to till their fields and vineyards, and reap the fruits as formerly. *Thirdly*, The issue of Sennacherib's invasion is announced (*vv.* 32-34).

21. The virgin, the daughter of Zion, hath despised thee—the inhabitants in the upper part of the city, the citadel or fortress of Zion, called a virgin because it had hitherto been inviolate by a foreign enemy. the daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken her head at thee. This, of course, must denote the people in the lower city. 'Shaking head'—a sign of contempt (Ps. xxii. 7; Matt. xxvii. 39). 22. Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed? . . . even against the Holy One of Israel. In the Jewish law he was guilty of blasphemy who applied that fearful and glorious name to an idol; not less was he chargeable with the same crime who would have the boldness to apply it unwarrantably to himself. Of the latter form of blasphemy Sennacherib was guilty, in ascribing to himself powers, and a command over success and victory, such as can belong to none but an omnipotent being. 23. I am come up . . . the sides of Lebanon. There is no reason to suppose there was an actual ascent of Lebanon, as Hannibal and Napoleon

- And I will enter into the lodgings of his borders, and into ⁶the forest of his Carmel.
- 24 I have digged and drunk strange waters,
And with the sole of my feet have I dried up all the rivers of ⁷besieged places.
- 25 Hast thou not heard long ago *how* ⁶I have done it,
And of ancient times that I have formed it?
Now have I brought it to pass,
That ⁶thou shouldst be to lay waste fenced cities into ruinous heaps.
- 26 Therefore their inhabitants were ⁸of small power,
They were dismayed and confounded;
They were *as* the grass of the field, and *as* the green herb,
As ^dthe grass on the house-tops, and *as* corn blasted before it be grown up.

B. C. 710.

⁶ Or, the forest and his fruitful field.
Isa. 10. 18.

⁷ Or, fenced.
Ps. 33. 11.
Ps. 76. 10.
Isa. 10. 5, 6, 15.

⁸ Isa. 37. 23.
Isa. 45. 7.

⁶ Isa. 10. 5.

⁸ short of hand
⁴ Ps. 129. 6.

crossed the Alps. The description is figurative. I will enter into the lodgings of his borders [לִּלְוֵי קַרְמֵל]—a lodging-place, or khan, on the border. and into the forest of his Carmel—according to some, its densest forest. The words “and into” are not in the original. Carmel, when used as a proper name, whether of the well-known mountain in the tribe of Issachar (Josh. xii. 22), or of the district “of Maon,” in the wilderness of Paran, is invariably preceded by the article, *ha-Carmel*. As the article is wanting in this passage, the word must be a common noun, denoting a fruitful field, a rich, cultivated country (cf. Isa. xxix. 17; xxxii. 13, 16; Jer. iv. 6, 7). The clause then may be translated, “I will go into the lodging of (I will encamp with my troops on) his border, his forest, his fruitful country.” Thus, as *Poole* remarks, “all the parts of the land are here enumerated; the mountains, the cities, the woods, and the fruitful fields. Or “his fruitful forest” may mean Jerusalem, which is thought by many interpreters to be called a forest (Jer. xxi. 14; Ezek. xx. 46)—a name agreeing well enough with cities, where buildings are very numerous, close, and high, like trees in a forest. Further, if Jerusalem might be called “a forest,” it may well be called Hezekiah’s Carmel, a fruitful place, because his chief strength, treasure, and fruit were now in it; and this last word seems to be added here, to intimate that this was not like other forests, unfruitful and barren. So both this and the foregoing words are understood of Jerusalem, the last branch being joined to the former by way of apposition—“into the lodgings of his border,” “the forest of his Carmel,” or his fruitful forest, there being no more words in the Hebrew text.” 24. I have digged and drunk strange waters. Here is another instance of boasting that he had overcome the greatest difficulties and disadvantages of nature. Though passing through foreign countries, parts of which extended in inhospitable deserts, where it might have been anticipated that his army would have perished of thirst, he had with skilful and well-applied labour digged into the arid soil, and found a sufficient supply of the necessary fluid. and with the sole of my feet have I dried up all the rivers of besieged places. The metaphor was probably derived from the familiar fact of a gardener opening rills of water by his foot. Assuming that there is some reality, or basis of fact, under this grandiloquent figure, it may be supposed to mean, that the strongest fortresses had been taken by his forces, and that cities defended by the encircling course of broad rivers were successfully stormed, by diverting the currents, so that the assailants, crossing dry-shod the old channels of those streams, had, contrary to human

anticipations, effected an easy entrance into the “besieged places.” [But קַרְמֵל, rendered “besieged places,” is considered by *Gesenius* (sub voce) and *Bochart* (‘Hierozoicon,’ part ii., lib. v., cap. 15) to be here the proper name of Egypt, and apparently of Lower Egypt (so called, probably, from being well fortified. *Bochart*, ‘Phaleg,’ iv., 34.) In this sense the word occurs in Isaiah xix. 6; Micah vii. 12. If Sennacherib made an actual invasion into Lower Egypt, it must have been with the army of his father Sargon. For the Assyrian monuments afford no evidence that he himself proceeded farther against the Egyptians than Lachish, which was at that time under their jurisdiction. The language seems to point to the energetic and politic measures which Hezekiah had taken for stopping up the wells, fountains, and reservoirs about Jerusalem (cf. 2 Chr. xxxii. 3, 4; Isa. xxii. 9, 11; *Josephus*, ‘Antiquities,’ b. vi., ch. xiv., sec. 5); notwithstanding which the proud Assyrian boasted that he was under no apprehension of wanting a supply of that essential liquid, or being compelled to fetch it from distant sources, since he had previously overcome the greatest difficulties in that respect. (See *Rawlinson’s* ‘Ancient Monarchies,’ ii., p. 437, where that writer states it as his opinion that the blocking up of the fountains at Jerusalem took place on the first expedition of Sennacherib. And, on the nature and extent of the changes made at that time in the water supply, *Williams’s* ‘Holy City,’ ii., pp. 472-482; *Robinson’s* ‘Biblical Researches,’ i., p. 513; *Stewart’s* ‘Tent and Khan,’ p. 271; *Barclay’s* ‘City of the Great King,’ ch. x., especially p. 307; *Wilson’s* ‘Lands of the Bible,’ i., p. 493; *Porter’s* ‘Handbook,’ p. 135, sec. 47.)

25. Hast thou not heard long ago how I have done it. Here comes the prophet’s response to the Assyrian’s boasting. The purport of it is, that Sennacherib was merely an instrument in the hands of Jehovah, to accomplish His purposes of providential judgment. now have I brought it to pass, that thou shouldst be to lay waste fenced cities into ruinous heaps, &c. This Divine description of Sennacherib’s career receives a striking illustration from that king’s own monumental account of his rapid course of conquest, which has rarely been paralleled in history except by Napoleon the Great. ‘In my third (*i. e.*, regnal) year, I went up to the country of the Khetta, or Hittites (a name denoting Phœnicia, Palestine, &c.) Euliyā, king of Sidon (the Elulenus of Menander), had thrown off the yoke of allegiance. On my approach from Abiri, he fled to Yetnana, which is on the sea-coast (the Rhinocolura of the Greeks). I reduced his entire country. The places which submitted to me were Sidon

- 27 But 'I know thy ⁹abode, and thy going out, and thy coming in,
And thy rage against me.
- 28 Because thy rage against me and thy tumult is come up into mine ears,
Therefore ^fI will put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips,
And I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest.
- 29 And this shall be ⁹a sign unto thee,
Ye shall eat this year such things as grow of themselves,
And in the second year that which springeth of the same;
And in the third year sow ye, and reap,
And plant vineyards, and eat the fruits thereof,
- 30 And ¹⁰the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah
Shall yet again take root downward, and bear fruit upward.
- 31 For out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant,
And ¹¹they that escape out of mount Zion:
¹²The zeal of the LORD of hosts shall do this.

B. C. 710.

⁹ Ps. 139. 1.
⁹ Cr. sittin g.
^f Job 41. 2.
 Eze. 29. 4.
 Eze 33. 4.
 Amos 4. 2.
⁹ 1 Sam 2. 31.
 ch 20. 8, 9.
 Isa. 7. 11.
 Luke 2. 12.
¹⁰ the escap-
 ing of the
 house of
 Judah that
 remaineth.
¹¹ the
 e-aping.
¹² Isa 9. 7.

the greater and Sidon the less, Beth-zitta (the city of Olives)—unknown; Saripat (Sarepta), Mahallat (an ascent), Husuva (Tyre), Akzib (Ecdippa), and Akka (Accho, Acre). I placed a new prince on the throne instead of Euliyah, and imposed on him the regulated amount of tribute. The kings of the sea-coast all repaired to my presence in the neighbourhood of Husuva (Tyre), and brought me their accustomed tribute.' The names of these kings—all maritime princes—are only found upon *Colonel Taylor's* cylinder, and some of them are unfortunately illegible. 'Sika of Ascalon, who did not come to pay me homage, the gods of his house, and his treasures, his sons and his daughters, and his brothers of the house of his father, I seized, and sent off to Nineveh. I placed another chief on the throne of Ascalon, and I imposed on him the regulated amount of tribute.' All these achievements were performed during the spring and summer. 'In the autumn of that year,' he continues, 'certain other cities, amongst which was Ekron, the inhabitants of which were attached to Hezekiah, and which had refused to submit to my authority, I took and plundered.' Then he describes his progress southward, till he reached Al...ku, or Allakhis (Lachish) (*Rawlinson's* 'Outlines of Assyrian History,' p. xxxv.) 27. I know thy abode, and thy going out, and thy coming in. All the movements of Sennacherib were well known to Jehovah. His residence in Assyria, his expedition against Judah and Egypt, his return home for a time, his second expedition, his menaces against Judah, and blasphemous defiance of Judah's God—all these were well known and permitted in the course of Divine Providence.

28. I will put my hook in thy nose—or I have put, &c. People in the East lead their large and turbulent beasts by a bridle fastened to a ring, which is put through the cartilage of the animal's nose (Job xli. 1, 2). The Assyrians often strung a number of war-captives in that way, with their hands bound behind them, and rings fastened in their nostrils (cf. Ezek. xix. 4, 9; xxix. 3, 4) (*Rawlinson*, 'On the Cuneiform Inscriptions,' p. 76). Sometimes the ring was passed through the lip ('Nineveh and its Remains,' ii., 376).

29. this shall be a sign unto thee, Ye shall eat this year such things as grow of themselves, &c. The "sign" which Isaiah goes on to promise, in terms apparently made obscure in order to excite consideration, seems best explained to mean, that the Assyrian devastations of the open country of the Jews had prevented the regular cropping of the land, and consequently the regular harvest for the current year; and as the enemy was still in occupation of the country, there was no possibility

of ploughing and sowing, in preparation for the next year either; but the season after that, the prophet confidently asserts that they would be able to sow and reap, and plant vineyards, and eat the fruit thereof. The promise is thus brought into strict harmony with the previous threat (cf. Isa. xxxii. 10), that 'the vintage should fail, and the gathering not come' for a time, which we must understand Isaiah thereby to say would be considerable; whether we understand the 'days above a year,' of the original, to mean 'more than a full year,' or look only at the general expressions in the following verses of the passage referred to. That what Isaiah said there, he may have meant here, might seem answer enough to the objection, that those who give this explanation of the loss of two harvests, must suppose the prophet to have expected the Assyrian occupation to last much longer than the history shows that it did; but the objection itself vanishes, if we recollect that the movements of great armies against and over a country defended by deserts and mountains and fortified cities, the political negotiations preceding and following these movements, and the recovery of depopulated villages and wasted corn-fields and vineyards, were not events which could begin and end within any such short space as it takes to write or read of them. 'This sign is analogous in character to all other symbols (cf. Gen. ix.; Exod. iii. 12; Isa. vii. 14; viii. 1) of which the purpose is, not to establish faith in a future miracle, because a present one has been wrought, but to supply such an outward and visible sign of the accompanying inward spiritual grace as will, from the very constitution of man's being, help him to realize the latter, as he could not do by any naked mental effort. And the thing here signified has itself an inward and an outward part; for as the spontaneously-sowed and multiplied corn and fruit will be the foundation and materials of the regular cultivation of the third year, so will the deserted villages and farms be replenished with the survivors of those who have for the present found refuge within the walls of Jerusalem; and both the one and the other will be the types of "holy seed," the existence of which in the corrupt nation was made known to Isaiah at his first calling to the prophetic office, when he was told that he was to watch and wait with the long patience of the husbandman for the growing up of that seed, after the hard ground had been broken up, and the rampant weeds rooted out, by the ploughshare of repeated national calamities' (*Strachley*, 'Hebrew Politics,' p. 250). 30. the remnant... shall yet again take root downward, and bear fruit upward [i.e., fruit of the womb;

- 32 Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning the king of Assyria,
He 'shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there,
Nor come before it with shield, nor cast 'a bank against it.
- 33 By the way that he came, by the same shall he return,
And shall not come into this city, saith the LORD.
- 34 For ^k I will defend this city, to save it,
For mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake.
- 35 And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the LORD went out,
and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five
thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were

	B. C. 710.
'	Isa. 8. 7, 10.
	Isa. 10. 21,
	25, 28.
	Isa. 32. 7.
	Isa. 33. 35.
'	2 Sam. 10.
	15.
	Eze 21. 22.
	Luke 19. 4.
'	ch. 20. 6.
	Ps. 46. 5, 6.
	Ps. 48. 2, 3.

used sometimes of beasts, but here of persons (cf. Jer. xii. 2; Hos. ix. 10).

33. shall not come into this city—nor approach near enough to shoot an arrow, not even from the most powerful engine which throws missiles to the greatest distance; nor shall he occupy any part of the ground before the city by a fence, a mantlet, or covering for men employed in a siege; nor cast (raise) a bank (mound) of earth, overtopping the city walls, whence he may see and command the interior of the city. None of these, which were the principal modes of attack followed in ancient military art, should Sennacherib be permitted to adopt. Though the army under Rabshakch marched towards Jerusalem, and encamped at a little distance, with a view to blockade it, they delayed laying siege to it, probably waiting till the king, having taken Lachish and Libnah, should bring up his detachment, that with the whole combined forces of Assyria they might invest the capital. So determined was this invader to conquer Judah and the neighbouring countries (Isa. x. 7), that nothing but a Divine interposition could have saved Jerusalem.—It might be supposed that the powerful monarch who overran Palestine, and carried away the tribes of Israel, would leave memorials of his deeds on sculptured slabs or votive bulls. A long and minute account of this expedition is contained in the annals of Sennacherib, a translation of which has recently been made into English; and in his remarks upon it, *Colonel Rawlinson* says the Assyrian version confirms the most important features of the Scripture account. The Jewish and the Assyrian narratives of the campaign are, indeed, on the whole, strikingly illustrative of each other. 34. for mine own sake—(cf. Isa. xlvi. 11.) and for my servant David's sake—*i. e.*, from regard to the promise and solemn covenant established with David, relating to the stability of his kingdom and the perpetuity of his royal line (2 Sam. vii. 12-16; 1 Ki. xi. 12, 13).

35, 36.—AN ANGEL DESTROYS THE ASSYRIANS.

35. And it came to pass that night. These two last words are not contained in the parallel passages either of Chronicles (2 Chr. xxxii. 21) or of Isaiah (xxxvii. 36). The latter passage reads simply, "Then the angel of the Lord went forth;" and as the phrase 'that day' is frequently used in a vague, indefinite sense (cf. Isa. iv. 1; xxvi. 1; xxvii. 1), so may "that night," meaning only that memorable night on which the destruction took place. Certainly the idea of its immediate occurrence is directly at variance with the limitation of time specified, *v.* 29. That the catastrophe was completed in one night is confirmed by Ps. xlv. (a psalm which is generally regarded as composed at the time by Isaiah, or some devout inhabitant of Jerusalem), in *v.* 5 of which the words, "God shall help her, and that right early," are, in the Hebrew original, 'God shall help her at the turning of the morning.' The expression is exceedingly signifi-

cant and striking, if it be viewed as pointing to that period of the night when the awful overthrow took place, the sight of which was discovered at the break of day (cf. Isa. xvii. 14).

'Like the leaves of the forest, when summer is green,
That host with their banners at sunset were seen;
Like the leaves of the forest, when autumn hath blown,
That host on the morrow lay withered and strown.'

the angel of the Lord went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand. The representation of an angel smiting the camp of the Assyrians expresses, according to the mental conception of the sacred historian, the suddenness, fatality, and wide-spread extent of the terrible visitation (cf. Acts xii. 23). and when they arose early in the morning . . . they were all dead corpses. It was the miraculous interposition of the Almighty that defended Jerusalem; and, in the despair of help from human counsels or arms, which Hezekiah betrays on receiving the letter, nothing but a Divine power could have rescued the kingdom of Hezekiah at that time from an immediate overthrow similar to those of Damascus and Samaria. As to the secondary agent employed in the destruction of the Assyrian army, some think (*Berosus*, quoted by *Josephus*, 'Antiquities,' b. x., ch. ii., p. 48) that it was caused by the pestilence, to which may be ascribed the sickness of Hezekiah about the same time; or it might be that it was effected by a hot south wind, the Simoom, such as to this day often envelops and destroys whole caravans. This conjecture is supported by various reasons—1. The destruction was during night: the officers and soldiers being in full security, were negligent, their discipline was relaxed, the camp-guards were not alert, or perhaps they themselves were the first taken off, and those who slept, *not wrapped up*, imbibed the poison plentifully. Others, amongst whom is *Vitringus* ('Commentary,' in loco), founding on Isaiah xxx. 30 (English version), and considering that 'the voice of Jehovah' denotes thunder (Ps. xxix.), are of opinion that the destruction was effected by a tempest of extraordinary violence, the hailstones being as destructive as at the battle of Beth-horon (Josh. x. 11). Further, that it took place in Judah, not in Egypt, appears from Isaiah xiv. 25. If this had been an evening of dissolute mirth (no uncommon thing in a camp) their joy (perhaps for a victory, or 'the first night of their attacking the city,' says *Josephus*), became, by its effects, one means of their destruction. This hypothesis proceeds on the assumption, which the text appears to warrant, that the destruction was accomplished in one night. *Berosus*, the Chaldean historian, and *Herodotus* (b. ii., p. 141) agree with the apparent tenor of the sacred record, that the calamity occurred in one night. The former says that it happened on the first night of the siege of Jerusalem. The latter, who drew his account

36 all dead corpses. So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went
 37 and returned, and dwelt at 'Nineveh. And it came to pass, as he was

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1 Jon. 1. 2.

from the Egyptians, attributes it to a singular visitation. His words are, 'Sennacherib came against the Egyptian king, who was the priest of Vulcan, and that as he was besieging Pelusium, he broke up the siege for the following reason:—The Egyptian priest prayed to his god, who heard him, and sent a judgment on the Arabian (erroneously for the Assyrian) king. A multitude of mice gnawed to pieces in one night both the bows and the other accoutrements of the Assyrians, and that it was on that account Sennacherib, when he had no armour left, hastily withdrew his army from Pelusium.' *Herodotus* thus lays the scene of the disaster in Egypt, misled by a national myth, which the vanity of his Egyptian informers, in ascribing it to their god, palmed upon him. But the sacred history, and *Berosus* along with it, represent the Assyrian soldiers as perishing by an invisible stroke. As to the number of the slain, immense as the destruction was, there would be no extraordinary difficulty in ascertaining the precise amount. The scene in the morning would exhibit no trace of the wild disorder and universal confusion consequent upon a battle. The camp was in its normal state of orderly disposition, the common soldiers stretched upon their beds, unconscious of what had befallen them, the officers in their splendid tents, and the sentinels at their respective posts of duty, when they were overtaken by the sudden visitation which made them all dead corpses. The Jews, therefore, would soon learn the astounding intelligence; and Hezekiah, who would doubtless regard the dispensation as the accomplishment of Isaiah's prediction, would send out messengers to examine and report. When their first astonishment, mingled with the deepest feelings of reverential awe, and of thanksgiving for what was so unmistakeably a Divine interposition in their behalf, had subsided, they would be able with ease, as well as with perfect accuracy in the circumstances, to take the tale of the slaughtered Assyrians, and bring it to Jerusalem. The report of the Jews would spread with the rapidity of lightning through all the cities of Philistia and Phœnicia, Syria, and Chaldea, which had suffered from the ruthless invader, as well as the people of Hezekiah; so that in all likelihood *Berosus*, in making his numerical statement at 185,000, was giving permanence to the popular tradition universally current amongst the tributary nations of the Assyrian empire. No notice, as might be expected, is found in the Ninevite inscriptions of this terrible catastrophe. The Assyrian monarchs were accustomed to record in minute detail the successes of the national arms, but they carefully abstained from the smallest allusion to any reverses. But the omission of a full record of this second expedition, so contrary to the invariable practice, the established usage, of those sovereigns to narrate the transactions of their own reigns, is very significant; and although Sennacherib has not registered the miraculous destruction of his vast army, the abandonment of all further attempts to prosecute his enterprise against Jerusalem is in itself a most intelligible indication that he felt himself no longer in a condition to make an attack on that city. 'The events of the following year of Sennacherib present a marked contrast to the detailed and magniloquent descriptions of the preceding periods. They are confined to a few meagre lines, and refer exclusively to an expedition against the Chaldees, which Sennacherib does not seem even

to have conducted in person' (*Rawlinson's* 'Outlines,' p. 37). The narrative of this great campaign, so memorable for that miraculous interposition of Jehovah which rescued the kingdom of Judah from otherwise inevitable ruin, and dealt a fatal blow to the Assyrian empire, is, in the chapter before us, scanty and imperfect, being continued, in fact, only so far as was necessary to show the bearing of the expedition upon the interests of Jerusalem and Judah. Some parts of it are involved in considerable obscurity. It is impossible to determine whether Sennacherib had actually taken Lachish, when he despatched Rab-shakeh, Rab-saris, and Tartan, with a large contingent of troops against Jerusalem, to intimidate Hezekiah;—whether Rab-shakeh withdrew these troops from Jerusalem when he returned himself to Sennacherib's head-quarters;—whether, if they were left before the walls of Jerusalem, to commence a regular siege of that metropolis, it was this portion of the soldiers which perished so awfully, or the main body of the Assyrian army;—whether Sennacherib, having, as he says in his annals, signally defeated the Egyptians at Lachish, had penetrated into Egypt, and having heard of Tirhakah the Ethiopian's junction of his forces to those of the native king, *Sethos* (or *Zet*), he formed the determined purpose to encounter him, but on hearing the report of the sudden and mysterious loss of his army, he was struck with uncontrollable awe, and hastily fled, as *Josephus* says, out of Egypt, back to his own country;—these and other questions of a similar kind, it is impossible, from the succinct account of the sacred historians, to answer with confidence. But we may learn from it all that it is important and necessary to know. 'We see that in the regular advance of the Assyrian power, it had reached the point at which Sennacherib could cease to temporize with Judah, and might proceed completely to absorb the tributary state into the empire. The kingdom of Samaria had already followed the fate of Damascus in this respect; the taking of Ashdod had not only opened the road to Egypt, but also turned the position of Judah; the plunder of No-ammon had sharpened the appetites of the northern invaders for new campaigns and conquests; and if Sennacherib thought it well to try and intimidate Hezekiah and his people into surrendering cities, which even Tartan himself would have had difficulty in taking, until they were starved out, we may infer from the insolent way in which he still avows his ultimate intentions, if they did surrender, that he really had no fear for the result, even though he should be obliged to fight Tirhakah, with Judah unconquered, and assisting the Egyptians. The justness of the belief, which (as we learn from *Herodotus*) was held by the Egyptians as well as by the Hebrews, that nothing but an interposition of God's hand could at this moment have broken the great Assyrian power, is confirmed by this conduct of Sennacherib and his messenger, no less than by the despair of help from human counsels, or of arms, which Hezekiah manifests on receiving the report of the message and the letter by which it was afterwards followed. The conviction that the Lord of Israel was strong enough, and no less willing, to keep his covenant, by defending the nation against all its enemies, had no doubt supported Hezekiah hitherto; but it would have been insufficient, in this moment, to meet the terrible feeling that he was now in the actual presence and power of the represen-

worshipping in the house of ^mNisroch his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons smote him with the sword: and they escaped into

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m ch. 18. 6. o.

tative of irresistible arbitrary force, unless a higher truth had come to sustain this lower one, and he had realized (as men only do realize in some extremity of their own helplessness) that there was an absolute Will retaining the mastery over that irresistible force, however crushing it might seem; and that the Lord of Israel, who "dwelt between the cherubims," was himself the God, the only God, of all the kingdoms of the earth, and so of this Assyrian kingdom among the rest' (*Strachey*, 'Hebrew Politics,' p. 274). It was the living power of this truth which supported the heart of Hezekiah himself, and which being communicated through his royal example, together with the exhortations and assurances of Isaiah to the court and inhabitants of Jerusalem, enabled them all to stand still in faith and patience till, like the Israelites pursued by Pharaoh and his host at the Red Sea, they saw the salvation of God. 36. So Sennacherib . . . departed, and went and returned [פָּרַד], decamped; Septuagint, ἀπῆρε, took away by force, departed with the remnant of his army. The redundancy of expression used in this description of Sennacherib's flight from Judah is similar to that of Catiline's from Rome, *Abiit, excessit, erasit, erupit*]. The early chariot-track near Beyrout is on the rocky edge of Lebanon, which is skirted by the ancient Lycus (*Nahr el-Kelb*). On the perpendicular face of the limestone rock, at different heights, are seen slabs with Assyrian inscriptions, which, having been deciphered, are found to contain the name of Sennacherib. Thus, by the preservation of these tablets, the wrath of the Assyrian invaders is made to praise the Lord. dwelt at Nineveh [נִנְוֵה]; Septuagint, ἐκκῆσθαι—resided, remained in his capital, administering the internal government of his kingdom, and relinquishing all extensive plans of foreign conquest—particularly against Judah, the king and kingdom of which he had learned by dire experience were under Divine protection. Both the Hebrew and Greek verbs imply a considerable period of time, but neither of them determines the question, how long he dwelt at Nineveh, though most readers take up an impression, from the tenor of the context, that so daring a blasphemer would not be permitted long to live. *Josephus* ('Antiquities,' b. x., ch. i., sec. 3) quotes *Berosus*, who says indefinitely, that 'he had abode there a little while,' when his life was suddenly terminated. The annals of his reign, as read in the inscriptions at Kouyunjik, carry on his history at least five years after his return to Nineveh. Notices are supposed to have been found which record his conducting a war against the Armenians and Medes in the fifth year, and that, having engaged Phœnician sailors to man a small fleet he had built to ply on the navigable rivers the Tigris and Euphrates, he put himself at the head of a naval armament fitted out against some of his revolted subjects along the shores of the Persian Gulf, whom he reduced to submission. This expedition occupied him the whole of the next three years. But from the eighth year after his disastrous retreat from Palestine his annals are wanting. *Eusebius*, quoting *Alexander Polyhistor* ('Chronica,' b. i., ch. v.), says he reigned eighteen years; but there is monumental evidence that the duration of his reign extended over twenty-two or twenty-five years. This statement implies a considerable period of time, and his annals carry on his history at least five years after his disastrous campaign at Jerusalem. No record

of his catastrophe can be found, as the Assyrian practice was to record victories alone. The sculptures gave only the sunny side of the picture.

37.—SENNACHERIB SLAIN.

37. as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch. Nisroch, a great eagle (*Gesenius*). The eagle was declared to be the form of this Assyrian god long before the discovery of the Ninevite monuments (*Selden*, 'De Diis Syris. Syntag.' ii., cap. x.; *Beyer*, 'Addimenta,' p. 325); and conformably to that ancient belief, it was supposed that the eagle, or vulture-headed figure, which so frequently occurs among the sculptured remains, had a reference to some deified hero who was worshipped under that title—either Asshur, the founder and tutelary deity of Assyria (*Rawlinson's* 'Outlines,' p. 18), or Nimrod, whose personal qualities and pursuits were expressed by that rapacious bird (see 'Nineveh and its Remains,' ii., p. 459; also 'Nineveh and Babylon,' p. 637, note). Asshur, however, the head of the Assyrian Pantheon, is not represented as a vulture-headed figure—that is now ascertained to be a priest—but as a winged figure in a circle. No trace of Nisroch is found except in the present passage and the parallel one of Isaiah xxxvii. 38, and *Sir H. Rawlinson* has shown that there was no temple of Asshur in Nineveh. [The name, which does not occur in the Assyrian monuments, is variously given, being called by *Josephus* ('Antiquities,' b. x., ch. i., sec. 3) Arascus (Eng., Arak); Septuagint, Vatican, Μισσαράχ; Alexandrine, εσθραχ; but in Isaiah the same version has Νασαράχ. 'These various readings of the Septuagint version,' says *Rawlinson* ('Ancient Monuments,' ii., p. 265) 'make it extremely uncertain what was the name actually written in the original Hebrew text.'] Nisroch, which is utterly unlike any divine name hitherto found in the Assyrian records, is most probably a corruption (see also *Sir H. Rawlinson's* 'Herodotus,' b. i., 590). *Josephus* ('Antiquities,' b. x., ch. i., sec. 3) says that Sennacherib was slain in his own temple, which was called Araske. Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons smote him with the sword [כֶּרְסָרְסָן, splendour of the king; Septuagint, Vatican, Ἀδραμέλεχ; Alexandrine, Ἀδραμελεχ]. *Berosus* calls him Ardamusanus, and mentions him alone, doubtless as being the principal assassin. *Moses Chorenensis* ('Hist. Armeni.,' i., 22) gives him the name of Adramelus in one passage, and that of Argamozanus in another. *Eusebius* ('Chron. Can. Pars prima,' cap. v., sec. 1), from *Alexander Polyhistor*, styles him Ardamuzanes, and (in Ditto, cap. ix.) from *Abydenus*, Adrameles. "Sharezer" [שָׂרְזֵר], prince of fire, according to *Gesenius*, who derives it from the Persian; Septuagint, Σαρασάρ; *Josephus* ('Antiquities,' b. x., ch. i., sec. 3), *Scraser*]. According to the monuments, the eldest son of Sennacherib was *Ashur-inadi-su*, the Asordanes of *Polyhistor*, and the Assaranadius of *Ptolemy's* canon, who, having been made governor of Babylon, might naturally have been expected, had he survived, to succeed his father on the throne of Assyria. In consequence of his death, the right of succession devolved on Nergilus (Nergal), who is supposed to have been the second son of Sennacherib, but whom *Abydenus* (*Eusebius*, 'Chron. Can. Pars,' ix., already quoted) erroneously considers the father of Adrameles; and the king was slain by him. It appears from the monuments that Sennacherib had other three sons, Adrammelech,

the land of ¹² Armenia. And Esarhaddon "his son reigned in his stead.

20 IN ^a those days was Hezekiah sick unto death: and the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz came to him, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, 2 Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live. Then he

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¹² Arar it.ⁿ Ezra i. 2.

CHAP. 23.

^a 2 Chr 32. 24.

Sharezer, and Esarhaddon, the two first being full brothers, the last a half-brother. 'Perhaps,' says Rawlinson ('Ancient Monarchies,' ii., p. 464), 'upon the death of Asshur-inadi-su, disputes arose about the succession. Adrammelech and Sharezer, anxious to obtain the throne for themselves, plotted against the life of their father, and having slain him in a temple as he was worshipping, proceeded further to remove their brother Nergilus, who claimed the crown, and wore it for a brief space after Sennacherib's death. Having murdered him, they expected to obtain the throne without further difficulty; but Esarhaddon now came forward, and was favourably received. The murderers finding that they had miscalculated, quitted Assyria, and went into voluntary exile' (see also p. 43). *Josephus* says that they were expelled by the indignation of the people. This is a historical chain, ingeniously wrought by connecting the isolated facts recorded on the monuments, and it wears so strong an air of probability that it may be accepted as the true account of the motive and the object of the unnatural parricides. This murder, if a judgment upon Sennacherib personally (cf. v. 7), was at least equally a judgment on the empire over which he reigned. Sennacherib's temper, exasperated, probably by his reverses, displayed itself in the most savage cruelty and intolerable tyranny over his subjects and slaves. He intended to sacrifice his two sons to pacify the gods, and dispose them to grant him a return of prosperity, and that, it has been said, according to a horrid usage of heathen kings when their kingdoms were in desperate circumstances, and they escaped into the land of Armenia [עַרְמֵיָא].

The Septuagint in this passage renders εις γην 'Αραβίαν; but in Isa. xxxviii. 38 they have εις 'Αρμενίαν. *Jerome* ('Commeatary' on Isa. xxxviii. 38) says, 'The land of Ararat is a region in the lowlands of Armenia, through which the Araxes flows, and distinguished by its extraordinary fertility. This region probably extended as far north as the river Cyrus, and embraced most of the country lying between the lakes Oormiah and Van (see also *Rosenmüller's* 'Biblical Geography,' vol. i., ch. iv., sec. 7). *Moses Chorenensis* says that the two parricides, on their arrival in Armenia, were hospitably received by the sovereign of the country, who gave them possessions, and they became respectively founders of two large and influential families, and Esarhaddon his son reigned in his stead [עַרְמֵיָא, gift of fire. *Ezer* enters largely into the composition of Assyrian proper names, being put sometimes at the beginning, sometimes at the end, of a word. Septuagint, Vatican, 'Αραβίαν; Alexandrine, ἀραβία; *Josephus*, Assarachoddas.] His claim to be the successor of his father may have arisen from his being the eldest son at the death of Sennacherib. The rumour that the great king of Assyria had fallen, and in so horrid a manner, would naturally produce a deep and universal sensation throughout contemporary nations. Amongst the people of Judah, who expected some awful judgment to befall so daring a blasphemer, it would be received with awe, mingled with thanksgiving for their deliverance, now at length complete. And accordingly, various direct references in the writings

of contemporary prophets and others attest how intensely the national feelings were excited by the hand of God, so awfully displayed in the fate of Sennacherib. The magnificent ode of Isaiah (xiv.), on the fall of the great conqueror, who was styled interchangeably 'the king of Assyria,' and "the king of Babylon," is felt to be exceedingly pointed and striking, if it be considered as composed immediately on the intelligence of his assassination reaching Jerusalem. And several psalms, believed to have had their origin at the time of the invasion, abound with facts and allusions which set before the imagination of the reader a vivid picture of the horrors of "that night." These are graphically grouped together by *Dean Stanley* in the following passage ('Lectures on the Jewish Church,' xxxviii.):— The weapons of the great army, such as we see them in the Assyrian monuments, the mighty bow and its lightning arrows, the serried shields (Isa. xxxvii. 33; Ps. lxxvi. 3 (*Heb.*); also Ps. xli. 9; *Herodotus*, ii., 141; *Layard's* "Nineveh," ii., pp. 340, 342) were shattered to pieces; the long array of dead horses (Ps. lxxvi. 6; Isa. xxxvii. 36) (the Hebrew word always includes animals); the chariots now useless, left to be burnt (Ps. xli. 9; cf. Isa. ix. 5; *Louth*); the trophies carried off from the dead—all rise to view in the recollection of that night. The proud have slept their sleep, and the mighty soldiers (Ps. lxxvi. 5; xli. 10) flung out their hands in vain. The arms have fallen from their grasp. The neigh of the charger, the rattle of the chariot, are alike hushed in the sleep of death. The wild uproar is over; the whole world is silent (Ps. lxxvi. 8; xli. 10), and in that awful stillness the people descend from the heights of Jerusalem (Ps. xli. 8; lxxvi. 4, 5), like their ancestors to the shores of the Red Sea, to see the desolation that had been wrought on the earth. As then, they carried away the spoils as trophies. The towers of Jerusalem were brilliant with the shields (Ps. lxxvi. 4) of the dead. The fame of the fall of Sennacherib's host struck the surrounding nations with terror far and wide. It was like the knell of the great potentates of the world; and in their fall the God of Israel seemed to rise to a higher and yet higher exaltation (Ps. xli. 10; lxxvi. 10, 11).

CHAP. XX. 1-7.—HEZEKIAH'S LIFE LENGTHENED.

1. In those days was Hezekiah sick. As his reign lasted twenty-nine years (ch. xviii. 2), and his kingdom was invaded in the fourteenth (ch. xviii. 13), it is evident that this sudden and severe illness must have occurred in the very year of the Syrian invasion. Between the threatened attack and the actual appearance of the enemy, this incident in Hezekiah's history must have taken place. But according to the usage of the sacred historian, the story of Sennacherib is completed before entering on what was personal to the king of Judah (see also Isa. xxxviii. 39). *Dean Stanley* is of opinion that the king's illness occurred either during Sennacherib's invasion or immediately after his retreat, and was produced by mental excitement as well as bodily exhaustion connected with that crisis. set thine house in order. Isaiah, being of the blood-royal, might have access to the king's private house. But since the prophet was

- 3 turned his face to the wall, and prayed unto the LORD, saying, I beseech thee, O LORD, ^bremember now how I have ^cwalked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done *that which is good* in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept ¹sore.
- 4 And it came to pass, afore Isaiah was gone out into the middle ²court,
- 5 that the word of the LORD came to him, saying, Turn again, and tell Hezekiah the captain of my people, Thus saith the LORD, the God of David thy father, ^d"I have heard thy prayer, I have seen ^ethy tears: behold, I will heal thee: on the third day thou shalt go up unto the
- 6 house of the LORD. And I will add unto thy days fifteen years; and I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria; and I ^fwill defend this city for mine own sake, and for my servant David's
- 7 sake. And Isaiah said, Take a lump of figs. And they took and laid *it* on the boil, and he recovered.
- 8 And Hezekiah said unto Isaiah, What *shall be* the sign that the LORD will heal me, and that I shall go up into the house of the LORD the third
- 9 day? And Isaiah said, ^g"This sign shalt thou have of the LORD, that the LORD will do the thing that he hath spoken: shall the shadow go forward
- 10 ten degrees, or go back ten degrees? And Hezekiah answered, It is a light thing for the shadow to go down ten degrees: nay, but let the

B. C. 713.

^b Neh. 13. 22.

Ps. 132, 1-5.

Isa. 38. 3.

² Tim. 4. 7.^c Gen. 5. 22.

24.

Gen. 17. 1.

¹ with a

great

weeping.

² Or. city.^d Ps. 65. 2.

Ps. 19. 19.

Luke 11. 9.

10.

Acts 10. 31.

⁶ Job 16. 20.

Ps. 39. 12.

Ps. 56. 8.

Ps. 120. 5, 6.

Rev. 7. 17.

^f ch. 19. 34.² Chr. 32. 22.

Isa. 10. 21.

^g Isa. 33. 7.

commissioned to make this announcement, the message must be considered as referring to matters of higher importance than the settlement of the king's domestic and private affairs. It must have related chiefly to the state of his kingdom, he having not as yet any son (cf. v. 6 with ch. xxi. 1). for thou shalt die, and not live. The disease was of a malignant character, and would be mortal in its effects, unless the healing power of God should miraculously interpose. 2. turned his face to the wall. Not like Ahab (see on I Ki. xxi. 4 for an account of the position of beds), in fretful discontent, but in order to secure a better opportunity for prayer, to conceal his face from the notice of his attendants, that the fervency of his devotion might not be observed. But *Lamy* thinks that Hezekiah turned his face to the wall because he meant to pray looking in the direction of the temple ('De Tabernaculo,' lib. vii., cap. 1., sec. 5'). 3. remember . . . how I have walked, &c. The course of Hezekiah's thoughts was evidently directed to the promise made to David and his successors on the throne (I Ki. viii. 25). He had kept the conditions as faithfully as human infirmity admitted; and as he had been all along free from any of those great crimes by which, through the judgment of God, human life was often suddenly cut short, his great grief might arise partly from the love of life, and the promise of long life and temporal prosperity made to the pious and godly, which would not be fulfilled to him if he were cut off in the midst of his days; partly from the obscurity of the Mosaic dispensation, where life and immortality had not been fully brought to light; and partly from his plans for the reformation of his kingdom being frustrated by his death, and from his having as yet, which was most probably the case, no son whom he could leave heir to his work and his throne. He pleaded the fulfilment of the promise.

4. afore Isaiah was gone out into the middle court—of the royal castle. 5. Thus saith . . . the God of David thy father. An immediate answer was given to his prayer, containing an assurance that the Lord was mindful of His promise to David, and would accomplish it in Hezekiah's experience, both by the prolongation of his life and his deliverance from the Assyrians. on the third day. The perfect recovery from a dangerous sickness,

within so short a time, shows the miraculous character of the cure (see his thanksgiving song, Isa. xxxviii. 9). The disease cannot be ascertained; but the text gives no hint that the plague was raging then in Jerusalem; and although Arabian as well as Persian (*Morier*) physicians apply a cataplasm of figs to plague-boils, they also do so in other cases, as figs are considered useful in ripening and soothing inflammatory ulcers.

8-11.—THE SUN GOES TEN DEGREES BACKWARDS.

8. What shall be the sign that the Lord will heal me. His recovery in the course of nature was so unlooked for, that the king asked for some token to justify his reliance on the truth of the prophet's communication; and the sign he specified was granted to him. The shadow of the sun went back upon the dial of Ahaz the ten degrees it had gone down. Various conjectures have been formed as to this dial. The word in the original [מַקְלוֹתָי] means "degrees," or "steps;" and hence many commentators have supposed that it was a stair, so artfully contrived that the shadow on the steps indicated the hours and course of the sun. But it is more probable that it was a proper instrument—"a series of steps or terraces like those of the Birs Nimroud, on which an upright pole cast its shadow, the hours being marked by the coincidence of the shadow of the gnomon with the edge of the steps (degrees)" (*Layard's* 'Nineveh and Babylon,' p. 498; also 'Dissertation on the Old Testament' by *M. Von Gumpach*, p. 181). [The Septuagint evidently views it as consisting of steps; but the same version in Isa. xxxviii. 8 calls the sundial of Ahaz, ἀναβαθμῶν τοῦ οἴκου τοῦ πατρὸς σου; and, from the Hebrews having no term to designate it, there is a strong presumption that it was one of the foreign novelties imported from Babylon by Ahaz, or presented to him by Tiglath-pileser.] It seems to have been of such magnitude, and so placed in the court, that Isaiah could point to it, and the king see it, from his chamber. *Mr. Bosanquet* refers this incident to a partial eclipse of the sun which took place at noon-day at Jerusalem in January, B. C. 689. In the discussion produced by his suggestion, *Professor Airey*, the Astronomer-Royal, demonstrated, by chronological arguments, that such an eclipse did take place at the very time—viz., on the 11th January, fourteen

- 11 shadow return backward ten degrees. And Isaiah the prophet cried unto the LORD; and ^hhe brought the shadow ten degrees backward, by which it had gone down in the ³dial of Ahaz.
- 12 At that time ⁴Berodach-baladan, the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and a present unto Hezekiah: for he had heard that Hezekiah

B. C. 713.
^a Isa 38. 8.
⁸ degrees.
⁴ Or,
 Merodach-baladan.

days after the winter solstice of 690 B. C.—and calculates the time of the central eclipse to have been shortly after eleven o'clock a. m.—too early an hour for the phenomenon being produced on the dial. Whereupon a supplemental contribution to this view was made by the eminent mathematician, Adams, to the effect that, as the received secular variation of the moon was a little erroneous, the time of the eclipse referred to might perhaps be advanced half an hour (*Athenaeum*, June 28, 1856). But admitting, on the testimony of these eminent astronomers, the actual occurrence of this celestial phenomenon at the date mentioned, and still further, that, as *Vitringa* and *Gesenius* state, instances of a refraction caused by some vapour or cloud have been known in modern times, these concessions will not bring the remarkable fact recorded in the text within the operation of the established laws of nature. For it is distinctly asserted that the sign being left to the absolute choice of Hezekiah, whether the shadow on the dial should go ten degrees forward or backward, he fixed upon the latter. No doubt, the statement made here, that the conditions of the sign were submitted to the free selection of Hezekiah, does not appear in the parallel passage of Isaiah (xxxviii. 7, 8); but that omission cannot affect the truth of the narrative contained in the book of Kings, which is much more circumstantial and full than the succinct account given in that of Isaiah. The only right conclusion appears to be, that the retrogression of the sun's shadow on the dial was miraculous, accomplished by the omnipotent power of God; but the phenomenon was temporary, local, confined to the notice, and intended for the satisfaction, only of Hezekiah and his court. It has been suggested as a conjectural emendation on this passage, that an error may have crept into the text in the recorded number of degrees on the sun-dial of Ahaz. The present text says ten. But why that number rather than five, seven, or twenty? Assuming that it was fifteen degrees, the passage will appear exceedingly beautiful,—the sign would be perfect, and most apposite. The life of the king was to be prolonged fifteen years, and in token of this favour the shadow on the dial recedes a corresponding number of degrees. It is fatal, however, to this critical hypothesis that the word "ten" is repeatedly used in the narrative, and that the proposed alteration is not supported by the authority of any of the ancient versions or MSS. (see *Strachey's* 'Hebrew Politics,' pp. 286-290; 'Journal of Sacred Literature,' October, 1854, pp. 217, 218; 1855, pp. 163-178; 1856, p. 163).

12. At that time Berodach-baladan, the son of Baladan, king of Babylon [בְּרֹדַח בַּלְדַּן בֶּן בַּלְדַּן (as in Isa. xxxix. 1); בְּרֹדַח בַּלְדַּן (Gesenius)]. This name, as compounded of בְּרֹדַח, Mars, the great slaughterer (Jer. 1, 2), and frequently incorporated with proper names, as Evil-merodach, &c., Baladan = בַּל, and דַּן, sovereign lord, read on the side of a bowl found at Nineveh, Merod-onkh-bal; probably Mardocempalus of *Ptolemy* (*Rawlinson's* 'Herodotus,' i., p. 502), "son" of Baladan.] The father of Merodach-baladan seems, from the Assyrian Inscriptions, to have been Yagina, or Yakin

(*Rawlinson's* 'Bampton Lectures,' p. 443, note; 'Ancient Monarchies,' ii., p. 395, note); so that Baladan must have been his grandfather, or some distinguished ancestor. He is here styled "king of Babylon." In the 'annals of Sennacherib' the name of Merodach-baladan occurs as king of Kardunyas, or Chaldea. But Babylon was at that time a provincial capital of Assyria; and then, could there be, during the existence of the old Assyrian empire, a king of Babylon possessed of an independent kingdom, and free to appoint a mission of the kind to Hezekiah, who was the determined and successful enemy of the Assyrian power? In the Armenian version of *Eusebius's* 'Chronicle,' discovered a few years ago, a fragment of the Chaldean historian *Berosus*, preserved by *Alexander Polyhistor*, throws a welcome light on this obscure portion of history. It is to the following effect:—"After the reign of the brother of Sennacherib, Acises reigned over the Babylonians; and when he had exercised supreme authority for the space of thirty days, he was slain by Marodachus Baladanus, who held the empire by force during six months; and he was slain by a person called Elibus, who succeeded to the throne. In the third year of his reign Sennacherib, king of the Assyrians, levied an army against the Babylonians, and in a battle in which they were engaged, routed and took him prisoner, with his adherents, and ordered them to be carried into the land of the Assyrians. Having assumed the government of the Babylonians, he appointed his son, Asordanius, to be their king as his deputy, after which he himself retired again into Assyria' (*Cory's* 'Fragments'). Thus it is explained how, since the rulers of Babylon were formerly viceroys of the Assyrian monarchs, there happened to be a "king of Babylon" who acted independently, and despatched a friendly embassy to a distant monarch, who was notoriously in opposition to the Assyrian power. Merodach-baladan was one in a series of three successive rulers who, having thrown off the Assyrian yoke, were *de facto* kings of Babylon; and whether these usurpers took advantage of the fatal campaign in Judea, which reduced the Assyrian empire to a low ebb, for unfurling the banner of independence, as the Medes are thought also to have done, or whatever other occasion may have tempted them to rebel, this precious fragment of *Berosus* has solved a historical problem, has given an actual existence to a person who, in the absence either of direct testimony or indirect corroboration from any quarter, was long considered a myth; and by thus establishing the reality of Merodach-baladan's royal condition, has wrested from sceptics one of their most formidable weapons against the truth of the Old Testament history, (see *Layard's* 'Nineveh and Babylon'—the results of a Second Expedition, pp. 140-145, 212, 443, 620; *Rawlinson's* 'Outlines,' pp. 39-32; *Niebuhr*, pp. 46, 47, 169; *Bonomi*, 'Nineveh and its Palaces,' pp. 51, 52; *Wiseman's* 'Lectures on the Connection of Science and Revealed Religion,' p. 409, &c.) sent letters and a present unto Hezekiah. It is highly probable that the message of congratulation to Hezekiah on his recovery, was only a polite pretext for the embassy; and that in the circum-

13 had been sick. And 'Hezekiah hearkened unto them, and showed them all the house of his ⁵precious things, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and *all* the house of his ⁶armour, and all that was found in his treasures: there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah showed them not.

14 Then came Isaiah the prophet unto king Hezekiah, and said unto him, What said these men? and from whence came they unto thee? And Hezekiah said, They are come from a far country, *even* from Babylon.

15 And he said, What have they seen in thine house? And Hezekiah answered, *All the things that are* in mine house have they seen: there is nothing among my treasures that I have not showed them.

16, And Isaiah said unto Hezekiah, Hear the word of the LORD: Behold, 17 the days come, that all that *is* in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store unto this day, ¹shall be carried into Babylon: 18 nothing shall be left, saith the LORD. And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, ²shall they take away; ³and they 19 shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon. Then said Hezekiah unto Isaiah, ⁴Good *is* the word of the LORD which thou

B. C. 712.
 2 Chr. 32, 27.
 31.
 Isa. 39. 2.
 5 Or, spicery.
 6 Or, jewels.
 7 Lev. 26. 31.
 ch. 24. 13.
 ch. 25. 13.
 15.
 2 Chr. 36. 10.
 15.
 Jer. 27. 21.
 Jer. 52. 17.
 8 ch. 24. 12.
 7 Fulfilled,
 2 Ki. 24. 14.
 Dan. 1. 3.
 1 Sam. 3. 13.
 Job 1. 21.
 Ps 39. 9.
 Lam 3. 22.
 19.

stances, common to these kings of Babylon and of Judah, of opposition to the Assyrian power, Merodach was desirous of forming a defensive league with Hezekiah against their great foe. The presents were, according to Eastern usage, an indispensable passport to the commencement of civil or social communications of any kind, and might be more or less valuable according to the ability or the purposes of the donor. But it appears further (2 Chr. xxxii. 31), that one important object of this mission to Hezekiah was, in accordance with the favourite tastes and pursuits of the chief men in Chaldea, to enquire respecting the 'wonder' which had occurred in the country of Judah. That 'wonder' was in all probability, not the miraculous overthrow of the Assyrians, but the recession of the sun's shadow; for that phenomenon was directly connected with the convalescence of Hezekiah, and, doubtless, excited great interest among the astronomers of Babylon. 13. Hezekiah hearkened unto them [חִזְקִיָּהוּ]; but the parallel passage, Isa. xxxix. 2, has חִזְקִיָּהוּ, was glad. The latter must, from the tenor of the context, be regarded as the proper reading, for the Babylonians came not as suppliants for a favour, but as the bearers of a congratulatory message. It is confirmatory of the correctness of this view that the Septuagint has ἐχάρη ἐπ' αὐτοῖς in both passages]. The king of Judah, flattered with this honour, showed the ambassadors [בָּרְכִיָּהוּ] all the house of his precious things—his storehouse, containing the regalia and hereditary treasures belonging to the crown, his armoury (see ch. xxii. 8) and warlike stores; and his motive for this was, evidently, that the Babylonian deputies might be the more induced to prize his friendship. the silver, and the gold. He had paid so much tribute to Sennacherib as exhausted his treasury (ch. xviii. 16). But after the destruction of Sennacherib, presents were brought him from various quarters, out of respect to a king who, by his faith and prayer, saved his country (2 Chr. xxxii. 23); and, besides, it is by no means improbable that from the corpses in the Assyrian camp, all the gold and silver he had paid might be recovered. The vain display, however, was offensive to his Divine liege-lord, who sent Isaiah to reprove him. The answer he gave the prophet (v. 14) shows how he was elated by the compliment of their visit; but the display was wrong, as making

a vain exhibition, for his own aggrandizement, of what had been offered him from reverence and respect to his God, and at the same time presenting a bait for the cupidity of these rapacious foreigners, who, at no distant period, would return from the same city of Babylon, and pillage his country, and transfer all the possessions he ostentatiously displayed to Babylon, as well as his posterity, to be court attendants in that country (see on 2 Chr. xxxii. 31). Besides, it was wrong in a higher point of view still, as all alliances with foreign or heathen states were at variance with the fundamental principle of the theocratic kingdom of Judah. This passage affords a strong argument as to the prophecy respecting the captivity to Babylon, showing that the words must have been spoken very long before the event. 'The folly of the king and the reproof of the prophet must stand or fall together; the one prompts the other; the truth of the one sustains the truth of the other; the date of the one fixes the date of the other. Thus the period of Hezekiah's display of his finances being determined to a period soon after the downfall of the Assyrians, this rebuke of the prophet, which springs out of it, is determined to the same. Then the rebuke was a prophecy; for as yet it remained for Esarhaddon, the son of Sennacherib, to annex Babylon to Assyria by conquest; it remained for the two kingdoms to continue united for two generations more; it remained for Nabopolassar, the satrap of Babylon, to revolt from Assyria, and set up that kingdom for itself; and it remained for Nebuchadnezzar his son to succeed him, and by carrying away the Jews to Babylon, accomplish the words of Isaiah. But this interval occupied a hundred years and upwards; and so far, therefore, must the spirit of prophecy have carried him forward into futurity, and that, too, contrary to all present appearances. For Babylon was as yet but a name to the people of Jerusalem; it was a far country, and was to be swallowed up in the great Assyrian empire, and recover its independence once more, before it could be brought to act against Judah' (*Blunt's* 'Undesigned Coincidences,' p. 222) (cf. Mic. ii. 10; iv. 10).

19. Good is the word of the Lord—indicating a humble and pious resignation to the Divine will. The concluding part of his reply was uttered after a pause, and was probably an ejaculation to himself, expressing his thankfulness that,

hast spoken. And he said, ⁸*Is it not good*, if peace and truth be in my days?

20 And the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and all his might, and how he ^mmade a pool, and a conduit, and brought water into the city, *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah?

21 And Hezekiah slept with his fathers: and Manasseh his son reigned in his stead.

21 MANASSEH was twelve years old when he began to reign, and reigned fifty and five years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Hephzibah. And he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD, "after the abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD cast out before the children of Israel. For he built up again the high places which ^bHezekiah his father had destroyed; and he reared up altars for Baal, and made a grove, ^cas did Ahab king of Israel; and worshipped ^aall the host of heaven, and served them. And ^ehe built altars in the house of the LORD, of which the LORD said, ^dIn Jerusalem will I put my name. And he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the LORD. And ^fhe made his son pass through the fire, and observed ^htimes, and used enchantments, and dealt with familiar spirits and wizards: he wrought much wickedness in the sight of the LORD, to provoke ^ghim to anger. And he set a graven image of the grove that he had made in the house, of which the LORD said to David, and to Solomon his son, ⁱIn this house, and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all tribes of Israel, will I put my name for ever. Neither will I make the feet of Israel move any more out of the land which I gave their fathers; only if they will observe to do according to all that I have

B. C. 712.

^a Or Shall there not be peace and truth.

^m Neh. 3. 15.

CHAP. 21.

^a ch. 16. 3.

^b ch. 13. 4.

^c 1 Ki. 16. 32.

^d Deut. 4. 19. Deut. 17. 3. ch. 17. 16.

^e ch. 16. 10.

Jer. 32. 34.

^f 2 Sam. 7. 13.

1 Ki. 8. 29.

1 Ki. 9. 3.

^g Lev. 18. 21. Lev. 20. 2. ch. 16. 3. ch. 17. 17.

2 Chr. 28. 3.

2 Chr. 33. 6.

^h Lev. 19. 26, 31.

Deut. 18. 10. ch. 17. 17.

ⁱ 1 Ki. 8. 29. 1 Ki. 9. 3. ch. 23. 27. 1s. 132. 13, 14.

Jer. 31. 34.

though great afflictions should befall his descendants, the execution of the Divine judgment was to be suspended during his own lifetime.

20. pool, and a conduit—(see on 2 Chr. xxxii. 30.)

CHAP. XXI. 1-18. — MANASSEH'S WICKED REIGN AND GREAT IDOLATRY.

1. Manasseh was twelve years old when he began to reign. He must have been born three years after his father's recovery; and his minority, spent under the influence of guardians who were hostile to the religious principles and reforming policy of his father, may account in part for the anti-theocratic principles of his reign. The work of religious reformation which Hezekiah had zealously carried on was but partially accomplished. There was little appearance of its influence on the heart and manners of the people at large. On the contrary, the true fear of God had vanished from the mass of the people; corruption and vice increased, and were openly practised (Isa. xxviii. 7, &c.) by the degenerate leaders, who, having got the young prince Manasseh into their power, directed his education, trained him up in their views, and seduced him into the open patronage of idolatry. Hence, when he became sovereign, he introduced the worship of idols, the restoration of high places, and the erection of altars or pillars to Baal, and the placing, in the temple of God itself, a graven image of Asherah, the sacred or symbolic tree, which represented "all the host of heaven." This was not idolatry, but pure star worship, of Chaldaic and Assyrian origin (*Keil*, in loco). The sun, as among the Persians, had chariots and horses consecrated to it (ch. xxiii. 11), and incense was offered to the stars on the house-tops (ch. xxiii. 12; 2 Chr. xxxiii. 5; Jer. xix. 13; Zeph. i. 5), and in the temple-area, with the face turned toward the sunrise (Ezek. viii. 16). 5. the two courts of the

house of the Lord—the court of the priests and the large court of the people. 6. made his son pass through the fire—(see on ch. xvi. 3.) 3.) observed times—from an observation of the clouds determined the proper season for things, distinguishing lucky from unlucky days. [Septuagint, ἐκλογουμένων] used enchantments—observed auguries [Septuagint, οἰωνισίαι]; but it is used in a general sense for divining by the cup, &c. dealt with familiar spirits עֵינֵי אוֹיֵב (see on Deut. xviii. 11; 1 Sam. xxviii. 7); Septuagint, generally, ἐγγαστριμύθος, ventriloquist, who pretended to ask counsel of a familiar spirit, and gave the response received from him to others; but here that version renders the phrase, ἐποίησε τεμένει, made sanctuaries]. and wizards [עֲוֵיִם] (see on Lev. xix. 31; xx. 27; Deut. xviii. 11)—wise or knowing ones, who pretended to reveal secrets, to recover things lost, and hidden treasure, and interpret dreams. A great influx of these impostors had, at various times, poured from Chaldea into the land of Israel to pursue their gainful occupations, especially during the reigns of the latter kings; and Manasseh was not only their liberal patron, but zealous to appear himself an adept in the arts. He raised them to an influential class at his court, as they were in that of Assyria and Babylon, where nothing was done till they had ascertained the lucky hour and promised a happy issue. 7. And he set a graven image [פְּסֵלֵי אֲשֵׁרָה]—a carved image of the Asherah, a statue or rilievo figure. The placing of the Asherah within the precincts of the temple, which was dedicated to the worship of the true God, is dwelt upon as the most aggravated outrage of the royal idolater. 8. Neither will I make the feet of Israel move . . . out of the land—alluding to the promise, 2 Sam. vii. 10. only if they will observe, &c. This condition was expressed from

- commanded them, and according to all the law that my servant Moses
 9 commanded them. But they hearkened not: and Manasseh seduced
 them to do more evil than did the nations whom the LORD destroyed
 before the children of Israel.
- 10, And the LORD spake by his servants the prophets, saying, Because
 11 ^kManasseh king of Judah hath done these abominations, ^land hath done
 wickedly above all that the Amorites did, which were before him, and
 12 hath made Judah also to sin with his idols; therefore thus saith the LORD
 God of Israel, Behold, I am bringing such evil upon Jerusalem and Judah,
 13 that whosoever heareth of it, both ^mhis ears shall tingle. And I will
 stretch over Jerusalem ⁿthe line of Samaria, and the plummet of the
 house of Ahab; and I will wipe Jerusalem as a man wipeth a dish,
 14 ^owiping it, and turning it upside down. And I will forsake ^pthe remnant
 of mine inheritance, and deliver them into the hand of their enemies;
 15 and they shall become a prey and a spoil to all their enemies; because
 they have done that which was evil in my sight, and have provoked me
 to anger, since the day their fathers came forth out of Egypt, even unto
 this day.
- 16 Moreover ^qManasseh shed innocent blood very much, till he had filled
 Jerusalem ^rfrom one end to another; besides his sin wherewith he made
 Judah to sin, in doing that which was evil in the sight of the LORD.
- 17 Now ^sthe rest of the acts of Manasseh, and all that he did, and his
 sin that he sinned, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of
 18 the kings of Judah? And ^tManasseh slept with his fathers, and was buried
 in the garden of his own house, in the garden of Uzza: and Amon his son
 reigned in his stead.
- 19 Amon ^uwas twenty and two years old when he began to reign; and he
 reigned two years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Meshul-

B. C. 698.
 j Fro. 19. 12.
 k ch. 23. 23.
 l ch. 21. 3, 4.
 m Jer. 15. 4.
 n 1 Ki. 21. 26.
 o Eze. 16. 3.
 p 45.
 q 1 Sam. 3. 11.
 r Jer. 19. 3.
 s 1 Isa. 34. 11.
 t Lam. 2. 8.
 u Amos 7. 7.
 v 8.
 w he wipeth
 and tura-
 eth it upon
 the face
 thereof.
 x ch. 19. 30.
 y ch. 21. 4.
 z Ps. 10. 2, 3.
 aa Ps. 106. 38.
 ab Fro. 6. 16.
 ac Isa. 59. 2, 7.
 ad Jer. 2. 34.
 ae Jer. 19. 3, 4.
 af Lam. 4. 13.
 ag 2 from
 mouth to
 mouth.
 ah 2 (hr. 33. 11-
 19.
 ai 2 (hr. 33. 50.
 Jer. 32. 19.
 aj 2 (hr. 33. 21-
 23.

the first plantation of Israel in Canaan. But that people not only did not keep it, but through the pernicious influence of Manasseh were seduced into greater excesses of idolatrous corruption than even the original Canaanites. There was a gradation in the apostasy of Judah similar to that of Israel. Ahaz abandoned the worship of Jehovah, but he did not seduce the generality of his subjects; whereas the height and front of Manasseh's offending was that his pernicious influence carried the whole nation along with him into idolatry (cf. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 9, 10).

10. the Lord spake by his servants the prophets. These were Hoshua, Joel, Nahum, Habakkuk, and Isaiah. Their counsels, admonitions, and prophetic warnings were put on record in the national chronicles (2 Chr. xxxiii. 18), and now form part of the sacred canon. 12. whosoever heareth of it, both his ears shall tingle—a strong metaphorical form of announcing an extraordinary and appalling event (see 1 Sam. iii. 11; Jer. xix. 3; also Hab. i. 5). 13. the line of Samaria, and the plummet of the house of Ahab. Captives doomed to destruction were sometimes grouped together, and marked off by means of a measuring line and plummet (2 Sam. viii. 2; Isa. xxiv. 11; Amos vii. 7); so that "the line of Samaria" means the line drawn for the destruction of Samaria; "the plummet of the house of Ahab," for exterminating his apostate family; and the import of the threatening declaration here is, that Judah would be overthrown, as Samaria and the dynasty of Ahab had been. I will wipe Jerusalem, &c. The same doom is denounced more strongly in a figure unmistakably significant. This doom of utter and universal extermination, which was threatened against Judah, was averted by repentance, at least to a certain extent, inas-

much as a large portion of Judah was restored from the Babylonish captivity. But it was executed on the kingdom of Israel, which, as the sin of its people had been over a longer duration and of a more aggravated character, was more severely punished. The turning of a dish upside down implies the complete emptying of all its contents; and accordingly many writers maintain that not a single Israelite was left (cf. Jer. vii. 15), and that the Samaritan colonists were heathen foreigners (see on ch. xvii. 6-24; also *Winer*, 'Realwörterbuch,' article, 'Samaritaner'). 14. I will forsake the remnant of mine inheritance—the people of Judah, who of all the chosen people alone remained. The consequence of the Lord's forsaking them would be their fall into the power of their enemies.

16. Moreover Manasseh shed innocent blood. Not content with the patronage and the practice of idolatrous abominations, he was a cruel persecutor of all who did not conform. The land was deluged with the blood of good men, amongst whom, it is traditionally said, Isaiah suffered a horrid death, by being sawn asunder (see on Heb. xi. 37).

17. Now the rest of the acts of Manasseh—(see on 2 Chr. xxxiii.)

19-26.—AMON'S WICKED REIGN.

19. Amon was twenty and two years old when he began to reign. Manasseh, having ascended the throne of Judah at twelve years of age and reigned fifty-five years in Jerusalem (v. 1: cf. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 1), was sixty-seven years old at his death; so that, as Amon, when he succeeded his father, was twenty-two years of age, his birth must have taken place in his father's forty-fifth year. This circumstance, of a king whose accession to regal power was so early as that of Manasseh continu-

- 20 lemeth, the daughter of Haruz of Jotbah. And he did *that which was*
 21 evil in the sight of the LORD, as his father Manasseh did. And he walked
 in all the way that his father walked in, and served the idols that his
 22 father served, and worshipped them: and he ⁴forsook the LORD God of his
 23 fathers, and walked not in the way of the LORD. And ²the servants of
 Amon conspired against him, and slew the king in his own house.
 24 And the people of the land slew all them that had conspired against
 king Amon: and the people of the land made Josiah his son king in
 his stead.
 25 Now the rest of the acts of Amon which he did, *are* they not written
 26 in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah? And he was
 buried in his sepulchre in the garden of Uzza: and ²Josiah his son reigned
 in his stead.
- 22 JOSIAH ^awas eight years old when he began to reign; and he reigned
 thirty and one years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Jedidah,
 2 the daughter of Adaiah of ^bBoscath. And he did *that which was* right in
 the sight of the LORD, and walked in all the way of David his father, and
^cturned not aside to the right hand or to the left.
- 3 And ^dit came to pass in the eighteenth year of king Josiah, *that* the
 king sent Shaphan the son of Azaliah, the son of Meshullam, the scribe,
 4 to the house of the LORD, saying, Go up to Hilkiah the high priest, that
 he may sum the silver which is ^ebrought into the house of the LORD,
 5 which ^fthe keepers of the ¹door have gathered of the people: and let them
²deliver it into the hand of the doers of the work, that have the oversight
 of the house of the LORD: and let them give it to the doers of the work
 which *is* in the house of the LORD, to repair the breaches of the house,
 6 unto carpenters, and builders, and masons, and to buy timber and hewn
 7 stone to repair the house. Howbeit ^hthere was no reckoning made with
 them of the money that was delivered into their hand, because they dealt
ⁱfaithfully.
- 8 And Hilkiah the high priest said unto Shaphan the scribe, ^jI have
 found the book of the law in the house of the LORD. And Hilkiah

B C. 613.

^k Deut 32.15.

Judg. 2. 12.

^l 1 Ki 11. :3.^m ch. 12. 20.

ch. 14. 19.

2 Chr. 33.24.

25.

ⁿ Matt. 1. 10.

called

Jo-ias.

CHAP. 22.

^o 1 Chr. 3. 14.

2 Chr. 34. 1.

Jer. 1. 2.

Zeph. 1. 1.

^p Josh. 15.39.^q Deut 5. 32.

Josh. 1. 7.

Pro. 4. 27.

Eze. 13. 14-17.

^d 2 Chr. 31. 8.^e ch. 12. 4.

2 Chr. 24. 8-12.

Mark 12. 41.

42.

^f ch. 12. 9.

Neh. 11. 19.

Ps. 64. 10.

¹ threshold.² ch. 12. 11, 12, 14.^h ch. 12. 15.ⁱ Neh. 7. 2.

Pro. 28. :0.

Luke 16.10-12.

1 Chr. 4. 2.

^j Deut. 31. 21.

2 Chr. 34.11.

ing till he reached the age of forty-five without an heir to his crown being born, is so rare, or rather unprecedented, in Oriental history, that Niebuhr ('Kleine historische und philologische Schriften') maintains that there is an error in the number of years assigned to Manasseh. But the reasoning of Niebuhr evidently proceeds on the gratuitous and false assumption that Amon was the eldest son of Manasseh; whereas it is clear, from the sacred narrative, that in the early part of his reign, before his captivity in Babylon, he had become a father (v. 6: cf. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 6). What became of that son and of those children we are not informed. They may have all died, or the inheritance to the crown may, from causes unknown, have fallen to Amon. But the fact adverted to, of Manasseh's having a family previous to the birth of Amon, overturns the objection of Niebuhr to the accuracy of the chronological statement. 20. he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord. This prince continued the idolatrous policy of his father, and after an inglorious reign of two years, was massacred by some of his own domestics. The people slew the regicidal conspirators, and placed his son Josiah on the throne.

CHAP. XXII. 1, 2.—JOSIAH'S GOOD REIGN.

1. Josiah was eight years old when he began to reign. Happier than his grandfather Manasseh, he seems to have fallen, during his minority, under the care of better guardians, who trained him in the principles and practice of piety; and

so strongly had his young affections been enlisted on the side of true and undefiled religion, that he continued to adhere all his life, with undeviating perseverance, to the cause of God and righteousness.

3-7.—HE PROVIDES FOR THE REPAIR OF THE TEMPLE.

3. In the eighteenth year of king Josiah. Previous to this period he had commenced the work of national reformation. The preliminary steps had been already taken—not only the builders were employed, but money had been brought by all the people, and received by the Levites at the door, and various other preparations had been made. But the course of this narrative turns on one interesting incident, which happened in the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign, and hence that date is specified. In fact, the whole land was thoroughly purified from every object and all traces of idolatry. The king now addressed himself to the repair and embellishment of the temple, and gave directions to Hilkiah, the high priest, to take a general survey, in order to ascertain what was necessary to be done (see on 2 Chr. xxxiv. 8-15).

8-14.—HILKIAH FINDS THE BOOK OF THE LAW.

8. Hilkiah . . . said . . . I have found the book of the law, &c.—i. e., the law of Moses—the Pentateuch. It was the temple copy, which, having been laid (Deut xxxi. 25, 26) beside the ark in the most holy place, and during the ungodly reigns of Manasseh and Amon—perhaps under Ahaz, when

- 9 gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it. And Shaphan the scribe came to the king, and brought the king word again, and said, Thy servants have ²gathered the money that was found in the house, and have delivered it into the hand of them that do the work, that have the oversight of the house of the LORD. And Shaphan the scribe showed the king, saying, Hilkiah the priest hath delivered me a book. And Shaphan ¹read it before the king. And it came to pass, when the king had heard ²the words of the book of the law, that he rent his clothes. And the king commanded Hilkiah the priest, and Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and Achbor the son of ³Michaiah, and Shaphan the scribe, and Asahiah a servant of the king's, saying, Go ye, ⁴enquire of the LORD for me, and for the people, and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that is found: for great ⁵is ⁶the wrath of the LORD that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book, to do according unto all that which is written concerning us.
- 14 So Hilkiah the priest, and Ahikam, and Achbor, and Shaphan, and Asahiah, went unto Huldah the ⁷prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of ⁸Tikvah, the son of ⁹Harhas, keeper of the ¹⁰wardrobe; (now she dwelt in Jerusalem ¹¹in the college;) and they communed with her. And she said unto them, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Tell the man that sent you to me, Thus saith the LORD, Behold, ¹²I will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, *even* all the words of the book which the king of Judah hath read: because they have forsaken me, and have burnt incense unto other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the ¹³works of their hands; therefore my wrath shall be kindled against this place, and shall not be quenched. But to ¹⁴the king of Judah, which sent you to enquire of the LORD, ¹⁵thus shall ye say to him, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, *As touching* the words which thou hast

B. C. 6:4

² melted.
⁴ Jer. 36. 21.
¹ Abdon,
² Chr. 14:10.
³ Or, Micah.
¹¹ 1's 25. 14.
 Pro. 3. 6,
¹² Deut. 29. 27.
¹⁰ Ex. 15. 21.
 Judg. 4. 4.
 Mic. 6. 4.
 Luke 1. 41.
 Luke 2. 36.
 Ac. 8. 21. 9.
 1 Cor. 11. 5.
⁷ Tikvah,
² Chr. 31. 22.
⁴ Or,
 Hasrah.
⁶ garments.
² Ki. 10. 22.
 Neh. 7. 72.
⁶ Or, in the second part.
² Deut. 20. 27.
 Dan. 9. 11,
 12-14.
⁷ Ps. 115. 4.
 Isa. 2. 8, 9.
 Isa. 44. 17-20.
 Isa. 46. 5-3.
 Mic. 5. 13.
² Chr. 34. 16.
⁴ Eccl. 8. 12.

the temple itself had been profaned by idols, and the ark also (2 Chr. xxxv. 3) removed from its site—was somehow lost, and was now found again during the repair of the temple (*Keil*, in loco). The Gemara says that it had been probably deposited in a secret recess of the house of God, by some faithful priest, in those times of abounding iniquity, when its publicity might have endangered the very existence of that best treasure of the sanctuary. Delivered by Hilkiah, the discoverer, to Shaphan, the scribe, it was by the latter shown and read to the king. It is thought, with great probability, that the passage read to the king, and by which the royal mind was so greatly excited, was a portion of Deuteronomy—the 28th, 29th, and 30th chapters—in which is recorded a renewal of the national covenant, and an enumeration of the terrible threats and curses denounced against all who violated the law, whether prince or people. The impressions of grief and terror which the reading produced on the mind of Josiah have seemed to many unaccountable. And as it is certain, from the extensive and familiar knowledge displayed by the prophets, that there were numbers of other copies in popular circulation, the king must have known its sacred contents in some degree. But he might have been a stranger to the passage read to him; or the reading of it might, in the peculiar circumstances, have found a way to his heart in a manner that he never felt before. His strong faith in the Divine Word, and his painful consciousness that the woeful and long-continued apostasies of the people had exposed them to the infliction of the judgments denounced, must have come with overwhelming force on the heart of so pious a prince. 12. the king commanded . . . 13. Go ye, enquire of the Lord for me, &c. To

“enquire of the Lord,” through the appointed methods, by Urim and Thummim, or from the prophets, was a phraseology as common amongst the Jews as to consult a physician or lawyer is amongst ourselves. Innumerable instances occur in the Old Testament (Gen. xxv. 22; Judg. i. 1, 2; x. 10-14; xx. 18, 23; 1 Sam. x. 21; 2 Sam. xvi. 23; 1 Ki. xxii. 5-7; 2 Ki. iii. 11, 12; 1 Chr. xiii. 3). The agitated feelings of the king prompted him to ask immediate counsel how to avert those curses under which his kingdom lay; and forthwith a deputation of his principal officers was sent to one endowed with the prophetic spirit.

14. Ahikam—a friend of Jeremiah (Jer. xxvi. 24). Achbor—or Abdon (2 Chr. xxxiv. 20), a man of influence at court (Jer. xxvi. 22). The occasion was urgent, and therefore they were sent, not to Zephaniah (Zeph. i. 1), who was perhaps young, nor to Jeremiah, who was probably absent at his house in Anathoth, but to one who was at hand, and known for her prophetic gifts,—to Huldah, who was probably at this time a widow. Her husband, Shallum, was grandson of one Harhas, “keeper of the wardrobe.” If this means the priestly wardrobe, he must have been a Levite. But it probably refers to the royal wardrobe. she dwelt . . . in the college [חֲדָרֵי הַכֹּהֲנִים]—in the second part, i. e., the suburb, of the city (cf. Neh. xi. 9; Zeph. i. 10). [The Septuagint, taking it as a proper name, retains the original, ἐν τῇ μασενᾷ.] It was not a school or college, but a particular suburb of Jerusalem. Huldah was held in such veneration that Jewish writers say she and Jehoiada the priest were the only persons not of the house of David (2 Chr. xxiv. 16) who were ever buried in Jerusalem. 15. she said. . . Tell the man that sent you. On being consulted, she delivered an oracular response in which judgment was blended with

19 heard; because thine ^uheart was tender, and thou hast ^vhumbled thyself before the LORD, when thou heardest what I spake against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, that they should become ^wa desolation and ^xa curse, and hast rent thy clothes, and wept before me; I also have
 20 heard thee, saith the LORD. Behold therefore, I will gather thee unto thy fathers, and thou ^yshalt be gathered into thy grave in peace; and thine eyes shall not see all the evil which I will bring upon this place. And they brought the king word again.
 23 AND ^athe king sent, and they gathered unto him all the elders of Judah and of Jerusalem. And the king went up into the house of the LORD, and all the men of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem with him, and the priests, and the prophets, and all the people, ^bboth small and great: and he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant
 3 ^cwhich was found in the house of the LORD. And the king ^dstood by a pillar, and made a covenant before the LORD, to walk after the LORD, and to keep his commandments and his testimonies and his statutes with all ^etheir heart and all ^ftheir soul; to perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book: and ^gall the people stood to the covenant.
 4 And the king commanded Hilkiah the high priest, and the priests of the second order, and the keepers of the door, to bring forth out of the temple of the LORD all the vessels that were made for Baal, and for the ^hgrove, and for all the host of heaven; and he burned them without Jerusalem in the fields of Kidron, and carried the ashes of them unto
 5 Beth-el. And he ⁱput down ^jthe idolatrous priests, whom the kings of Judah had ordained to burn incense in the high places in the cities of Judah, and in the places round about Jerusalem; them also that burnt incense unto Baal, to the sun, and to the moon, and to the ^kplanets, and

B. C. 624.
^u P; 51. 17.
 Isa 57. 15.
^v Ex. 10. 3.
 Lev. 26. 40.
 41.
 1 Ki. 21. 29.
 2 Chr. 32. 12, 19, 23.
 Ps. 34. 18.
^w Lev. 23. 31.
^x Jer. 23. 6.
 Jer. 44. 22.
^y Ps. 37. 37.
 Isa. 57. 1, 2.
 Jer. 22. 10, 15, 16.
 CHAP. 23.
^a 2 Chr 31:9, 30.
^b 1 from small even unto great.
^c ch 22. 8.
^d ch. 11. 14.
^e Jer. 4. 2.
^f ch. 21. 3, 7.
^g 2 caused to cease.
^h Chema-rim.
ⁱ Or, twelve signs, or, constellations.

mercy; for it announced the impending calamities that at no distant period were to overtake the city and its inhabitants, but at the same time consoled the king with an assurance that this season of punishment and sorrow should not be during his lifetime, on account of the faith, penitence, and pious zeal for the divine glory and worship which, in his public capacity, and with his royal influence, he had displayed.

CHAP. XXIII. 1-3.—**JOSIAH CAUSES THE LAW TO BE READ.**

1. the king sent, and . . . gathered . . . all the elders. This pious and patriotic king, not content with the promise of his own security, felt, after Huldah's response, an increased desire to avert the threatened calamities from his kingdom and people. Knowing the richness of the Divine clemency and grace to the penitent, he convened the elders of the people, and placing himself at their head, accompanied by the collective body of the inhabitants, went in solemn procession to the temple, where he ordered the book of the law to be read to the assembled audience, and covenanted, with the unanimous concurrence of his subjects, to adhere stedfastly to all the commandments of the Lord. It was an occasion of solemn interest, closely connected with a great national crisis, and the beautiful example of piety in the highest quarter would exert a salutary influence over all classes of the people, in animating their devotions and encouraging their return to the faith of their fathers. 2, he read in their ears—*i. e.*, caused to be read. 3, all the people stood to the covenant—*i. e.*, they agreed to the proposals made; they assented to what was required of them.

4-23.—**HE DESTROYS IDOLATRY.**
 4. the king commanded Hilkiah, &c.—*i. e.*, the high priest and other priests, for there was no greater variety of official gradations in the

temple. all the vessels, &c.—the whole apparatus of idol worship. burned them without Jerusalem. The law required them to be consigned to the flames (Deut. vii. 25). in the fields of Kidron—most probably that part of the valley of Kidron where lies Jerusalem and the mount of Olives. It is a level, spacious basin, abounding at present with plantations (*Robinson*, 'Biblical Researches,' i., pp. 342, 398, 402; ii., p. 249). The brook winds along the east and south of the city, the channel of which is throughout a large portion of the year almost or wholly dry, except after heavy rains, when it suddenly swells and overflows. There was emptied all the impurities of the temple (2 Chr. xxix. 15, 16) and the city. His reforming predecessors had ordered the mutilated relics of idolatry to be thrown into that place of graves and receptacle of filth (1 Ki. xv. 13; 2 Chr. xv. 16; xxx. 14); but Josiah, while he imitated their piety, far outstripped them in zeal; for he caused the ashes of the burnt wood and the fragments of the broken metal to be collected and conveyed to Beth-el, in order thenceforth to associate ideas of horror and aversion with that place, as odious for the worst pollutions. 5. put down the idolatrous priests [שִׁפְטֵי־בָּרָא, blackness, gloominess], the 'scorched'—*i. e.*, Guébres, or fire-worshippers, distinguished by a girdle (Ezek. xxiii. 14-17) or belt of wool and camel's hair, twisted round the body twice, and tied with four knots, which had a symbolic meaning, and made it a defence against evil. The Septuagint has *κατέκασε τους Χωμαρίμ*, he burned the idol-priests.—*them also that burned incense unto Baal . . . the sun, &c.*—or Baal-shemesh, for Baal was sometimes considered the sun [שֶׁמֶשׁ] (or כְּסִיּוֹת, Job xxxviii. 32), constellations, the twelve signs of the Zodiac; Septuagint, *μαζ-*

6 to all ^fthe host of heaven. And he brought out the grove from the house of the LORD, without Jerusalem, unto the brook Kidron, and burnt it at the brook Kidron, and stamped *it* small to powder, and cast the powder
 7 thereof upon the ^ggraves of the children of the people. And he brake down the houses ^hof the sodomites, that *were* by the house of the LORD, ⁱwhere the women wove ⁵hangings for the grove.
 8 And he brought all the priests out of the cities of Judah, and defiled the high places where the priests had burnt incense, from Geba ^jto Beersheba, and brake down the high places of the gates that *were* in the entering in of the gate of Joshua the governor of the city, which *were* on a man's left hand at the gate of the city. Nevertheless ^kthe priests of the high places came not up to the altar of the LORD in Jerusalem, ^lbut they did eat of the unleavened bread among their brethren.
 10 And he defiled ^mTopheth, which *is* in the ⁿvalley of the children of Hinnom, that ^ono man might make his son or his daughter to pass
 11 through the fire to Molech. And he took away the horses that the kings of Judah had given to ^pthe sun, at the entering in of the house of the LORD, by the chamber of Nathan-melech the ^qchamberlain, which *was* in
 12 the suburbs, and burned the chariots of the sun with fire. And the

B. C. 624.
 f ch. 21. 3, 4.
 Jer. 8. 1, 2.
 Jer. 44. 17.
 g 2 Chr. 34. 4.
 h 1 Ki. 11. 24.
 i 1 Ki. 15. 12.
 j Eze. 16. 16.
 k houses.
 l 1 Ki. 15. 22.
 m Eze. 44. 10.
 n Mal. 2. 8.
 o 1 Sam. 2. 36.
 p Isa. 30. 33.
 q Jer. 19. 6.
 r Josh. 15. 8.
 s Lev. 18. 21.
 t Eze. 23. 37.
 u Deut. 4. 19.
 v 2 Chr. 14. 5.
 w Job 31. 26.
 x Eze. 8. 16.
 y Or.
 z enunch.
 or, officer.

οὐράς]. This form of false worship was not by images, but pure star-worship, borrowed from the old Assyrians, and—rather, *even*—to all the host of heaven—(cf. Isa. xiv. 12.) 6. brought out the grove—i. e., Asherah, the mystic tree, placed by Manasseh in the temple, removed by him after his conversion, and replaced in the sanctuary by his wicked son Amon. Josiah had it taken to Kidron, burnt the wood, ground the metal about it to powder, and strewn the ashes on “the graves of the children of the people.” It appears, from this verse recording the action of Josiah, and that of Moses under similar circumstances (Exod. xxxii. 20), that, ordinarily speaking, the Kidron was not a running stream of water; for, lacking water, Josiah cast the powder upon the graves, then, as now, plentiful in that valley. The poor were buried in a common on part of the valley of Kidron. But reference is here made to the graves ‘of those that had sacrificed’ (2 Chr. xxxiv. 4). 7. brake down the houses of the sodomites [עֲשֵׂרֵת]—of the males consecrated to Astarte (Venus) (see on Deut. xxiii. 18; 1 Ki. xiv. 24). where the women wove hangings for the grove (Asherah) [עֲשֵׂרֵת]—not solid houses, but tents, or small tent-like temples, which were regarded as holy, and worshipped along with the deities which they contained (Amos v. 26); called elsewhere Succoth-benoth, the booths of the young women who were devoted to the service of Asherah, for which they made embroidered hangings, and in which they gave themselves to unbridled revelry and lust. Or, the hangings might be for Asherah itself, as it is a popular superstition in the East to hang pieces of cloth on trees (Ezek. xvi. 16). 8. he brought all the priests... and defiled the high places, &c. Numbers of the Levitical order, finding in the reigns of Manasseh and Amon the temple worship abolished, and the tithes and other offerings alienated, had been betrayed into the folly of officiating on high places, and presenting such sacrifices as were brought to them. These irregularities, even though the object of that worship was the true God, were prohibited in the law (Deut. xii. 11). Those who had been guilty of this sin Josiah brought to Jerusalem, and, regarding them as defiled, debarred them from the service of the

temple, but gave them an allowance out of the temple revenues, like the lame and disabled members of the priesthood (Lev. xxi. 21, 22). from Geba to Beersheba—the most northern and the most southern places in Judah; meaning all parts of the kingdom. the high places... that were in the entering in of the gate of Joshua. The governor's house and gate were on the left of the city gate, and close by the entrance of that civic mansion-house were public altars, dedicated, it might be, to the true God, but contrary to His own ordinance of worship (Isa. lviii. 5). 10. Topheth—so called from Toph, a drum; the prevailing opinion among Jewish writers being that the cries of the terrified children made to pass through the fire in that place of idolatrous horror were drowned by the sound of that instrument. At the north-east angle of the city, on the slope nearest the city, where there are many Turkish graves, extending beyond the gate of St. Stephen, this part of the valley was called Hinnom. In it many cruel and idolatrous ceremonies were performed, and children passed through the fire to Moloch by their unnatural parents. The filth of the city was here collected and consumed; and from the fires that were continually kept burning for this purpose, its name was chosen as typical of hell, where “the fire is not quenched.” It was defiled by Josiah, that no more human sacrifices might be presented in it to the bloody demon (see *Barclay*, p. 90). 11. he took away the horses that the kings of Judah had given to the sun. Among the people who anciently worshipped the sun, horses were usually dedicated to that divinity, from the supposed idea that the sun himself was drawn in a chariot by horses. In some cases these horses were sacrificed; but more commonly they were employed either in the sacred processions to carry the images of the sun, or for the worshippers to ride in every morning to welcome his rise. This form of superstition prevailed in Asia long before the Persian domination (*Layard*, ‘Nineveh and its Remains,’ ii., p. 365; see also *Drew*, ‘Scripture Lands,’ p. 196, note; *Barclay*, p. 99). It seems that the idolatrous kings, Ahaz, Manasseh, and Amon, or their great officers, proceeded on these horses early on each day, from the east gate of the temple, to salute and worship the sun at his appearing above the

- altars that were ² on the top of the upper chamber of Ahaz, which the kings of Judah had made, and the altars which ⁷ Manasseh had made in the two courts of the house of the LORD, did the king beat down, and ⁷ brake them down from thence, and cast the dust of them into the brook
- 13 Kidron. And the high places that were before Jerusalem, which were on the right hand of ⁸ the mount of Corruption, which ⁸ Solomon the king of Israel had builded for Ashtoreth the abomination of the Sidonians, and for Chemosh the abomination of the Moabites, and for ⁹ Milcom the abomination of the children of Ammon, did the king defile. And ⁴ he brake in pieces the ¹⁰ images, and cut down the groves, and filled their places with the bones of men.
- 15 Moreover the altar that was at Beth-el, and the high place ² which Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, had made, both that altar and the high place he brake down, and burned the high place, and
- 16 stamped it small to powder, and burned the grove. And as Josiah

R. C. 621.
^a Jer. 19. 13.
 Zeph. 1. 6.
^r ch. 21. 6.
⁷ Or, ran from thence.
⁸ That is, the mount of Olives.
⁹ 1 Ki. 11. 7.
⁹ Or, Molech.
^c Ex. 23. 24.
 Deut. 7. 5.
 Deut. 12. 3.
¹⁰ statues.
^u 1 Ki. 12. 28.
 33.

horizon. 12. the altars that were on the top of the upper chamber of Ahaz. Altars were reared on the flat roofs of houses, where the worshippers of "the host of heaven" burnt incense (Zeph. i. 5; Jer. xix. 13). Ahaz had reared altars for this purpose on the *oleah* or upper chamber of his palace, and Manasseh on some portion of the roof of the temple. Josiah demolished both of these structures. 13. the high places . . . the right hand of the mount of Corruption [הַר הַתְּהוֹמִים] which Solomon . . . had builded—(see on 1 Ki. xi. 7.) The mount of Olives is a hilly range on the east of Jerusalem. This range has three summits, of which the central one is, by a slight change [הַר הַתְּהוֹמִים], the mount of Corruption, so called from the idol temples built there; and of course the hill on the right hand denotes the southernmost peak. (Barclay, p. 65; Osborne, 'Palestine,' p. 107, note; Rosenmüller's 'Geography,' i., p. 70.) Josiah is said not to have destroyed, but only defiled, 'the high places on the hill of Corruption.' It is most probable that Hezekiah had long before demolished the idolatrous temples erected there by Solomon; but as the superstitious people continued to regard the spot as consecrated ground, Josiah defiled it. 14. filled their places with the bones of men. Every monument of idolatry in his dominions he in like manner destroyed, and the places where they stood he defiled by strewing them with dead men's bones. The presence of a dead carcase rendered both persons and places unclean in the eyes both of Jews and heathens.

15. Moreover the altar that was at Beth-el, &c. Not satisfied with the removal of every vestige of idolatry from his own dominions, this zealous iconoclast made a tour of inspection through the cities of Samaria and all the territory formerly occupied by the ten tribes, destroying the altars and temples of the high places, consigning the Asherim to the flames, putting to death [v. 20, זָבַח, he sacrificed; Septuagint, *εὐστυρε* (cf. 1 Ki. xiii. 2)] the priests of the high places, and showing his horror at idolatry by ransacking the sepulchres of idolatrous priests, and strewing the burnt ashes of their bones upon the altars before he demolished them. In narrating the proceedings of this stern iconoclast in the cities of Samaria, the sacred historian speaks of his destroying 'all the houses of the high places which the kings of Israel had made to provoke the Lord to anger.' Whether Josiah interfered with the sanctuaries and altars which the heathen colonists had erected to their idols (see on ch. xvii. 29-31),

we are not informed; but it is distinctly affirmed that his zeal as a theocratic sovereign was specially directed against "the high places" reared and consecrated by Israelitish monarchs in all the Samaritan cities, as being indications of the same spirit of disloyalty to Jehovah which the policy of Jeroboam had inaugurated at Beth-el and at Dan. But the altar at Beth-el, which had been sumptuously and elaborately fitted up in the Egyptian style of architecture, and at which the worship of the golden calf was performed with a splendour that rivalled or surpassed the purer ritual celebrated at Jerusalem, was the special object of his abhorrence, both on account of its vicinity to his own kingdom and the outrage which its establishment, on a spot hallowed by the memory of the patriarch Jacob, inflicted on the feelings of all the pious in Judah. The royal sanctuary (Amos vii. 13), therefore, with its altar, was overturned, and its huge stones scattered along the adjoining ravines (see Stanley, 'Sinai and Palestine,' p. 219). The question naturally occurs, Did not Josiah, in thus purging the cities of Samaria of all idolatrous relics, transgress the limits of his proper jurisdiction? Was not the kingdom of Israel, since its conquest and the deportation of its people, a tributary province of Assyria? And must not the proceedings of the king of Judah within that territory have tended to provoke the resentment and vengeance of the Assyrian monarch as an insult to his authority, as well as daring sacrilege in his eyes? The answer is, that Assyria had at this time become so greatly reduced by internal commotions at home, and especially by the invasion and ultimate ascendancy of the Scythians in the region of the Euphrates and Tigris, as to have neither power nor leisure to maintain an active and vigorous superintendence of its distant colonies. For twenty-eight years, during which those barbarians maintained their successful usurpation, the political connection between Assyria and Palestine was virtually, though not actually, dissolved; and Josiah was thus left at liberty, without any risk of molestation or challenge from the Assyrian ruler, and without any detriment to his possession, to carry out his thorough-going reforms by demolishing the altar at Beth-el, as well as by extending his measures for the extermination of all idolatrous edifices and symbols throughout the whole length and breadth of the land occupied by the tribes of Israel on the western side of the Jordan. that altar and . . . brake down . . . and burned the grove. The altar and high place of Jeroboam (1 Ki. xii. 28, 31), with the Asherah and the worship of Astarte, that had been gradually

turned himself, he spied the sepulchres that were there in the mount, and sent, and took the bones out of the sepulchres, and burned them upon the altar, and polluted it, according to the word of the LORD, 17 which the man of God proclaimed, who proclaimed these words. Then he said, What title is that that I see? And the men of the city told him, It is the sepulchre of the man of God, which came from Judah, and proclaimed these things that thou hast done against the altar of Beth-el. 18 And he said, Let him alone; let no man move his bones. So they let his bones alone, with the bones of the prophet that came out of Samaria. 19 And all the houses also of the high places that were in the cities of Samaria, which the kings of Israel had made to provoke the LORD to anger, Josiah took away, and did to them according to all the acts that he had done in Beth-el. And he slew all the priests of the high places that were there upon the altars, and burned men's bones upon them, and returned to Jerusalem. 20 And the king commanded all the people, saying, Keep the passover unto the LORD your God, as it is written in the book of this covenant.

B. C 621
 v 1 Ki. 13. 2.
 Matt 21. 35.
 John 10. 35.
 11 to escape
 w 2 Chr. 30. c-
 11.
 2 Chr 31. 1.
 2 Chr. 34. 6.
 12 Cr.
 sacrificed.
 Ex 22 10.
 1 Ki. 13. 2.
 1 Ki. 18. 40.
 ch. 11. 18.
 Isa. 31. 6.
 v 2 Chr 31. 5.
 v 2 Chr. 35. 1.
 v Ex 12. 3.
 Lev. 23. 5.
 Num. 9. 2.
 Num 28. 6.
 Deut. 16. 2.

clustered around it, he razed, and consumed the fragments in the flames. 16. And as Josiah turned himself, he spied the sepulchres that were there in the mount. The "mount," doubtless, is the same as the "mountain," on the east of Beth-el, described in the history of Abraham. The "sepulchres" must be the numerous rock-hewn tombs still visible in the whole descent from that "mountain" to the Wady Suweinit. In one of these, though we know not which, lay side by side the bones of the two prophets—the aged prophet of Beth-el and his brother and victim, "the man of God from Judah"—and they were left to repose. From that time the desolation foretold by Amos and Hosea (Hos. iv. 15; v. 8; x. 5, 8; Amos v. 5) has never been disturbed; and Beth-el, "the house of God," has become literally Beth-aven, "the house of nought" (Stanley, 'Sinai and Palestine,' p. 220). according to the word of the Lord, &c. In carrying on these proceedings, Josiah was prompted by his own intense hatred of idolatry. But it is remarkable that this act was predicted 326 years before his birth, and his name also was expressly mentioned, as well as the very place where it should be done (1 Ki. xiii. 2). 17. What title is that that I see? The king's attention, it is probable, had been arrested by a tombstone more conspicuous than the rest around it, bearing on an inscription the name of him that lay beneath; and this prompted his curiosity to make the enquiry. It seems probable from this instance, that epitaphs were inscribed on the tombs of the ancient Jews, especially those which were placed in proper cemeteries. The title or inscription which caught the eye of the king, was there reason to believe, on an excavated sepulchre; but from the way in which the circumstance is recorded, it may be inferred that the practice of surmounting a tomb with an epitaph was common and familiar. It was followed by the Jews in the mediæval times; for Buxtorf has preserved numerous specimens from an old Jewish cemetery of Basle. Here is a sample from his work,—'I have set this stone over the head of the venerable Rabbi Eliakim, deceased. God grant that he may rest in the garden of Eden with all the saints. Amen, amen. Selah,' the men of the city—not the Assyrian colonists, for they could know nothing about the ancient transactions of the place, but some of the old people who had been allowed to remain (Hengstenberg, 'On

Daniel,' p. 146, and Trench, 'On the Parables,' p. 311, note, deny that any of the Israelites were left), and perhaps the tomb itself might not then have been discoverable, through the effects of time and neglect, had not some 'Old Mortality' garnished the sepulchre of the righteous. This is one of the most remarkable prophecies contained in the Bible. It may appear strange and unaccountable that some pious and devoted king, like Jehoshaphat or Hezekiah, had not, at a much earlier period, bestowed upon his son the name of Josiah [יְהוֹשִׁיָּא, whom Jehovah heals], and thus taken a step which, to a sovereign of such a character, must have appeared so exceedingly desirable—that of overthrowing the establishment of the calf-worship at Beth-el, and vindicating the honour of Jehovah. Had the prediction referred to the entire suppression of idolatry throughout the kingdom of Israel, and its reunion with that of Judah in the common celebration of national worship at Jerusalem, the spirit of patriotism would assuredly have kept alive the remembrance of the announcement both in the court and throughout the country, making a consummation so devoutly to be wished the favourite and distinguishing policy of the best kings. But the demolition of the single altar at Beth-el was too limited an enterprise, too trivial an act to stimulate the ambition of a Jewish king, or to continue a subject of interest in the councils of his cabinet; and hence the prophecy seems to have fallen into comparative neglect or oblivion. But not one jot nor tittle of the Divine word ever fails to be fulfilled. God chooses his own time, as well as his own instrument, for the accomplishment of His providential purposes; and although no king of Judah before Manasseh had an opportunity of passing the confines of his kingdom; although Manasseh, with Amon, had not probably the slightest knowledge of the prophecy, and was influenced solely by motives of humble penitence and devout gratitude for his own temporal and spiritual deliverance in bestowing the name of Josiah upon his grandson; he was unconsciously, but by an unseen, overruling power, led to do what verified 'the word of the Lord which the man of God proclaimed to Jeroboam, regarding the overthrow of the altar at Beth-el.'

21. the king commanded . . . Keep the pass-over, &c. It was observed with great solemnity, and was attended not only by his own subjects,

22 Surely there was not holden such a passover from the days of the judges that judged Israel, nor in all the days of the kings of Israel, nor of the
 23 kings of Judah; but in the eighteenth year of king Josiah, *wherein* this passover was holden to the LORD in Jerusalem.
 24 Moreover ^athe *workers with familiar spirits*, and the wizards, and the ¹³images, and the idols, and all the abominations that were spied in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, did Josiah put away, that he might perform the words of ^bthe law *which were* written in the book that Hilkiah the priest found in the house of the LORD. And ^clike unto him was there no king before him, that turned to the LORD with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses; neither after him arose there *any* like him.
 26 Notwithstanding the LORD turned not from the fierceness of his great wrath, wherewith his anger was kindled against Judah, ^dbecause of all the ¹⁴provocations that Manasseh had provoked him withal. And the LORD said, I will remove Judah also out of my sight, as ^eI have removed Israel, and will cast off this city Jerusalem which I have chosen, and the house of which I said, ^fMy name shall be there.
 28 Now the rest of the acts of Josiah, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah?
 29 In his days Pharaoh-nechoh king of Egypt went up against the king of Assyria to the river Euphrates: and king Josiah went against him; and he slew him ^gat Megiddo, when he ^hhad seen him. And his servants carried him in a chariot dead from Megiddo, and brought him to Jerusalem, and buried him in his own sepulchre. And the people of the land took ⁱJehoahaz the son of Josiah, and anointed him, and made him king in his father's stead.
 31 Jehoahaz *was* twenty and three years old when he began to reign; and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was*
 32 ^jHamutal, the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. And he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his fathers had
 33 done. And Pharaoh-nechoh put him in bands at ^kRiblah, in the land of Hamath, ¹⁵that he might not reign in Jerusalem; and ¹⁶put the land to a tribute of an hundred talents of silver, and a talent of gold.
 34 And Pharaoh-nechoh made Eliakim the son of Josiah king in the room of Josiah his father, and ^lturned his name to ^mJehoiakim, and took
 35 Jehoahaz away: and ⁿhe came to Egypt, and died there. And Jehoiakim gave the silver and the gold to Pharaoh; but he taxed the land to give the money according to the commandment of Pharaoh: he ^oexacted the silver and the gold of the people of the land, of every one according to his taxation, to give *it* unto Pharaoh-nechoh.
 36 Jehoiakim ^p*was* twenty and five years old when he began to reign; and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was*
 37 Zebudah, the daughter of Pedaiah of Rumah. And he did *that which*

B C. 6. 3
^a ch. 21. 6.
¹ Chr. 10. 13.
¹³ Or, teraphim.
¹ Sam. 19. 13
^b Lev 19. 31, Lev. 20. 27.
 Deut. 18. 11, ch. 22. 8-13.
² Chr 31. 14-19.
^c ch. 18. 5.
^d ch. 21. 11. ch. 24. 3. Jer 15. 4.
¹⁴ ang'rs.
^e ch. 17. 18. ch. 18. 11. ch. 24. 3. Ps 57. 11. Jer. 31. 37. Jer. 33. 24. Lam. 2. 7.
^f 1 Ki. 8. 29. 1 Ki. 9. 3. ch. 21. 4, 7.
^g Judg. 1. 27. Judg. 5. 19. 1 Ki. 4. 12. ch. 9. 27. Zech. 12. 11.
^h ch. 14. 8.
ⁱ ch. 14. 21. ch. 21. 24. 2 Chr. 36. 1. 2. Jer 22. 11. j ch. 24. 18.
^k Num 31. 11. ch. 25. 6. Jer 5. 27.
¹⁵ Or, because he reigned.
¹⁶ set a mulet upon the land.
^l ch. 24. 17. Dan. 1. 7.
^m Matt 1. 11. Jakim.
ⁿ Jer 22. 11. Eze. 19. 3. 4.
^o Fro. 11. 11. Pro 15. 6.
^p 2 Chr. 36. 5.

but by the remnant people from Israel (see on 2 Chr. xxxv. 1-19). Many of the Israelites who were at Jerusalem might have heard of, if they did not hear, the law read by Josiah. It is probable that they might even have got a copy of the law, stimulated as they were to the better observance of Jehovah's worship by the unusual and solemn transactions at Jerusalem.

24. Moreover the workers with familiar spirits—(see on Deut. xviii. 11; 1 Sam. xxviii. 7.) and the wizards—(see on Lev. xix. 31; xx. 6, 27; Deut. xviii. 11.) and the images [תְּרָפִים, the teraphim (Gen. xxxi. 34; Judg. xvii. 4; Zech. x. 2; Hos. iii. 4)]—all these Josiah exterminated.

26. Notwithstanding the Lord turned, &c. The national reformation which Josiah carried on was acquiesced in by the people from submission to the royal will; but they entertained a secret and strong hankering after the suppressed idolatries. Though outwardly purified, their hearts were not right towards God, as appears from many passages of the prophetic writings: their thorough reform was hopeless; and God, who saw no sign of genuine repentance, allowed His decree (ch. xxi. 12-15) for the subversion of the kingdom to take fatal effect.

29. In his days Pharaoh-nechoh—(see 2 Chr. xxxv. 20-27, and xxxvi.)

- was* evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his fathers had done.
- 24 IN ^ahis days Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up, and Jehoiakim became his servant three years: then he turned and rebelled against him.
- 2 And ^bthe LORD sent against him bands of the Chaldees, and bands of the Syrians, and bands of the Moabites, and bands of the children of Ammon, and sent them against Judah to destroy it, ^caccording to the word of the
- 3 LORD, which he spake ¹by his servants the prophets. Surely at the commandment of the LORD came *this* upon Judah, to remove *them* out of his
- 4 sight, ^dfor the sins of Manasseh, according to all that he did; and ^ealso for the innocent blood that he shed: for he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood; which ^fthe LORD would not pardon.
- 5 Now the rest of the acts of Jehoiakim, and all that he did, *are* they
- 6 not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah? So ^gJehoiakim slept with his fathers: and Jehoiachin his son reigned in his stead.
- 7 And ^hthe king of Egypt came not again any more out of his land: for ⁱthe king of Babylon had taken from the river of Egypt unto the river Euphrates all that pertained to the king of Egypt.
- 8 ²Jehoiachin *was* eighteen years old when he began to reign; and he reigned in Jerusalem three months. And his mother's name *was* Ne-
- 9 hushta, the daughter of Elnathan of Jerusalem. And he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father had done.

B. C. 60.

CHAP. 24.
^a Lev. 23. 25.
 Jer. 21. 9.
 Dan. 1. 1.
^b Job 1. 17.
 Isa. 7. 17.
 Jer. 23. 9.
 Jer. 32. 28.
 Eze. 19. 8.
^c ch. 20. 17.
 ch. 21. 12-14.
 ch. 23. 27.
¹ by the hand of.
^d ch. 21. 2, *1.
 ch. 23. *6.
^e ch. 21. 16.
^f Jer. 15. 1.
 Lam. 3. 42.
^g 2 Chr. 36. 6.
 Jer. 22. 18.
 Jer. 26. *0.
^h Jer. 37. 5.
ⁱ Jer. 46. 2.
² Jeconiah,
 1 Chr. 3. 16.
 Jer. 21. 1.
 and
 Coniah,
 Jer. 22. 21.

CHAP. XXIV. 1-7.—JEHOIAKIM PROCURES HIS OWN RUIN.

1. **Nebuchadnezzar.** The name as written on the monuments is Nabukudurri-uzur, and signifies, according to *Sir H. Rawlinson*, 'Nebo protects the youth'; according to *Dr. Hincks*, 'Nebo has formed a warrior.' He was the son of Nabopolassar, the founder of the Chaldee monarchy. The rulers who are entitled 'kings of Babylon' belong to two different periods, separated by the interval of nearly seven centuries. The first period was coeval with the origin of the Assyrian empire, in the twentieth century B.C., and terminated in the middle of the sixteenth. After the lapse of two centuries, Nineveh rose to be the metropolis of the great Assyrian empire; and Babylon being only a provincial capital, the Assyrian kings never assumed to themselves, nor permitted any one to appropriate, the title of king of Babylon. But on the decline and fall of Nineveh, Babylon recovered its metropolitan pre-eminence, and the kings of Assyria again called themselves 'kings of Babylon.' This invasion took place in the fourth year of Jehoiakim's, and the first of Nebuchadnezzar's, reign (Jer. xxv. 1: cf. xlvi. 2). The young king of Assyria being probably detained at home on account of his father's demise, despatched, along with the Chaldean troops on his border, an army composed of the tributary nations that were contiguous to Judea, to chastise Jehoiakim's revolt from his yoke. But this hostile band was only an instrument in executing the Divine judgment (v. 2) denounced by the prophets against Judah for the sins of the people; and hence, though marching by the orders of the Assyrian monarch, they are described as sent by the Lord, v. 3. 2. **The Lord sent against him bands of the Chaldees** [כְּשָׂרִים]. This is either a new race or the same people under a different name who supplanted the Assyrians and Babylonians. They appear in Scripture in three different states,—*first*, as nomad tribes (Job i. 17; Jer. xl. 10); *secondly*, as a priestly caste, men of science so-called, such as

astrology and divination (Dan. ii.); and *thirdly*, they appear as a great and powerful nation, under Nebuchadnezzar, who is called "king of the Chaldees," 2 Chr. xxxvi. 17: cf. Dan. ix. 1; Hab. i. 6 [Septuagint, χηλοδαι]. From other notices in the sacred history (Gen. xi. 28; xv. 7), it would appear that they inhabited a district north of Babylon; while several classical writers assign their locality to the south-western part of the Babylonian empire—a district now known as *Irak al Araby*. Afterwards the name Chaldea was used as synonymous with Mesopotamia.

6. **Jehoiakim slept with his fathers.** This phraseology can mean nothing more than that he died, for he was not buried with his royal ancestors; and whether he fell in battle, or his body was subjected to posthumous insults, he was, according to the prediction, Jer. xxii. 19, not honoured with the rites of sepulture (Jer. xxxvi. 30). **Jehoiachin his son reigned in his stead.** The very brief reign of this prince, which lasted only three months, during which he was a humble vassal of the Assyrians, is scarcely deserving to be taken into account, and therefore is no way contradictory to the prophetic menace denounced against his father (Jer. xxxvi. 30).

7. **the king of Egypt—i. e., Pharaoh-nechoh, for the king of Babylon had taken from the river of Egypt unto the river Euphrates all that pertained to the king of Egypt.** He was defeated at Carchemish by the forces of the young king Nebuchadnezzar, who wrested from him all his acquisitions both in Northern and Southern Syria (see *Rawlinson's* 'Herodotus,' ii., p. 247).

8, 9.—JEHOIACHIN SUCCEEDS HIM.

8. **Jehoiachin—i. e., God appointed; contracted into Jeconiah and Coniah** (Jer. xxii. 24). **eighteen years old when he began to reign.** At the age of eight his father took him into partnership in the government (2 Chr. xxxvi. 9). He began to reign alone at eighteen. 9. **he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord.** Untaught by experience, and deaf to the prophetic warnings, he

- 10 At ^jthat time the servants of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came
 11 up against Jerusalem, and the city ³was besieged. And Nebuchadnezzar
 king of Babylon came against the city, and his servants did besiege it.
 12 And ^kJehoiachin the king of Judah went out to the king of Babylon, he,
 and his mother, and his servants, and his princes, and his ⁴officers: 'and
 13 the king of Babylon ^mtook him ⁿin the eighth year of his reign. And
^ohe carried out thence all the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the
 treasures of the king's house, and ^pcut in pieces all the vessels of gold
 which Solomon king of Israel had made in the temple of the LORD, ^qas
 14 the LORD had said. And ^rhe carried away all Jerusalem, and all the
 princes, and all the mighty men of valour, *even* ten thousand captives,
 and all ^sthe craftsmen and smiths: none remained, save ^tthe poorest sort
 of the people of the land.
 15 And ^uhe carried away Jehoiachin to Babylon, and the king's mother, and
 the king's wives, and his ^vofficers, and the mighty of the land; *those*
 16 carried he into captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon. And ^wall the
 men of might, *even* seven thousand, and craftsmen and smiths a thou-
 sand, all *that were strong and apt for war*, even them the king of Babylon
 17 brought captive to Babylon. And ^xthe king of Babylon made ^yMattan-
 niah his father's brother king in his stead, and ^zchanged his name to
 Zedekiah.
 18 Zedekiah ²was twenty and one years old when he began to reign; and
 he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was
 19 "Hamutal, the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. And he did *that which*
was evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that Jehoiakim had
 20 done. For ^bthrough the anger of the LORD it came to pass in Jerusalem
 and Judah, until he had cast them out from his presence, that ^cZedekiah
 rebelled against the king of Babylon.

B C. 699
^j Dan 1. 1.
^k came into siege.
^l Jer 24. 1.
^m Jer 29. 1. 2.
ⁿ Eze 17. 12.
^o Cr.
eunuchs.
^p Jer. 23. 1.
^q ch. 25. 27.
^r Jer. 52. 23.
^s Isa. 39. 6.
^t Dan. 5. 2.
^u Jer. 20. 5.
^v Jer 21. 1.
^w 1 Sam. 13. 19.
^x ch. 5. 12.
^y Jer 40 7.
^z Esth. 2. 6.
Jer. 12. 24. 25.
Eze 1. 2.
^a Cr.
eunuchs.
^b Jer 39. 2.
Jer. 52. 23.
^c Jer. 37. 1.
^d 1 Chr. 3. 15.
^e ch 23. 34.
^f Jer. 37. 1.
^g ch. 23. 31.
^h Deut. 4. 21.
ⁱ Eut 2. 27.
^j 28.
^k Eze 17. 15.

pursued the evil courses which had brought so many disasters upon the royal family as well as the people of Judah. This bad character is figuratively but strongly depicted, Ezek. xix. 5-7.

10-16.—JERUSALEM TAKEN.

10. At that time—within three months after his accession to the throne; it was the spring of the year (2 Chr. xxxvi. 10); so early did he indicate a feeling hostile to the interests of his Assyrian liege-lord, by forming a league with Egypt. Nebuchadnezzar sent his generals to besiege Jerusalem, as Jeremiah had foretold (xxii. 18; xxiv. 30), and soon after followed in person. Convinced of the hopelessness of making any effectual resistance, Jehoiachin, going to the camp of the besiegers, surrendered (v. 12), in the expectation, probably, of being allowed to retain his throne as a vassal of the Assyrian empire. But Nebuchadnezzar's clemency towards the kings of Judah was now exhausted; so that Jehoiachin was sent as a captive to Babylon, according to Jeremiah's prediction (xxii. 24), accompanied by the queen-mother (the same who had held that dignity under Jehoa-haz, ch. xxiii. 31), his generals, and officers. This happened in the eighth year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, computing from the time when he was associated with his father in the government. Those that were left consisted chiefly of the poorer sort of people and the unskilled workmen. The palace and the temple were ransacked. The smaller golden vessels had been taken on the first capture of Jerusalem, and placed by Nebuchadnezzar in the temple of his god, as tokens of victory, and used by Belshazzar at his impious feast, for the purpose of rewarding his army with these trophies, amongst which were probably the golden candlesticks, ark, &c. (cf. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 7; Dan. i. 2). Now the gold plating was torn off all the larger temple furniture.

13. as the Lord had said—(cf. ch. xx. 17; Isa. xxxix. 6; Jer. xv. 13; xvii. 3.) The *élite* of the nation for rank, usefulness, and moral worth, all who might be useful in Babylon or dangerous in Palestine, were carried off to Babylon, to the number of 10,000 (v. 14). These are specified, *vv* 15, 16.—Warriors, 7,000; craftsmen and smiths, 1,000; king's wives, officers, and princes, also priests and prophets (Jer. xxix. 1; Ezek. i. 13), 2,000—equal to 10,000 captives in all. This was the second deportation from Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. 14. all the craftsmen and smiths כל־הַמְּסָכִים—all the artizans and forgers of arms.

17-20.—ZEDEKIAH'S EVIL REIGN.

17. Mattaniah his father's brother king in his stead. Adhering to his former policy of maintaining a show of monarchy, Nebuchadnezzar appointed the third and youngest son of Josiah (1 Chr. iii. 15), full brother of Jehoabaz, and uncle of the captive Jehoiachin. But according to the custom of conquerors, who changed the names of the great men they took captive in war, in token of their supremacy, he gave him the new name of Zedekiah—*i. e.*, 'The righteousness of God.' This being a purely Hebrew name, it seems that he allowed the puppet king to choose his own name, which was confirmed. His heart towards God was the same as that of Jehoiakim, impenitent and heedless of God's word. 20. through the anger of the Lord . . . he . . . cast them out from his presence—*i. e.*, in the course of God's righteous providence his policy as king would prove ruinous to his country. Zedekiah rebelled. Instigated by ambassadors from the neighbouring states, who came to congratulate him on his accession to the throne (cf. Jer. xvii. 3 with xxviii. 1), and at the same time get him to join them in a

25 AND it came to pass^a in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, in the tenth *day* of the month, *that* Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came, he, and all his host, against Jerusalem, and pitched 2 against it; and they built forts against it round about. And the city 3 was besieged unto the eleventh year of king Zedekiah. And on the ninth *day* of the *fourth* month the famine prevailed in the city, and there was 4 no bread for the people of the land. And the city was broken up, and all the men of war fled by night by the way of the gate between two walls, which *is* by the king's garden; (now the Chaldees *were* against the 5 city round about;) and ^bthe king went the way toward the plain. And the army of the Chaldees pursued after the king, and overtook him in the 6 plains of Jericho: and all his army were scattered from him. So they took the king, and brought him up to the king of Babylon ^cto Riblah; 7 and they ¹gave judgment upon him. And they slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and ²put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him with fetters of brass, and carried him to Babylon.

B. C. 589.
 CHAP. 25.
^a 2 Chr. 36. 17.
 Jer. 31. 2.
 Jer. 39. 1.
 Jer. 52. 45.
 Eze. 24. 1.
 2.
^b Ex. 12. 12.
 Jer. 19. 4.
 Jer. 52. 7.
 Eze. 12. 12.
^c ch. 23. 33.
 Jer. 52. 9.
¹ spake judgment with him.
² made blind.
 Jer. 39. 7.
 Eze. 12. 13.

common league to throw off the Assyrian yoke. Though warned by Jeremiah against this step, the infatuated and perjured (Ezek. xvii. 13) Zedekiah persisted in his revolt, by forming an alliance with Pharaoh-hophra—*i. e.*, Apries, grandson of Nechoh, king of Egypt, and the most energetic and successful monarch of that kingdom since Psammeticus.

CHAP. XXV. 1-3. — JERUSALEM AGAIN BESIEGED.

1. Nebuchadnezzar . . . came . . . against Jerusalem, and pitched against it. Incensed by the revolt of Zedekiah, the Assyrian despot determined to put an end to the perfidious and inconstant monarchy of Judah. This chapter narrates his third and last invasion, which he conducted in person at the head of an immense army, levied out of all the tributary nations under his sway. Having overrun the northern parts of the country, and taken almost all the fenced cities (Jer. xxiv. 7), he marched direct to Jerusalem to invest it. The date of the beginning as well as of the end of the siege is here carefully marked (cf. Ezek. xxvi. 1; Jer. xxxix. 1; lii. 46); from which it appears that, with a brief interruption caused by Nebuchadnezzar's marching to oppose the Egyptians who were coming to its relief, but who retreated without fighting (see an account of the war of Nebuchadnezzar against him in revenge for his seducing Zedekiah from his allegiance to Babylon, *Wilkinson in Rawlinson's 'Herodotus,'* ii., p. 386), the siege lasted a year and a half. So long a resistance was owing, not to the superior skill and valour of the Jewish soldiers, but to the strength of the city fortifications, on which the king too confidently relied, (cf. Jer. xxi.; xxxvii.; xxxviii.) pitched against it; and . . . built forts—rather, perhaps, drew lines of circumvallation, with a ditch to prevent any going out of the city. On this rampart was erected his military engines for throwing missiles into the city. 3. on the ninth day of the fourth month the famine prevailed. In consequence of the close and protracted blockade, the inhabitants were reduced to dreadful extremities; and, under the maddening influence of hunger, the most inhuman atrocities were perpetrated (Lam. ii. 20, 22; iv. 9, 10; Ezek. v. 10). This was a fulfilment of the prophetic denunciations threatened on the apostasy of the chosen people (Lev. xxvi. 29; Deut. xxviii. 53-57; Jer. xv. 2; xxvii. 13; Ezek. iv. 16).

4-30.—ZEDEKIAH TAKEN.

4. the city was broken up—*i. e.*, a breach was effected, as we are elsewhere informed, in a part

of the wall belonging to the lower city (2 Chr. xxxii. 5; xxxii. 14). the gate between two walls, which is by the king's garden. The king's garden was (Neh. iii. 15) at the Pool of Siloam—*i. e.*, at the mouth of the Tyropœon, and extended thence to the defile in which Eu-rogel is situated. A trace of the outermost of these two walls appears to be still extant in the rude pathway which crosses the mouth of the Tyropœon, on a mound hard by the old mulberry tree which marks the traditional spot of Isaiah's martyrdom (*Robinson's 'Biblical Researches,'* p. 388; *Barclay's 'City of the Great King,'* p. 92; *Porter's 'Handbook,'* pp. 94, 95; *Stewart's 'Tent and Khan,'* p. 271). It is probable that the besiegers had overlooked this pass. the king went . . . toward the plain—*i. e.*, the Ghor, or valley of Jordan, estimated at five hours' distance from Jerusalem. The plain near Jericho is about eleven or twelve miles broad. 6. they took the king, and brought him . . . to Riblah. Nebuchadnezzar, having gone from the siege to oppose the auxiliary forces of Pharaoh-hophra, left his generals to carry on the blockade, he himself not returning to the scene of action, but taking up his station at Riblah in the land of Hamath, near the 'entering in of Hamath,' under the northern extremity of Anti-Lebanou (*Porter's 'Damascus,'* ii., p. 336) (cf. xxiii. 33). gave judgment upon him—they, *i. e.*, the council (Jer. xxxix. 3, 13; Dan. vi. 7, 8, 12), regarding him as a seditious and rebellious vassal, condemned him for violating his oath, and neglecting the announcement of the Divine will as made known to him by Jeremiah (cf. Jer. xxxii. 5; xxxiv. 2; xxxviii. 17). His sons and the nobles who had joined in his fight were slain before his eyes (Jer. xxxix. 6; lii. 10). In conformity with Eastern notions, which consider a blind man incapable of ruling, his eyes were put out, an operation frequently performed on young princes whom it is wished to deprive of all pretensions to the throne, and which is done in Persia by a red-hot iron held close to the eyes, so as to dry up the humours, but in Assyria and Babylon by the point of a spear, wielded by the king, on the captive monarch stooping on his knees before his conqueror to be blinded ('Niveh and its Remains,' ii., p. 376). It would be in this latter way that Zedekiah's eyes were put out; and afterwards, being put in chains (cf. Judg. xvi. 21; Ps. cxlix. 8), he was carried to perpetual imprisonment in Babylon (Jer. lii. 11), which, though he came to it, as Ezekiel had foretold, he did not see (Jer. xxxii. 5; Ezek. xii. 13; xvii. 16).

8 And in the fifth month, on the seventh *day* of the month, which is ^dthe nineteenth year of king Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, came Nebuzar-adan, ^ecaptain of the guard, a servant of the king of Babylon, unto Jerusalem: and ^fhe burnt the house of the LORD, and ^gthe king's house, and all the houses of Jerusalem, and every great *man's* house burnt he with fire. And all the army of the Chaldees, that *were* with the captain of the guard, ^hbrake down the walls of Jerusalem round about. Now ⁱthe rest of the people that *were* left in the city, and the ^jfugitives that fell away to the king of Babylon, with the remnant of the multitude, did Nebuzar-adan, the captain of the guard, carry away. But the captain of the guard ^kleft of the poor of the land to be vinedressers and husbandmen.

13 And ^lthe pillars of ^mbrass that *were* in the house of the LORD, and the bases, and the brasen sea, that *was* in the house of the LORD, did the Chaldees break in pieces, and carried the brass of them to Babylon. And ⁿthe pots, and the shovels, and the snuffers, and the spoons, and all the vessels of brass wherewith they ministered, took they away. And the fire-pans, and the bowls, and such ^othings as *were* of gold, in gold, and silver, in silver, the captain of the guard took away. The two pillars, ^pone sea, and the bases which Solomon had made for the house of the LORD; the brass of all these vessels was without weight. The height of the one pillar *was* eighteen cubits, and the chapter upon it *was* brass; and the height of the chapter three cubits; and the wreathen work, and pomegranates upon the chapter round about, all of brass: and like unto these had the second pillar with wreathen work.

B. C. 588.

^d ch. 21. 12.
^e Or, chief marshal.
^f 2 Chr 36. 19.
 Ps. 74. 3-7.
 Ps. 79. 1.
 Isa. 64. 11.
 Jer. 7. 14.
 Mic 3. 12.
^g Amos 2. 5.
^h Neh. 1. 3.
ⁱ Jer. 39. 9.
 Jer. 52. 15.
 Eze 5. 2.
^j fallen away.
^k ch. 24. 11.
 Jer 40. 7.
^l ch. 50. 17.
^m 1 Ki 7. 15.
ⁿ Ex. 27. 3.
 1 Ki 7. 45, 50.
^o Ex. 37. 23.
 1 Ki. 7. 45-61.
 2 Chr. 24. 11.
 Ezra 1. 5-11.
 Dan. 5. 2.
^p the one sea.

8. on the seventh day of the month . . . came Nebuzar-adan—(cf. Jer. lii. 12.) In attempting to reconcile these two passages, it must be supposed either that, though he had set out on the seventh, he did not arrive in Jerusalem till the tenth, or that he did not put his orders in execution till that day. 9. he burnt the house of the Lord. The substructures of Solomon's temple have been discovered. The stones are of large size, such as are peculiar to Judea (and Assyria), and have the Jewish style of cut. The masonry is believed to belong to the time of Solomon (*Robinson's 'Biblical Researches,'* i., p. 426; 'Jewish Intelligence,' December, 1857, pp. 373, 374.) and the king's house. On the site afterwards occupied by King Herod the Great's palace stood the royal residence of the kings of Judah, which was destroyed when the Jews were driven into captivity. His office as captain of the guard (Gen. xxxvii. 36; xxxix. 1) called him to execute the awards of justice on criminals; and hence, although not engaged in the siege of Jerusalem (Jer. xxxix. 13), Nebuzar-adan was despatched to raze the city, to plunder the temple, to lay both in ruins, demolish the fortifications, and transport the inhabitants to Babylon.

13. the pillars of brass that were in the house of the Lord—(cf. Jer. lii. 19, 20.) 'The large bronze altar is not mentioned. Whether the gold used in overlaying the house, and in making up the furniture of the temple, was all removed previous to this, is not certain; but from what is stated, it would appear that much gold remained. The removing of such a vast quantity of metal to Babylon must have been a formidable undertaking, and it is exceedingly interesting thus to trace great and precious relics. The sacred vessels of gold and silver were preserved from destruction, and carried by the Assyrians to Babylon, who placed them in the temple of their idols. But in a very few years after the removal of the gold, silver, and brass from the temple in Jerusalem,

Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold in the plain of Dura (Dan. iii. 1). This took place in so short a time after the fall of Jerusalem as to suggest that the image was likely to have been made from the metal removed from the city. The siege had been a formidable undertaking, and of sufficient importance to warrant a memorial being erected. And this image set up in Dura was in all probability in commemoration of the fall of Jerusalem—the defeat of the Jews' (*Napier's 'Ancient Workers in Metal,'* p. 120). We have no information given us respecting the fate of the tabernacle or of the ark. Supposing the latter to have been captured and transported to Babylon along with the other appurtenances of the sacred place, some surprise may be felt that, while detained in a heathen country, its stay was not marked by Babylonish emeralds or by some Chaldean stricken for laying hands on it, or by the undirected march of milch-kine conveying it back to the holy land. The circumstances were different then from what they were at the time of the captivity. In the early period, the national covenant was in force, and Jehovah honoured the symbols of His presence placed amongst His people. In the latter, the national covenant had been completely broken by the apostasy of successive kings and the vast majority of their subjects in Judah, and the Lord was no longer bound to preserve or to honour the symbolic pledge of it. But the truth is, there is reason to believe that the ark was not amongst the spoils of the temple carried to Babylon; for undoubtedly the removal or destruction of an object so profoundly venerated would have been duly chronicled in the annals of the sacred historians. Perhaps it may have been hid by some pious priests, in anticipation of a disastrous outrage on the temple, as was done with other sacred treasures of that edifice. For Jewish tradition reports, with much probability, that Jeremiah, who had long before predicted that catastrophe, who was always distinguished for his

- 18 And ^athe captain of the guard took Seraiah ^othe chief priest, and
 19 ²Zephaniah the second priest, and the three keepers of the ⁶door: and
 out of the city he took an ⁷officer that was set over the men of war, and
²five men of them that ⁸were in the king's presence, which were found in
 the city, and the ⁹principal scribe of the host, which mustered the people
 of the land, and threescore men of the people of the land *that were found*
 20 in the city: and Nebuzar-adan, captain of the guard, took these, and
 21 brought them to the king of Babylon to Riblah: and the king of Babylon
 smote them, and slew them at Riblah in the land of Hamath. ⁷So Judah
 was carried away out of their land.
- 22 And ⁸as for the people that remained in the land of Judah, whom
 Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had left, even over them he made
 Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, ruler.
- 23 And when all the captains of the armies, they and their men, heard
 that the king of Babylon had made Gedaliah governor, there came to
 Gedaliah to Mizpah, even Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and Johanan the
 son of Careah, and Seraiah the son of Tanbunemeth the Netophathite, and
 24 Jaazaniah the son of a Maachathite, they and their men. And Gedaliah
 sware to them, and to their men, and said unto them, ⁴Fear not to be
 the servants of the Chaldees: dwell in the land, and serve the king of
 Babylon, and it shall be well with you.
- 25 But ¹¹it came to pass in the seventh month, that Ishmael the son of
 Nethaniah, the son of Elishama, of the seed ¹⁰royal, came, and ten men
 with him, and smote Gedaliah, that he died, and the Jews and the
 26 Chaldees that were with him at Mizpah. And all the people, both small
 and great, and the captains of the armies, arose, and ¹¹came to Egypt; for
 they were afraid of the Chaldees.
- 27 And ¹¹it came to pass in the seven and thirtieth year of the captivity

B. C. 688.

^a Jer. 52. 24.
^o 1 Chr. 6. 14.
 Ezra 7. 1.
² Jer. 21. 1.
 Jer. 29. 25, 29
⁶ threshold.
⁷ Cr.
 eunuch.
⁸ Jer. 52. 25.
⁹ saw the king's face.
⁹ Or, scribe of the captain of the host.
⁷ Lev. 26. 35-36.
 Deut. 4. 26.
 Deut. 23. 35.
 ch. 23. 27.
 Jer. 24. 9.
 Jer. 25. 9.
 Amos 6. 27.
⁴ Jer. 40. 5.
⁴ Jer. 27. 12.
 Jer. 38. 17.
¹¹ Jer. 41. 1, 2.
 Zech. 7. 5.
 Zech. 8. 19.
¹⁰ of the kingdom.
¹¹ Jer. 41. 16.
 Jer. 43. 4, 7.
¹¹ Deut. 28. 68.
 Jer. 41. 17.

attachment to the law, and who, as a priest and a prophet, lay under double responsibility to watch over its safety, had taken the precaution of removing the standard copy of the sacred books belonging to the temple beyond the reach of the flame which consumed the holy house.

18. the captain of the guard took Seraiah the chief priest, and Zephaniah the second priest. The most eminent inhabitants were taken to the king at Riblah (v. 21), and executed, as instigators and abettors of the rebellion, or otherwise obnoxious to the Assyrian government. In their number were Seraiah, the high priest, grandfather of Ezra (Ezra vii. 1), his sagan or deputy, a priest of the second order (Jer. xxi. 2; xxix. 25, 29; xxxvii. 3), the three keepers of the door—not mere porters, but officers of high trust among the Levites (ch. xxii. 4; 1 Chr. ix. 26). 19. five men of them that were in the king's presence—i. e., who belonged to the royal retinue: it is probable that there were five at first, and that other two were found afterwards (Jer. lii. 25). and the principal scribe of the host. There were two army registrars, whose figures are seen in almost every bas-relief, writing down the various objects brought to them by the victorious warriors,—the heads of the slain, the prisoners, cattle, sheep, furniture, and vessels of metal ('Nineveh and Babylon,' p. 633). 21. So Judah was carried away out of their land. 'In the history of the Jewish state, this great truth is clearly and powerfully impressed, that as "righteousness exalteth a nation, so sin is the reproach of any people" (Prov. xiv. 34)—a lesson which, but for the immediate and extraordinary providence displayed in this awful dispensation, could never have been so forcibly inculcated, or so clearly understood' (*Graves, 'Lectures on the Four Last Books of the Pentateuch,'* ii., p. 230).

22. Nebuchadnezzar . . . made Gedaliah . . . ruler. The people permitted to remain were, besides the king's daughters, a few court attendants and others (Jer. xl. 7), too insignificant to be removed—only the peasantry who could till the land and dress the vineyards. Gedaliah was Jeremiah's friend (Jer. xxvi. 24), and having, by the prophet's counsel, probably fled from the city as abandoned of God, he surrendered himself to the conqueror (Jer. xxxviii. 2, 17), and being promoted to the government of Judea, fixed his provincial court at Mizpah. He was well qualified to surmount the difficulties of ruling at such a crisis. Many of the fugitive Jews, as well as the soldiers of Zedekiah who had accompanied the king in his flight to the plains of Jericho, left their retreats (Jer. xl. 11, 12), and flocked around the governor, who, having counselled them to submit, promised them, on complying with this condition, security on oath, that they would retain their possessions and enjoy the produce of their land (Jer. xl. 9).

25. Ishmael . . . of the seed royal, came. He had found refuge with Baalis, king of the Ammonites, and he returned with a bad design, being either instigated by envy of a governor not descended from the house of David, or bribed by Baalis to murder Gedaliah. The generous governor, though apprised of his intentions, refused to credit the report, much less to sanction the proposal made by an attached friend to cut off Ishmael. The consequence was, that he was murdered by this same Ishmael, when entertaining him in his own house (Jer. xli. 1). 26. came to Egypt—in spite of Jeremiah's dissuasions (Jer. xliii. 7, 8), and settled in various cities of that country (Jer. xliiv. 1).

27. seven and thirtieth year of the captivity

of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, that Evil-merodach king of Babylon, in the year that he began to reign, did lift up the head of Jehoiachin king of Judah out of prison; and he spake kindly to him, and set his throne above the throne of the kings that were with him in Babylon; and changed his prison garments: and he did eat bread continually before him all the days of his life. And his allowance was a continual allowance given him of the king, a daily rate for every day, all the days of his life.

B. C. 558.
 2 Gen. 40. 13,
 20.
 11 good
 things
 with him.
 v Dan. 2. 37
 Dan. 5. 18.
 6 Gen. 41. 14.
 a 2 Sam. 9. 7.

of Jehoiachin—corresponding with the year of Nebuchadnezzar's death, and his son Evil-merodach's ascension to the throne. Evil-merodach . . . did lift up the head of Jehoiachin. 28. And he spake kindly—gave him liberty upon parole. Jehoiachin had continued a state-prisoner for thirty-seven years during the whole reign of Nebuchadnezzar, and amongst the many causes of grief and of mortification to the feelings of the captive Jews, perhaps there was no circumstance more humiliating than the fact, conscious to all of them, that one native sovereign was a miserable tenant, in prison garments, in one of the dungeons of Babylon, and that there, too, their last sovereign was immured so long as he lived—the eyeless Zedekiah in chains (cf. Jer. xxxix. 7). The

kindly feeling which subsisted between the young king of Babylon and Jehoiachin is said to have originated in a familiar acquaintance formed in prison, in which Evil-merodach had lain till his father's death, on account of some malversation while acting as regent during Nebuchadnezzar's seven years' illness (Dan. iv. 32, 33). But doubtless the improvement in Jehoiachin's condition is to be traced to the overruling providence and grace of Him who still cherished purposes of love to the house of David (2 Sam. vii. 14, 15). 29. he did eat bread continually before him—i. e., according to an ancient usage in Eastern courts, had a seat at the royal table on great days, and had a stated provision granted him for the maintenance of his exiled court.

THE
FIRST BOOK OF THE CHRONICLES.

1 **A**DAM, ^aSheth, Enosh, Kenan, Mahalaleel, Jered, ^bEnoch, Methu-
4 selah, Lamech, Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.
5 The ^csons of Japheth; Gomer, and Magog, and Madai, and Javan, and
6 Tubal, and Meshech, and Tiras. And the sons of Gomer; Ashchenaz,
7 and ¹Riphath, and Togarmah. And the sons of Javan; Elishah, and
 Tarshish, Kittim, and ²Dodanim.
8, The ^dsons of Ham; Cush, and Mizraim, Put, and Canaan. And the
9 sons of Cush; Seba, and Havilah, and Sabta, and Raamah, and Sab-
10 techa. And the sons of Raamah; Sheba, and Dedan. And Cush ^ebegat
11 Nimrod: he began to be mighty upon the earth. And Mizraim begat
12 Ludim, and Anamim, and Lehabim, and Naphtulim, and Pathrusim,
13 and Casluhim, (of whom came the Philistines,) and ¹Caphtorim. And
14 Canaan begat Zidon his first-born, and Heth, the Jebusite also, and the
15 Amorite, and the Girgashite, and the Hivite, and the Arkite, and the
16 Sinite, and the Arvadite, and the Zemarite, and the Hamathite.
17 The sons of ^gShem; Elam, and Asshur, and Arphaxad, and Lud, and
18 Aram, and Uz, and Hul, and Gether, and ³Meshech. And Arphaxad
19 begat Shelah, and Shelah begat Eber. And unto Eber were born two
 sons: the name of the one *was* ⁴Peleg, because in his days the earth was
20 divided: and his brother's name *was* Joktan. And Joktan begat Almo-
21 dad, and Sheleph, and Hazarmaveth, and Jerah, Hadoram also, and
22 Uzal, and Diklah, and Ebal, and Abimael, and Sheba, and Ophir, and
23 Havilah, and Jobab. All these *were* the sons of Joktan.
24 ^hShem, Arphaxad, Shelah, ⁱEber, Peleg, Reu, Serug, Nahor, Terah,
27 ^jAbram; the same *is* Abraham.
28 The sons of Abraham; ^kIsaac, and ^lIshmael.
29 These *are* their generations: The first-born ^mof Ishmael, Nebaioth;
30 then Kedar, and Adbeel, and Mibsam, Mishma, and Dumah, Massa, ⁵Hadad,
31 and Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. These are the sons of Ishmael.

B. C. 4001.
 CHAP. I.
^a Gen. 4. 25.
^b Gen. 5. 3, 9.
^c Jude 14.
^d Gen. 10. 2.
¹ Or, Diphath, as it is in some copies.
² Or, Rodanin, according to some copies.
⁴ Gen. 10. 6.
⁵ Gen. 10. 8, 13.
^f Deut. 2. 23.
^g Gen. 10. 22.
^h Gen. 11. 10.
³ Or, Mash.
ⁱ Gen. 10. 23.
⁴ That is, Division.
^j Gen. 10. 25.
^k Gen. 11. 10.
^l Luke 3. 36.
^m Gen. 11. 15.
ⁿ Gen. 17. 5.
⁶ Gen. 21. 2, 3.
⁷ Gen. 16. 11, 15.
⁸ Gen. 25. 13-16.
⁹ Or, Hadar, Gen. 25. 15.

CHAP. I. 1-3.—ADAM'S LINE TO NOAH.

1. Adam, &c. "Begot" must be understood as meaning that the person who "begot" was not in all instances the immediate parent, but an ancestor, near or more remote, of the person spoken of. Only that one member of the family is mentioned who came in the direct order of succession. **4. Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.** The three sons of this patriarch are enumerated, partly because they were the founders of the new world, and partly because the fulfilment of Noah's prophecy (Gen. ix. 25-27) could not otherwise appear to have been verified.

10. Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be mighty [נִמְרוֹד] (cf. Gen. x. 8); Septuagint, γίγας κωνυγός, a dog-leading giant.] **12. Casluhim, (of whom came the Philistines,) and Caphtorim—**better rendered, 'and Casluhim, of whom came the Philistim and Caphtorim:' they were brethren, the sons of Casluhim, and at first dwelt together, whence their names are used interchangeably; and the Caphtorim are described as inhabiting Azzah, or Gaza, the seat of the Philistines. **14. The Jebusites, &c.** From this verse to v. 17 the names are not those of individuals, but of people who all sprang from Canaan; and as several of them became extinct, or were amalgamated with their

brethren, their national appellations are given, instead of the personal names of their ancestors.

17. Uz, and Hul, and Gether, and Meshech—or Mash: these were the children of Aram, and *grandsons* of Shem (Gen. x. 23). **18. Arphaxad begat Selah.** Cainan, the father's name, is omitted here (see on Luke iii. 36). **19. Peleg—**(see on Gen. x. 25.) **22. Ebal—**or Obal (Gen. x. 28).

24-28.—SHEM'S LINE TO ABRAHAM.

24. Shem, &c. This comprises a list of ten, inclusive of Abraham.

29-31.—SONS OF ISHMAEL.

29. These are their generations—the heads of his twelve tribes. The great northern desert of Arabia, including the entire neck, was colonized by these tribes; and if we can recover, in the modern geography of this part of the country, Arab tribes bearing the names of those patriarchs—*i. e.*, names corresponding with those preserved in the original catalogue of Scripture—we obtain at once so many evidences, not of mere similarity, but of absolute identification (*Forster*). **Nebaioth**—gave rise to the Nabatheans of the classic, and the *Beni Nabat* of Oriental, writers. **Kedar**—the Arab tribe el-Khedeiry, on the coast of Hedjar. **Adbeel**—Adbilla, the name of a tribe in Yemen. **30. Dumah**—Dumah and Tema, the great Arab

- 32 Now ⁿthe sons of Keturah, Abraham's concubine: she bare Zimran, and Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuah. And
- 33 the sons of Jokshan; Sheba, and Dedan. And the sons of Midian; Ephah, and Epher, and Henoah, and Abida, and Eldaah. All these *are* the sons of Keturah.
- 34 And ^oAbraham begat Isaac. ^rThe sons of Isaac; Esau, and Israel.
- 35 The sons of ^qEsau; Eliphaz, Reuel, and Jeush, and Jaalam, and Korah.
- 36 The sons of Eliphaz; Teman, and Omar, ⁶Zephi, and Gatam, Kenaz, and
- 37 Timna, and Amalek. The sons of Reuel; Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, 38 and Mizzah. And ^rthe sons of Seir; Lotan, and Shobal, and Zibeon, 39 and Anah, and Dishon, and Ezer, and Dishan. And the sons of Lotan; 40 Hori, and ⁷Homam: and Timna *was* Lotan's sister. The sons of Shobal; ⁸Alian, and Manahath, and Ebal, ⁹Shephi, and Onam. And the sons of 41 Zibeon; Aiah, and Anah. The sons of Anah; ⁶Dishon. And the sons 42 of Dishon; ¹⁰Amram, and Eshban, and Ithran, and Cheran. The sons of Ezer; Bilhan, and Zavan, and ¹¹Jakan. The sons of Dishan; Uz, and Aran.
- 43 Now these *are* the ^tkings that reigned in the land of Edom before *any* king reigned over the children of Israel; Bela the son of Beor: and the 44 name of his city *was* Dinhabah. And when Bela was dead, Jobab the 45 son of Zerah of Bozrah reigned in his stead. And when Jobab was dead, 46 Husham of the land of the Temanites reigned in his stead. And when Husham was dead, ^uHadad the son of Bedad, which smote Midian in the field of Moab, reigned in his stead: and the name of his city *was* Avith.
- 47 And when Hadad was dead, Samlah of Masrekah reigned in his stead.
- 48 And ^vwhen Samlah was dead, Shaul of Rehoboth by the river reigned in 49 his stead. And when Shaul was dead, Baal-hanan the son of Achbor 50 reigned in his stead. And when Baal-hanan was dead, ¹²Hadad reigned in his stead: and the name of his city *was* ¹³Pai; and his wife's name *was* Mehetabel, the daughter of Matred, the daughter of Mezahab.
- 51 Hadad died also. And the ^wdukes of Edom were; duke Timnah, duke 52 ¹⁴Aliah, duke Jetheth, duke Aholibamah, duke Elah, duke Pinon, 53, duke Kenaz, duke Teman, duke Mibzar, duke Magdiel, duke Iram. 54 These *are* the dukes of Edom.
- 2 THESE *are* the sons of ¹Israel; ^aReuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah, 2 Issachar, and Zebulun, Dan, Joseph, and Benjamin, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher.
- 3 The sons of ^bJudah; Er, and Onan, and Shelah: *which* three were born unto him of the daughter of ^cShua the Canaanitess. And ^dEr, the first-

B C. 1853.

ⁿ Gen. 25. 1.

2.

^o Gen. 21. 2.

3.

^p Gen. 25. 23.^q Gen. 33. 9.

10.

Deut. 2. 22.

Mal. 1. 2. 3.

Rom. 9. 13.

Hcb. 12. 16.

^r Or, Zepho,

Gen. 33. 11.

⁷ Or, Zepho,

Gen. 36. 20.

⁸ Or,

Heman,

Gen. 37. 22.

⁸ Or, Alvan,

Gen. 33. 24.

⁹ Or,

Shepho,

Gen. 36. 21.

⁶ Gen. 36. 23.¹⁰ Or,

Hemdan,

Gen. 36. 26.

¹¹ Or, Akan,

Gen. 33. 27.

⁶ Gen. 33. 31.^u 1 Ki. 11. 14.^v Gen. 36. 37.¹² Or, Hada,

Gen. 36. 39.

¹³ Or, Pau,

Gen. 36. 39.

^w Gen. 36. 40.

Ex. 15. 15.

¹⁴ Or, Alvah.

CHAP. 2.

1 Or, Jacob,

Gen. 32. 28.

^a Gen. 29. 52.

Gen. 30. 5.

Gen. 25. 18.

Gen. 47. 8.

^b Gen. 28. 3.

Gen. 46. 12.

Num. 26. 19.

^c Gen. 28. 2.^d Gen. 33. 7.

tribes of Beni Teman. Thus this writer ('Historical Geography of Arabia') traces the names of all the heads of the twelve tribes of Ishmael as perpetuated in the clans or tribes of the Arabs in the present day.

32, 33.—SONS OF KETURAH.

32. sons of Keturah. These became founders of nomadic tribes in the north of Arabia and Syria, as Midian of the Midianites (Gen. xxxvi. 35; Judg. vi. 2). and Shuah—from whom Bildad sprang (Job ii. 11).

34-42.—POSTERITY OF ABRAHAM BY ESAU.

36. sons of Eliphaz—the tribe Arites, in the centre country of the Saracens, so called from his mother, Adah (Gen. xxxvi. 10). Teman—gave rise to the land of Teman, near the head of the Red Sea. Omar—the tribe Beni Amma settled at the northern point of Djebel Shera (mount Seir). Zephi—the tribe Dzaf. Gatam—Katam, inhabited by the tribe Al Saruat, or 'people of Sarah.' Kenaz—the tribe Aenezes, a tribe whose settlement lies in the neighbourhood of Syria. Timna and Amalek—i. e., and from Timna, Amalek, the

Beni Malak of Zohran, and the Beni Maledj of the Shat el-Arab. Reuel—a powerful branch of the great Aeneze tribe, the Rowalla Arabs. Shammah—the great tribe Beni Shammar. In the same way the names of the other kings and dukes are traced in the modern tribes of Arabia. But it is unnecessary to mention any more of those obscure nomads, except to notice that Jobab (v. 44), one of the kings of Edom, is considered to be Job, and that his seat was in the royal city of Dinahab (Gen. xxxvi. 32), identified with O'Daeb, a well-known town in the centre of Al Dahna, a great northern desert in the direction of Chaldea and the Euphrates (Forster).

CHAP. II. 1, 2.—SONS OF ISRAEL.

1. These are the sons of Israel. The names of his twelve sons are enumerated without regard to order.

3-12.—POSTERITY OF JUDAH.

3. The sons of Judah. His descendants are enumerated first, because the right and privileges of the primogeniture had been transferred to him

- 4 born of Judah, was evil in the sight of the LORD; and he slew him. And 'Tamar his daughter-in-law bare him Pharez and Zerah. All the sons of Judah were five.
- 5, 'The sons of 'Pharez; Hezron, and Hamul. And the sons of Zerah; 6 ²Zimri, ²and Ethan, and Heman, and Calcol, and ³Dara: five of them in 7 all. And the sons of ⁴Carmi; ⁴Achar, the troubler of Israel, who trans- 8, gressed in the thing 'accursed. And the sons of Ethan; Azariah. The 9 sons also of Hezron, that were born unto him; Jerahmeel, and ⁵Ram, and ⁶Chelubai.
- 10 And Ram ⁷begat Amminadab; and Amminadab begat Nahshon, ⁴prince 11 of the children of Judah; and Nahshon begat ⁷Salma, and Salma begat 12, Boaz, and Boaz begat Obed, and Obed begat Jesse, and ¹Jesse begat his 13 first-born Eliab, and Abinadab the second, and ⁸Shimma the third, 14 Nethaneel the fourth, Raddai the fifth, Ozem the sixth, David the seventh: 16 whose sisters were Zeruiah, and Abigail. ¹⁰And the sons of Zeruiah; 17 Abishai, and Joab, and Asahel, three. And ¹¹Abigail bare Amasa: and the father of Amasa was ⁹Jether the Ishmeelite.
- 18 And Caleb the son of Hezron begat children of Azubah his wife, and of 19 Jerioth: her sons are these; Jeshur, and Shobab, and Ardon. And when Azubah was dead, Caleb took unto him Ephrath, which bare him Hur. 20, And Hur begat Uri, and Uri ⁹begat Bezalcel. And afterward Hezron 21 went in to the daughter of ²Machir the father of Gilead, whom he ¹⁰married when he was threescore years old, and she bare him Segub. 22 And Segub begat Jair, who had three and twenty cities in the land of 23 Gilead. And ⁴he took Geshur, and Aram, with the towns of Jair, from

B. C. 1762.
⁶ Gen. 3. 19.
 Matt. 1. 3.
 / Gen. 46. 12.
 Ruth 4. 18.
² Or, Zabdi,
 Josh. 7. 1.
¹ 1 Ki. 4. 31.
³ Or, Darda.
⁴ ch. 4. 1.
⁴ Or, Achan.
¹ Josh. 6. 19.
⁵ Or, Aram.
 Matt. 1.3.4.
⁶ Or, Caleb.
⁷ Ruth 4. 19.
⁸ Num. 1. 7.
⁷ Or,
 Salmon
 Ruth 4. 21.
¹ 1 Sam. 16. 6.
⁸ Or,
 Shamamah,
 1 Sam. 16. 9.
¹⁰ 2 Sam. 2. 18.
¹¹ 2 Sam. 17.
 25.
⁹ Ithra an
 Israelite.
⁹ Ex. 31. 2.
⁷ Num. 7. 1.
¹⁰ tock.
⁹ Num. 32. 41.

(Gen. xlix. 8), and because from his tribe the Mes-
 siah was to spring.

6. Zimri, and Ethan, and Heman, and Calcol, and Dara. These five are here stated to be the sons of Zerah—i. e., of Ezra—whence they were called Ezrahites (1 Ki. iv. 31). In that passage they are called "the sons of Mahol," which, however, is to be taken not as a proper name, but appellatively for 'sons of music, dancing,' &c. The traditional fame of their great sagacity and acquirements had descended to the time of Solomon, and formed a standard of comparison for showing the superior wisdom of that monarch. Jewish writers say that they were looked up to as prophets by their countrymen during the abode in Egypt. 7. the sons of Carmi—he was the son of Zimri, or Zabdi, as he is called, Josh. vii. 1. Achar—or Achan (Josh. vii. 1). This variety in the form of the name is with great propriety used here, since Achar means 'troubler.'

13-17.—CHILDREN OF JESSE.

13. Shimma [שִׁמְמָה, or שִׁמְמָה (2 Sam. xiii. 3, 32), or שִׁמְמָה (1 Sam. xvi. 9; xvii. 13).] 14. Raddai [רַדַּי—is considered by Ewald ('Geschichte,' iii., 266) identical with Rei (1 Ki. i. 8), these being David's two surviving brothers at the time of Solomon's accession. But this identification is more than doubtful. 15. David the seventh. As it appears (1 Sam. xvi. 10; xvii. 12) that Jesse had eight sons, the presumption is, from David being mentioned here as the seventh son of his father, that one of them had died at an early age, without leaving issue. 16. Whose sisters were Zeruiah, and Abigail. Here the sons are mentioned by the mother's line,—instances amongst the Jews of the father sometimes being not taken into consideration at all; as is the case in many places of the Himalayah mountains, and at many courts of the Rajahs, as at Travancore, &c. (Joseph Wolf, 'Missionary Labours,' p. 493). 17. Jether the Ishmeelite—(cf. 2 Sam. xvii. 25.) In that passage

he is called Ithra an Israelite; and there seems no reason why, in the early days of David, any one should be specially distinguished as an Israelite. The presumption is in favour of the reading followed by the Septuagint, which calls him 'Jetra the Jezreelite.' The circumstance of his settling in another tribe, or of a woman marrying out of her own tribe, was sufficiently rare and singular to call for the statement that Abigail was married to a man of Jezreel.

18-55.—POSTERITY OF CALEB.

18. Caleb the son of Hezron. The notices concerning this person appear confused in our version. In v. 19 he is said to be the father of Hur, whereas in v. 50 he is called "the son of Hur." The words in this latter passage have been transposed in the copying, and should be read thus, 'Hur the son of Caleb,' begat children of Azubah his wife, and of Jerioth. The former was his spouse, while Jerioth seems to have been a secondary wife, and the mother of the children whose names are here given. On the death of his principal wife, he married Ephrath, and by her had Hur. 21. Hezron . . . daughter of Machir the father of Gilead—i. e., chief of that town, which, with the lands adjacent, was no doubt the property of Machir, who was so desirous of a male heir. He was grandson of Joseph. The wife of Machir was of the tribe of Manasseh (Num. xxvi. 29). 22. Jair, who had three and twenty cities in the land of Gilead. As the son of Segub and the grandson of Hezron, he was of the tribe of Judah; but from his maternal descent he is called, Num. xxxii. 41; Deut. iii. 14, "the son of Manasseh." This designation implies that his inheritance lay in that tribe in right of his grandmother; in other words, because his maternal and adopting great-grandfather was Machir, the son of Manasseh; and Jair, inheriting his property, was his lineal representative. And accordingly this is expressly stated to be the case; for the village-group of "Havoth-jair" was

them, with ⁷Kenath, and the towns thereof, *even* threescore cities. All these *belonged* to the sons of Machir, the father of Gilead. And after that Hezron was dead in ⁸Caleb-ephratah, then Abiah, Hezron's wife, bare him ⁹Ashur the father of ¹⁰Tekoa.

25 And the sons of Jerahmeel the first-born of Hezron were Ram the first-born, and Bunah, and Oren, and Ozem, *and* Ahijah. Jerahmeel had also another wife, whose name *was* Atarah: she *was* the mother of Onam.

27 And the sons of Ram the first-born of Jerahmeel were Maaz, and Jamin, and Eker. And the sons of Onam were Shammai, and Jada. And the sons of Shammai; Nadab, and Abishur. And the name of the wife of Abishur *was* Abihail, and she bare him Ahban, and Molid. And the sons of Nadab; Seled, and Appaim: but Seled died without children.

31 And the sons of Appaim; Ishi. And the sons of Ishi; Sheshan. And the children of Sheshan; Ahlai. And the sons of Jada the brother of Shammai; Jether, and Jonathan: and Jether died without children.

33 And the sons of Jonathan; Peleth, and Zaza. These were the sons of Jerahmeel.

34 Now Sheshan had no sons, but daughters. And Sheshan had a servant, an Egyptian, whose name *was* Jarha. And Sheshan gave his daughter to Jarha his servant to wife; and she bare him Attai. And Attai begat Nathan, and Nathan begat ¹¹Zabad, and Zabad begat Ephlal, and Ephlal begat Obed, and Obed begat Jehu, and Jehu begat Azariah, and Azariah begat Helez, and Helez begat Eleasah, and Eleasah begat Sisamai, and Sisamai begat Shallum, and Shallum begat Jekamiah, and Jekamiah begat Elishama.

42 Now the sons of ¹²Caleb the brother of Jerahmeel *were* Mesha ¹³his first-born, which *was* the ¹⁴father of ¹⁵Ziph; and the sons of Mareshah the ¹⁶father of Hebron. And the sons of Hebron; Korah, and Tappuah, and Rekem, and Shema. And Shema begat Raham the father of Jorkoam:

E. C. 14. 1.

⁷ Num. 32. 1.

2.

⁸ 1 Sam. 33. 14.⁹ ch. 4. 5.¹⁰ 2 Sam. 11. 2.

ch. 4. 5.

2 Chr. 11. 6.

2 Chr. 9. 20.

Neh. 3. 5.

Jer. 6. 1.

Amos 1. 1.

¹¹ ch. 11. 41.¹² Not Caleb

the son of

Jephun-

neh, but

Caleb the

son of

Hezron.

¹³ Gen. 49. 3.

Ex. 22. 29.

Rom. 8. 9.

Heb. 12. 23.

¹⁴ Called

father, be-

cause his

descen-

dants

pe-pled

that city.

¹⁵ Josh. 15. 24.

1 Sam. 23.

19.

¹⁶ ch. 3. 21.

Ezra 2. 21.

35.

awarded to him in that tribe, in consequence of his valiant and patriotic exploits. This arrangement, however, took place previous to the law (Num. xxxvi.) by which it was enacted that heiresses were to marry in their own tribe. But this instance of Jair shows, that in the case of a man obtaining an inheritance in another tribe, the law required him to become thoroughly incorporated with it, as a representative of the family through which the inheritance was received. He had been adopted into Manasseh, and it would never have been imagined that he was other than 'a son of Manasseh' naturally, had not this passage given information supplementary to that of the passage in Numbers. 23. he took—rather 'he had taken.' This statement is accounting for his acquisition of so large a territory: he got it by right of conquest from the former possessors. Kenath. This place, along with its group of surrounding villages, was gained by Nobah, one of Jair's officers sent by him to capture it (Num. xxxii. 1, 2). All these belonged to the sons of Machir. In their number Jair is included, as having completely identified himself, by his marriage and residence in Gilead, with the tribe of Manasseh. 24. Caleb-ephratah—so called from uniting the names of husband and wife (v. 19), and supposed to be the same as was afterwards called Bethlehem-ephratah. Ashur the father of Tekoa (2 Sam. xiv. 2-4). He is called the father, either from his being the first founder, or perhaps the ruler, of the city.

31. the children of Sheshan; Ahlai [אָהַלַי]—sons, *i. e.*, offspring.

34. Sheshan had no sons, but daughters—

either he had no sons alive at his death, or his family consisted wholly of daughters, of whom Ahlai, v. 31, was one, she being specially mentioned on account of the domestic relation about to be noticed. This view is adopted by Junius and Tremellius. Wall, followed by Lord A. Hervey, think that Ahlai = Attai, v. 36, the son of Sheshan's daughter, and grandfather to Zabab. A third conjecture is, that Ahlai was the Hebrew name given to Jarha on his circumcision, signifying 'brother to me' [אָהַלַי], to express his adoption into the family of Israel—an example of a son-in-law reckoned as a son (see further, Lord A. Hervey, 'Genealogies,' p. 34). 35. Sheshan gave his daughter to Jarha his servant to wife. The adoption and marriage of a foreign slave in the family where he is serving is far from being a rare or extraordinary occurrence in Eastern countries. It is thought, however, by some, amongst whom is Michaelis, to have been a connection not sanctioned by the law of Moses. But this is not a well-founded objection, as the history of the Jews furnishes not a few examples of foreign proselytes in the same manner obtaining an inheritance in Israel; and doubtless Jarha had previously embraced the Jewish faith in place of the grovelling idolatries of his native Egypt. In such a case, therefore, there could be no legal difficulty. Being a foreign slave, he had no inheritance in a different tribe to injure by this connection; while his marriage with Sheshan's daughter led to his adoption into the tribe of Judah, as well as his becoming heir of the family property.

42. the sons of Caleb—(cf. vv. 18, 25.) The sons here noticed were the fruit of his union with a

45 and Rekem begat Shammai. And the son of Shammai was Maon: and
 46 Maon was the father of Beth-zur. And Ephah, Caleb's concubine, bare
 47 Haran, and Moza, and Gazez: and Haran begat Gazez. And the sons of
 Jahdai; Regem, and Jotham, and Geshan, and Pelet, and Ephah, and
 48, Shaaph. Maachah, Caleb's concubine, bare Sheber, and Tirhanah. She
 49 bare also Shaaph the father of Madmannah, Sheva the father of Mach-
 benah, and the father of Gibeaz: and the daughter of Caleb was ²Achsa.
 50 These were the sons of Caleb the son of Hur, the first-born of Ephratah;
 51 Shobal the father of Kirjath-jearim, Salma the father of Beth-lehem,
 52 Hareph the father of Beth-gader. And Shobal the father of Kirjath-
 53 jearim had sons; ¹³Haroeh, and ¹⁴half of the Manahethites. And the
 families of Kirjath-jearim; the Ithrites, and the Puhites, and the Shu-
 mathites, and the Mishraitites: of them came the Zareathites, and the
 54 Eshtaulites. The sons of Salma; Beth-lehem, and the Netophathites,
¹⁵Ataroth, the house of Joab, and half of the Manahethites, the Zorites.
 55 And the families of the scribes which dwelt at Jabez; the Tirathites, the
 Shimeathites, and Sucathites. These are the Kenites ^athat came of
 Hemath, the father of the house of ^bRechab.
3 NOW these were the sons of David, which were born unto him in
 Hebron: the first-born ^aAmnon, of Ahinoam the ^bJezreelitess; the
 2 second, ¹Daniel, of Abigail the Carmelitess; the third, Absalom the son
 of Maachah the daughter of Talmi king of Geshur; the fourth, Adoni-

B. C. 1171.
^a Josh. 15. 17.
 Or,
 Reaiah,
 ch. 4. 2.
¹⁴ Or, half
 of the Me-
 nuchites,
 or, Hasi-
 hamme-
 nuchoth.
¹⁵ Or, Asar-
 ites, or,
 crowns of
 the house
 of Joab
^a Gen. 15. 9.
 Num. 10. 20-
 32.
 Judg. 1. 16.
^b 2 Ki. 10. 15.
 Jer. 37. 2.
 CHAP. 3.
^a 2 Sam. 3. 2.
^b Josh. 15. 50.
 1 Or,
 Chieab,
 2 Sam. 3. 3.

third wife. 49. the daughter of Caleb was Achsa. We learn from Josh. xv. 16 that Caleb the spy had a daughter called by this name; and according to this genealogical record there was an elder Caleb, or Chelubai (v. 9), two generations earlier, who had a daughter Achsa. Lord Hervey seems to be of opinion that the register is here confused, and doubts the existence of an early Caleb. But there seems to be two distinct pedigrees traced in this passage in direct succession—of Caleb the brother of Jerahmeel, and Caleb the son of Hur, whose descent from the former Caleb is mentioned, v. 19: cf. ch. xi. 50. There is a considerable obscurity hanging over the origin of Caleb; and strong arguments are adduced to prove that he was a foreigner, who had formed a connection with the house of Hur, and was reckoned in the genealogies of Judah from his acquisition of land within the territory of that tribe (see on Josh. xv. 13). Lord Hervey, however, maintains that there is only one Caleb, the brother of Jerahmeel (v. 42) being declared to be the father of Achsa (v. 49); and this conclusion appears to him confirmed by v. 50, which is like the summing up of the preceding statement, describing Caleb as the son of Hur.

50. Shobal the father of Kirjath-jearim—or founder. 51. Salma—or Salmon (Ruth iv. 20, 21), son of Nahshon, prince of the children of Judah, and founder or chief man of Beth-lehem. Kennicott suggests that Salma and Salmon are two different persons. But his opinion is unsupported. A greater difficulty is felt with regard to the genealogy, which appears to be so different in this passage from that described, v. 11, as to create a belief that the Salma mentioned there is the name of two separate individuals. But a reference to what is said on the word "begat" (ch. i. 1), will show that, as it is not meant here that Salma was the literal son of Caleb, there is really no discrepancy between the two passages. Hareph the father of Beth-gader. This is a third descendant of Caleb. He was founder or ruler of a town of Judah, which is supposed by Porter to be Gederah, in the Shephelah (Josh. xv. 36); and by Grove to be Geder, in the extreme

south [Septuagint, Ἀριππαθη Βεθγεδάρ]. 53. the families of Kirjath-jearim; the Ithrites [יתרי], the Ithrite], and the Puhites [פיהי], the Puthite], and the Shumathites [שמתהי], the Shumathite], and the Mishraitites [מישרית], the Mishraite]. These four families, or branches of population, went from their parent residence of Kirjath-jearim to colonize small towns or villages in the neighbourhood. From the latter sprang, in process of time, the new townships of Zorah and Eshtaol. 54. The sons of Salma; Beth-lehem, and the Netophathites—Hebrew, singular, Netophah; seems to have been near Beth-lehem. Ataroth, the house of Joab [עקרו בית יואב], crowns of the house of Joab; a city in Judah; Septuagint, Ἀταρόθ οἶκον Ἰωάβ], and half of the Manahethites [מינתהי], the Manahethite; Septuagint, ἡμισὺ τῆς Μαλαθί; Alexandrine, τῆς Μανὰθ]. The other half is represented, v. 52, to have sprung from Shobal. The place or places referred to are unknown. Zorites—the place unknown [Septuagint, Ἡσαοί]. 55. the families of the scribes—either civil or ecclesiastical officers of a Kenite origin, who are here classed with the tribe of Judah, not as being descended from it, but as dwelling within its territory, and in a measure incorporated with its people. Jabez—a place in Judah (ch. iv. 9). Kenites that came of Hemath—who settled in Judah; and were thus distinguished from another division of the Kenite clan which dwelt in Manasseh (Judg. iv. 11).

CHAP. III. 1-9.—SONS OF DAVID.
 1. Now these . . . which were born . . . in Hebron. It is of consequence, for the proper understanding of events in the domestic history of David, to bear in mind the place and time of his sons' birth. The eldest son, born after his father's accession to the sovereign authority, is, according to Eastern notions, the proper heir to the throne. And hence the natural aspirations of ambition in Amnon, who was long unaware of the alienation of the crown, and could not be easily reconciled to the claims of a younger brother being placed above his own (see on 2 Sam. iii.

- 3 jah the son of Haggith; the fifth, Shephatiah of Abital; the sixth, 4 Ithream, by ^cEglah his wife. *These* six were born unto him in Hebron; and ^dthere he reigned seven years and six months: and ^ein Jerusalem 5 he reigned thirty and three years. And ^fthese were born unto him in Jerusalem: ²Shimea, and Shobab, and Nathan, and ⁹Solomon, four, of 6 ³Bath-shua the daughter of ⁴Ammiel: Ibhar also, and ⁵Elishama, and 7 Eliphelet, and Nogah, and Nepheg, and Japhia, and Elishama, and 9 ⁶Eliada, and Eliphelet, ^hnine. *These were* all the sons of David, besides the sons of the concubines, and ⁱTamar their sister.
- 10 And Solomon's son was ⁷Rehoboam, ⁷Abia his son, Asa his son, 11 Jehoshaphat his son, Joram his son, Ahaziah his son, Joash his son, 12 Amaziah his son, Azariah his son, Jotham his son, Ahaz his son, Heze- 14 kiah his son, Manasseh his son, Amon his son, Josiah his son.
- 15 And the sons of Josiah were, the first-born Jehohanah, the second Jehoiakim, the third Zedekiah, the fourth Shallum.
- 16 And the sons of ^kJehoiakim; Jeconiah his son, Zedekiah ^lhis son.
- 17, And the sons of Jeconiah; Assir, ⁸Salathiel ^mhis son, Malchiram also, 18 and Pedaiiah, and Shenazar, Jecamiah, Hoshama, and Nedabiah.
- 19 And the sons of Pedaiiah were ⁿZerubbabel, and Shimei: and the sons of Zerubbabel; Meshullam, and Hananiah, and Shelomith their sister: 20 and Hashubah, and Ohel, and Berechiah, and Hasadiah, Jushab-hesed, five.

B. C. 10. 3.

^c 2 Sam. 3. 5.^d 2 Sam. 2. 11.^e 2 Sam. 5. 5.^f ch. 14. 4.^g Cr.

Shammua.

^h 2 Sam. 12. 24.³ Cr. Bath-

sheb u.

⁴ Cr. Eliam.⁵ Cr.

Elishua.

⁶ Cr. Beeli-

ada,

ch. 11. 7.

^h 2 Sam. 5. 14.ⁱ 2 Sam. 13. 1.^j 1 Ki. 11. 43.⁷ Cr.

Abijam,

1 Ki. 15. 1.

^k Matt. 1. 11.^l 2 Ki. 24. 17.^m Being his

successor.

⁸ Shealtiel.ⁿ Matt. 1. 12.⁹ Ezra 3. 2.

1-5). 3. Eglah his wife—supposed to be another name of Michal, who, though she had no son after her mockery of David for dancing before the ark, might have had one previous to that time. She has the title of wife appended to her name, because she was his proper wife; and the mention of her name last probably arose from the circumstance that, having been withdrawn from David and married to another husband, but afterwards restored, she had in reality become the last of his wives. 5. of Bath-shua the daughter of Ammiel—or Bath-sheba (2 Sam. xi. 3), and there her father is called Eliam. Of course, Solomon was not her 'only son;' but he is called so, Prov. iv. 3, from the distinguished affection of which he was the object, and though the eldest, is named the last of Bath-sheba's children. 6. Elishama, and Eliphelet—two sons of the same name are twice mentioned (v. 8). They were the children of different mothers, and had probably some title or epithet appended by which the one was distinguished from the other. Or it might be that the former two were dead, and their names were given to sons afterwards born, to preserve their memories. 8. nine. The number of David's sons born after his removal to Jerusalem was eleven (2 Sam. v. 14), but only nine are mentioned here—two of them being omitted, either in consequence of their early deaths, or of their leaving no issue.

10-16.—HIS LINE TO ZEDEKIAH.

10. Solomon's son was Rehoboam, &c. David's line is here drawn down to the captivity, through a succession of good and bad, but still influential and celebrated, monarchs. It has rarely happened that a crown has been transmitted from father to son, in lineal descent, for seventeen reigns. But this was the promised reward of David's piety. There is, indeed, observable some vacillation towards the close of this period, the crown passing from one brother to another, and even from uncle to nephew—a sure sign of disorderly times and a disjointed government.

15. Zedekiah—is called the son of Josiah, cf. Jer. i. 3; xxxvii. 1, but, 2 Chr. xxxvi. 19, he is described as the brother of Jehoiachin, who was

the son of Jehoiachim, and consequently the grand-son of Josiah. Words expressive of affinity or relationship are used with great latitude in the Hebrew. Shallum. No king of this name is mentioned in the history of Josiah's sons (2 Ki. xiv. and xxiii.), but there is a notice of Shallum, the son of Josiah, Jer. xxii. 11, who reigned in the stead of his father, and who is generally supposed to be Jehoahaz, a younger son, here called the fourth, of Josiah.

17-24.—SUCCESSORS OF JECONIAH.

17. the sons of Jeconiah; Assir. This word does occur as the name of a person, Exod. vi. 24; ch. vi. 22, 23. But *Bertheaui* suggests that Assir is joined to Jeconiah, and then, being taken as a common noun, the translation will be, 'Jeconiah the captive or prisoner' (cf. Isa. x. 4; xxiv. 22; xlii. 7). This record of his condition was added to show that Salathiel was born during the captivity in Babylon (cf. Matt. i. 12). Jeconiah was written childless (Jer. xxii. 30)—a prediction which (as the words that follow explain) meant that this unfortunate monarch should have no son succeeding him on the throne. 18. Malchiram also. As far as Jeconiah, everything is plain; but there is reason to suspect that the text in the subsequent verses has been dislocated and disarranged. The object of the sacred historian is to trace the royal line through Zerubbabel, yet, according to the present reading, the genealogical stem cannot be drawn from Jeconiah downwards. The following arrangement of the text is given as removing all difficulty (*Davidson's* 'Hermeneutics'):—V. 17. And the sons of Jeconiah the captive; Salathiel (asked of God) (Shealtiel, Ezra iii. 2; Neh. xii. 1; Hagg. i. 12, 14; ii. 2) his son: v. 18. And the sons of Salathiel; Zerubbabel (sown, i. e., begotten, in Babylon—who was the direct son of Pedaiiah; but omitting several intermediate links, is called the son of Salathiel, Matt. i. 12), and Shimei (re-nowned); and the sons of Zerubbabel; Meshullam (friend—i. e., of God), Hananiah (graciously given of God), and Shelomith (pacific) their sister. V. 19. And Hashubah (esteemed), and Ohel, and Berechiah (blessed of Jehovah), and Hasadiah (beloved of God), Jushab-hezed (whose love is re-

- 21 And the sons of Hananiah; Pelatiah, and Jesaiah: the sons of Rephaiah, the sons of Arnan, the sons of Obadiah, the sons of Shechaniah.
- 22 And the sons of Shechaniah; Shemaiah: and the sons of Shemaiah; ^oHattush, and Igeal, and Bariah, and Neariah, and Shaphat, six.
- 23 And the sons of Neariah; Elioenai, and ⁹Hezekiah, and Azrikam, three.
- 24 And the sons of Elioenai were Hodaiah, and Eliashib, and Pelaiah, and Akkub, and Johanan, and Dalaiah, and Anani, seven.
- 4 THE sons of Judah; ^aPharez, Hezron, and ¹Carmi, and Hur, and ²Shobal. And ²Reaiah the son of Shobal begat Jahath; and Jahath begat Ahumai, and Lahad. These are the families of the Zorathites.
- 3 And these were of the father of Etam; Jezreel, and Ishma, and Idbash: and the name of their sister was Hazeleponi: and Penuel the father of Gedor, and Ezer the father of Hushah. These are the sons of Hur, the first-born of Ephrath, the father of Beth-lehem.
- 5 And Ashur the father of Tekoa had two wives, Helah and Naarah.
- 6 And Naarah bare him Ahuzam, and Hephher, and Temeni, and Haahash-tari. These were the sons of Naarah. And the sons of Helah were
- 7 Zereth, and Jezoar, and Ethnan. And Coz begat Anub, and Zobebah, and the families of Aharhel the son of Harum.
- 9 And Jabez was ^bmore honourable than his brethren: and his mother
- 10 called his name ³Jabez, saying, Because ^cI bare him with sorrow. And Jabez ^dcalled on the God of Israel, saying, ⁴Oh that thou wouldst bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldst ⁵keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me! And God ^egranted him that which he requested.

B. C. 10 3.
^o Ezra 8. 2.
⁹ Hiskijahu.
CHAP. 4.
^a Gen. 38. 29.
Gen. 48. 12.
¹ Or,
Chelubai.
ch. 2. 9.
or. Ca'eb,
ch. 2. 18.
² Or,
Haroech,
ch. 2. 52.
^b Gen. 31. 19.
Ps. 112. 6.
Iro 10. 7.
³ That is,
Sorrowful.
^c Gen. 3. 16.
^d Job 12. 4.
Job 22. 27.
Isa. 12. 4.
^e 1 Cor. 1. 2.
⁴ If thou
wilt, &c.
⁵ do me.
⁶ Ps. 65. 2.
Ps. 66. 19.
50.
Ps. 110. 1, 2.
Matt. 7. 7-11.
Eph. 3. 7, 0.

turned). 20. And Malchiram, and Rephaiah, and Shenazar, Jecamiah, Hoshana, and Nedabiah. 21. The sons of Hananiah; Pelatiah and Jesaiah: the sons of Rephaiah; his son Arnan, his son Obadiah (worshipper of Jehovah), his son Shechaniah (dwelling with Jehovah).

22. the sons of Shemaiah—or Shimeai (v. 19: cf. Zech. xii. 13).

CHAP. IV. 1-8. — POSTERITY OF JUDAH BY CALEB THE SON OF HUR.

1. The sons of Judah—i. e., the descendants, for with the exception of Pharez, none of those here noticed were his immediate sons. Indeed, the others are mentioned solely to introduce the name of Shobal, whose genealogy the historian intended to trace (ch. ii. 52). 3. the name of their sister was Hazeleponi [הַזֵּלֶפּוֹנִי]—the Hazeleponite. 4. Penuel the father of Gedor—founder or chief man of Gedor, now Jedur, in the hill-country of Judah, rather more than twelve miles from Jerusalem (*Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' ii., p. 338). and Ezer the father of Hushah—a city of Judah (see on ch. xxvii. 11) [Septuagint, 'Orav']. These are the sons of Hur, the first-born of Ephrath, the father of Beth-lehem. It is difficult to determine the connection of Hur with this place, for in ch. ii. 50 Salma is said to be "the father of Beth-lehem." Hur was the eldest son of Ephrath, the elder Caleb's second wife (ch. ii. 19), so that Hur, as the legal heir of his father Caleb, had the best title to the name of "father of Beth-lehem," and Salma, who had property in that place, must have owed his connection with it either to intermarrying into the family, or to his being, perhaps, a younger brother.

9-20.—OF JABEZ AND HIS PRAYER.

9. Jabez [as if for צַבִּי, he causes pain; Septuagint, 'Iyabhs]—was, as many think, the son of Coz, or Kenaz, and is here eulogized for his sincere and fervent piety, as well, perhaps, as for some

public and patriotic works which he performed. The Jewish writers affirm that he was an eminent doctor in the law, whose reputation drew so many scribes around him that a town was called by his name (ch. ii. 55); and to the piety of his character this passage bears ample testimony. The memory of the critical circumstances which marked his birth was perpetuated in his name (cf. Gen. xxxv. 15); and yet, in the development of his high talents, or distinguished worth in after-life, his mother must have found a satisfaction and delight that amply compensated for all her early trials. The prayer of his which is here recorded, and which, like Jacob's, is in the form of a vow (Gen. xxviii. 20), seems to have been uttered when he was entering on an important or critical service, for the successful execution of which he placed confidence neither on his own nor his people's prowess, but looked anxiously for the aid and blessing of God. 10. thou wouldst keep me from evil [יִשְׁמְרֵנִי מִכָּל עוֹלָה]—thou wouldst do so as abstain; i. e., thou wouldst abstain from evil. Others, says *Gesenius*, render less well, 'thou wouldst do me from evil—i. e., keep me from harm.' The enterprise was in all probability the expulsion of the Canaanites from the territory he occupied; and as this was a war of extermination, which God himself had commanded, His blessing could be the more reasonably asked and expected in preserving them from all the evils to which the undertaking might expose him. In the words "that it may not grieve me," and which might be more literally rendered, 'that I may have no more sorrow,' there is an allusion to the meaning of his name, Jabez, signifying grief; and the import of this petition is, let me not experience the grief which my name implies, and which my sins may well produce. God granted him that which he requested. Whatever was the kind of undertaking which roused his anxieties, Jabez enjoyed a

- 11 And Chelub the brother of Shuah begat Mehir, which *was* the father
 12 of Eshton. And Eshton begat Beth-rapha, and Paseah, and Tehinnah
 13 the father of ⁶Irnahash. These *are* the men of Rechah. And the sons
 of Kenaz; ⁷Othniel, and Seraiah: and the sons of Othniel; ⁷Hathath.
 14 And Meonothai begat Ophrah: and Seraiah begat Joab, the father of
 15 ⁹the ⁸valley of ⁹Charashim; for they were craftsmen. And the sons of
 Caleb the son of Jephunneh; Iru, Elah, and Naam: and the sons of
 16 Elah, ¹⁰even Kenaz. And the sons of Jehaleleel; Ziph, and Ziphah,
 17 Tiria, and Asareel. And the sons of Ezra *were* Jether, and Mered, and
 Ephra, and Jalon: and she bare Miriam, and Shammai, and Ishbah the
 18 father of Eshtemoa. And his wife ¹¹Jehudijah bare Jered the father of
 Gedor, and Heber the father of Socho, and Jekuthiel the father of
 Zanoah. And these *are* the sons of Bithiah the daughter of Pharaoh,
 19 which Mered took. And the sons of *his* wife ¹²Hodiah, the sister of
 Naham, the father of Keilah the Garmite, and Eshtemoa the Maacha-
 20 thite. And the sons of Shimon *were* Amnon, and Rinnah, Ben-hanan,
 and Tilon. And the sons of Ishi *were* Zoheth, and Ben-zoheth.
 21 The sons of Shelah ⁴the son of Judah *were* Er, the father of Lecah,
 and Laadah, the father of Mareshah, and the families of the house of
 22 them that wrought fine linen, of the house of Ashbea, and Jokim, and
 the men of Chozeba, and Joash, and Saraph, who had the ⁴dominion in
 23 Moab, and Jashubi-lehem. And *these are* ancient things. These *were*
 the potters, and those that dwelt among plants and hedges: there they
 dwelt with the king for his work.
 24 The sons of Simeon *were* ¹³Nemuel, and Jamin, ¹⁴Jarib, Zerach, and
 25 Shaul: Shallum his son, Mibsam his son, Mishma his son. And the sons

B. C. 1500.

⁶ Or, the city

of Nahash.

⁷ Josh 15. 17.

Judg 1. 13.

⁷ Or, Ha'h-

ath, and

Meono-

thai, who

begat, et c.

⁸ Neh 11. 35.⁸ (r, in-

habitants

of the

valley.

⁹ That is,

Craftsmen.

¹⁰ Or,

Uknaz.

¹¹ Or, the

Jewess,

¹² Or, Jehu-

dijah,

mentioned

before.

⁴ Gen 31. 1.⁴ 2 Sam. 8. 2.¹³ Or,

Jemuel.

Gen. 46. 10.

Ex. 6. 15.

Num 26 12.

¹⁴ Or, Jachin,

Zohar.

remakable degree of prosperity, and God, in his instance, proved that He was not only the hearer, but the answerer of prayer.

13. the sons of Kenaz—the grandfather of Caleb, who from that relationship is called a Kenezite (Num. xxxii. 12; Josh. xiv. 4). 14. Joab, the father of the valley of Charashim (צַרְשִׁים, artificial works)—the father of the valley of works of art, or the valley of craftsmen, as the word denotes. They dwelt together, according to a custom which, independently of any law, extensively prevails in Eastern countries for persons of the same trade to inhabit the same street or the same quarter, and to follow the same occupation from father to son through many generations. Their occupation was probably that of carpenters, and the valley where they lived seems to have been in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem (Neh. xi. 35). 17. she bare Miriam. It is difficult, as the verses stand at present, to see who is meant. The following re-adjustment of the text clears away the obscurity:—‘These are the sons of Bithiah (בִּיתְיָה, daughter, i. e., worshipper, of Jehovah; Septuagint, Βεθία), the daughter of Pharaoh, whom Mered took, and she bare Miriam, &c., and his wife Jehudijah bare Jezreel,’ &c. 18. Jehudijah (יְהוּדִיָּה; Septuagint, Ἰουδα)—the Jewess, to distinguish her from his other wife, who was an Egyptian. This passage records a very interesting fact, the marriage of an Egyptian princess to a descendant of Caleb. The marriage must have taken place in the wilderness. The barriers of a different national language and national religion kept the Hebrews separate from the Egyptians; but they did not wholly prevent intimacies, and even occasional intermarriages between private individuals of the two nations. Ere such unions, however, could be sanctioned, the Egyptian party must have renounced idolatry, and this daughter of Pharaoh, as appears from her name, had be-

come a convert to the worship of the God of Israel.

21. 23.—POSTERITY OF SHELAH.

21. Laadah, the father . . . of the house of them that wrought fine linen. Here again is another incidental evidence that in very early times certain trades were followed by particular families among the Hebrews, apparently in hereditary succession. Their knowledge of the art of linen manufacture had been most probably acquired in Egypt, where the duty of bringing up families to the occupation of their forefathers was a compulsory obligation; whereas in Israel, as in many parts of Asia to this day, it was optional, though common. 22. had the dominion in Moab (יְרֵכָה מוֹאָב, had possessions in Moab). And these are ancient things. This is a literal translation; but it seems a strange rendering, and besides, conveys a meaning that has no bearing on the record. The following interpretation is given in the Septuagint:—‘Sojourned in Moab, but returned to Beth-lehem and Adaberim-athekim. These and the inhabitants of Netaim and Gadera were potters, employed by the king (of Moab) in his own work.’ Gadera, or Gederoth, and Netaim belonged to the tribe of Judah, and lay on the south-east border of the Philistines’ territory (Josh. xv. 36; 2 Chr. xxviii. 18). 23. and those that dwelt among plants and hedges (צַמְחֵי וְהֶגְדֵּי, and those that were among plants and an enclosure—i. e., were gardeners).

24. 43.—OF SIMÉON.

24. The sons of Simeon. They are classed along with those of Judah, as their possession was partly taken out of the extensive territory of the latter (Josh. xix. 1). The difference in several particulars of the genealogy given here from that given in other passages is occasioned by some of the persons mentioned having more than one

27 of Mishma; Hamuel his son, Zacchur his son, Shimei his son. And Shimei had sixteen sons and six daughters; but his brethren had not many children, neither did all their family multiply, ¹⁵like to the children
28 of Judah. And they dwelt at Beer-sheba, and Moladah, and Hazar-
29 shual, and at ¹⁶Bilhal, and at Ezem, and at ¹⁷Tolad, and at Bethuel, and
31 at Hormah, and at Ziklag, and at Beth-mareaboth, and ¹⁸Hazar-susim,
and at Beth-birci, and at Shaaraim. These were their cities unto the
32 reign of David. And their villages were ¹⁹Etam, and Ain, Rimmon, and
33 Tochen, and Ashan, five cities: and all their villages that were round
about the same cities, unto ²⁰Baal. These were their habitations, and
34 ²¹their genealogy. And Meshobab, and Jamelech, and Joshah the son of
35 Amaziah, and Joel, and Jehu the son of Josibiah, the son of Seraiah, the
36 son of Asiel, and Elioenai, and Jaakobah, and Jeshohaiah, and Asaiah,
37 and Adiel, and Jesimiel, and Benaiah, and Ziza the son of Shippi, the son
of Allon, the son of Jedaiah, the son of Shimri, the son of Shemaiah:
38 these ²²mentioned by their names were princes in their families; and the
house of their fathers increased greatly.

39 And they went to the entrance of Gedor, even unto the east side of the
40 valley, to seek pasture for their flocks. And they found fat pasture and
good, and the land was wide, and quiet, and peaceable; for they of ³Ham
41 had dwelt there of old. And these written by name came in the days of
Hezekiah king of Judah, and smote ²their tents, and the habitations that
were found there, and destroyed them utterly unto this day, and dwelt
42 in their rooms; because there was pasture there for their flocks. And
some of them, even of the sons of Simeon, five hundred men, went to
mount Seir, having for their captains Pelatiah, and Neariah, and Re-
43 phaiah, and Uzziel, the sons of Ishi. And they smote ⁴the rest of the
Amalekites that were escaped, and dwelt there unto this day.

5 NOW the sons of Reuben, the first-born of Israel, (for ^ahe was the
first-born; but, forasmuch as he ^bdefiled his father's bed, ^chis birthright
was given unto the sons of Joseph the son of Israel; and the genealogy
2 is not to be reckoned after the birthright. For ^aJudah prevailed above
his brethren, and of him came the ^cchief ¹ruler; but the birthright was
3 Joseph's: the sons, I say, of ³Reuben the first-born of Israel were
4 Hanoch, and Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi. The sons of Joel; Shemaiah his

B. C. 13⁰.¹⁵ unto.

Gen. 49. 7.

¹⁶ Or, Balah,

Josh. 11. 3.

¹⁷ Or,

Eltolad,

Josh. 19. 4.

¹⁸ Or,

Hazar-

susah,

Josh. 19. 5.

¹⁹ Or, Ether.²⁰ Or, Baal-

at'-beer.

²¹ Or, as they

divided

themselves

by nations

among

them.

²² coming.^j Gen. 9. 22.

Gen. 10. 6.

Is. 78. 51.

^k 2 Ki. 18. 8.^l 1 Sam. 15. 8.^m 1 Sam. 30.

17.

ⁿ 2 Sam. 8. 12.

CHAP. 5.

^a Gen. 29. 32.

Gen. 49. 3.

^b Gen. 35. 22.^c Gen. 48. 15.

Deut. 21. 17.

^d Gen. 49. 3.

Ps. 69. 7.

^e 1 Sam. 16. 1.

Mic. 5. 2.

Matt. 2. 6.

^f Or, prince.^g Gen. 46. 9.

Ex. 6. 14.

Num. 16. 5.

name. 27. his brethren had not many children
—(see on Num. i. 22; xxvi. 14.) 28. And they
dwelt at Beer-sheba, &c.—(see on Josh. xix.)
31. and at Beth-birei [בֵּית בִּירַי]; supposed by Wilton
(‘Negeb,’ p. 216) to have been originally בֵּית לֵבָאוֹת,
or בֵּית לֵבָאוֹת, house of the lions = Beth-lebaath, the
dwelling of lionesses (Josh. xix. 6). These were
their cities unto the reign of David. In conse-
quence of the sloth or cowardice of the Simeonites,
some of the cities within their allotted territory
were only nominally theirs, but were never taken
from the Philistines until David's time, when, the
Simeonites having forfeited all claim to them,
he assigned them to his own tribe of Judah
(1 Sam. xxvii. 6). 32. their villages were Etam
—or Ether (Josh. xix. 7). Tochen. There is no
trace of this place in the parallel list of Joshua.
[The Septuagint has Θοκκά in this passage, and
Θαλαῖα in Joshua.]

38. increased greatly. 39. And they went to
the entrance of Gedor [probably not גֵּדוֹר, but
גֵּרָר, Gerar; Septuagint, Γέραρα]. Simeon having
only a part of the land of Judah, they were forced
to seek accommodation elsewhere; but their
establishment in the new and fertile pastures of
Gerar soon proved inadequate, and a new colony
of them effected by force a settlement on mount

Seir. 43. dwelt there unto this day. Many
writers, amongst whom are the commentators
Patrick and Poole, consider these last words to
mean that the Simeonite settlers on mount Seir
escaped the captivity of the other Israelites, and
were still in undisturbed possession of mount
Seir when the books of Chronicles were com-
piled after the restoration. ‘There is nothing,
therefore, improbable,’ says Wilton (‘Negeb,’ p.
66), ‘in the opinion that the Fellâhin of Wady
Mûsa are really descended from that little band of
Simeonite adventurers, and that thus the pre-
diction of the prophet Obadiah is even now
receiving a primary fulfilment.’

CHAP. V. 1-10.—THE LINE OF REUBEN.

1. Now the sons of Reuben. In proceeding to
give this genealogy, the sacred historian states in
a parenthesis (vs. 1, 2) the reason why it was not
placed first, as Reuben was the eldest son of
Jacob. The birthright, which by a foul crime he
had forfeited, implied not only dominion, but a
double portion (Dent. xxi. 17); and both of these
were transferred to Joseph, whose two sons hav-
ing been adopted as the children of Jacob (Gen.
xlviii. 5), received each an allotted portion, as
forming two distinct tribes in Israel. Joseph,
then, was entitled to the precedence; and yet, as
his posterity were not mentioned first, the sacred

- 5 son, Gog his son, Shimei his son, Micah his son, Reaia his son, Baal his
 6 son, Beerah his son, whom ²Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria carried away
captive: he was prince of the Reubenites.
 7 And his brethren by their families, (when ^othe genealogy of their gen-
 8 erations was reckoned,) *were* the chief, Jeiel, and Zechariah, and Bela
 the son of Azaz, the son of ³Shema, the son of Joel, who dwelt ^hin Aroer,
 9 even unto Nebo and Baal-meon: and eastward he inhabited unto the
 entering in of the wilderness from the river Euphrates; because their
 10 cattle were multiplied ⁱin the land of Gilead. And in the days of Saul
 they made war with ^jthe Hagarites, who fell by their hand: and they
 dwelt in their tents ⁴throughout all the east *land* of Gilead.
 11 And the children of Gad dwelt over against them, in the land of
 12 ^kBashan, unto Salcah: Joel the chief, and Shapham the next, and Jaanai,
 13 and Shaphat in Bashan. And their brethren, of the house of their
 fathers, *were* Michael, and Meshullam, and Sheba, and Jorai, and Jachan,
 14 and Zia, and Heber, seven. These *are* the children of Abihail the son of
 Huri, the son of Jaroah, the son of Gilead, the son of Michael, the son
 15 of Jeshishai, the son of Jahdo, the son of Buz; Ahi the son of Abdiel,
 16 the son of Guni, chief of the house of their fathers. And they dwelt in
 Gilead in Bashan, and in her towns, and in all the suburbs of 'Sharon,
 17 upon ⁵their borders. All these were reckoned by genealogies in the
 days of ^mJotham king of Judah, and in the days of ⁿJeroboam king of
 Israel.
 18 The sons of Reuben, and the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh,
⁶of valiant men, men able to bear buckler and sword, and to shoot with
 bow, and skilful in war, *were* four and forty thousand seven hundred and
 19 threescore, that went out to the war. And they made war with the
 20 Hagarites, with ^oJetur, and Nephish, and Nodab. And they were helped

B. C. 1300.

² Or,
Tiglath-
pileser.
2 Ki. 15, 21.
2 Ki. 16, 7.
³ ver 17.

⁴ Or,
Shemaiah,
ver. 4.

⁵ Deut. 22, 49.
Josh. 13, 15.

⁶ Num. 32, 1.
Josh. 22, 9.

⁷ Sorg 4, 1.
Mic. 7, 14.

⁸ Gen. 25, 12.
⁹ upon all
the face
of the east.

¹⁰ Josh. 13, 11,
24, 25.

¹¹ ch. 27, 29.
Song 2, 1.
Isa. 35, 2.

¹² Isa. 65, 10.
¹³ their
goings
forth.

¹⁴ 2 Ki. 15, 5.
¹⁵ 2 Ki. 14, 16,
22.

¹⁶ sons of
valour.
¹⁷ Gen. 25, 15.
ch. 1, 31.

historian judged it necessary to explain that 'the genealogy was not to be reckoned after the birth-right,' but with reference to a superior honour and privilege that had been conferred on Judah—not the man, but the tribe—whereby it was invested with the pre-eminence over all the other tribes, and out of it was to spring David, with his royal lineage, and especially the great Messiah (Heb. vii. 14). These were the two reasons why, in the order of enumeration, the genealogy of Judah is introduced before that of Reuben. 6. Beerah his son, whom Tiglath-pileser . . . carried away captive. There appear to have been carryings away of the people of Israel, the first by Pul (v. 23), the second by Tiglath-pileser (v. 6, 23), and the third by Salmeser (2 Ki. xvii. 6; xviii. 11). All these, however, previous to the final downfall of Samaria, were partial deportations, being confined to the inhabitants of the towns and villages which were the objects of Assyrian attack.

9. eastward he inhabited, &c. The settlement was on the east of Jordan, and the history of this tribe, which never took any part in the public affairs or movements of the nation, is comprised in 'the multiplication of their cattle in the land of Gilead,' in their 'wars with the Bedouin sons of Hagar,' and in the simple labours of pastoral life. They had the right of pasture over an extensive mountain-range, the great wilderness of Kedemoth (Deut. ii. 26) and the Euphrates being a security against their enemies. If their possession did not extend to this limit in the time of Moses or Joshua, it did in the reign of David; and it affords an unmistakeable proof of the increase of their herds and flocks when they pastured them as far eastward as the Euphrates. 10. And in the days of Saul they made war with the Hagarites, who fell by their hand. [The Septuagint has here,

instead of "with the Hagarites," *πρὸς τοὺς παροίκους*, with the neighbours.] Individual tribes often waged separate wars, and obtained successes over conterminous but hostile neighbours, by means of which they enlarged their territories, even in the reign of Saul.

11-26.—THE LINE OF GAD.

11. The children of Gad dwelt over against them. The genealogy of the Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh (v. 24) is given along with that of the Reubenites, as these three were associated in a separate colony. 16. Sharon. The term Sharon was applied as descriptive of any place of extraordinary beauty and productiveness. There were three places in Palestine so called. This Sharon lay east of the Jordan. upon their borders—i. e., of Gilead and Bashan. Gilead proper, or at least the largest part, belonged to the Reubenites; and Bashan, the greatest portion of it, belonged to the Manassites. The Gadites occupied an intermediate settlement on the land which lay upon their borders. 17. All these were reckoned . . . in the day of Jotham. His long reign and freedom from foreign wars, as well as intestine troubles, were favourable for taking a census of the people. and in the days of Jeroboam—the second of that name.

19. The Hagarites—or Hagarenes, originally synonymous with Ishmaelites (cf. Gen. xxi. 14, 21; xxxvii. 25), but afterwards applied to a particular tribe of the Arabs (cf. Ps. lxxiii. 6). Jetur. His descendants were called Itureans, and the country Auranitis, from Haouran, its chief city. These, who were skilled in archery, were invaded in the time of Joshua by a confederate army of the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half Manasseh, who, probably incensed by the frequent raids of those marauding neighbours, took reprisals in men and

- against them, and the Hagarites were delivered into their hand, and all that *were* with them: for they cried to God in the battle, and he was
 21 entreated of them; because they ²put their trust in him. And they ⁷took away their cattle; of their camels fifty thousand, and of sheep two hundred and fifty thousand, and of asses two thousand, and of ⁸men an hundred thousand. For there fell down many slain, because the war *was*
 22 ²of God. And they dwelt in their steads until ⁷the captivity.
 23 And the children of the half tribe of Manasseh dwelt in the land: they increased from Bashan unto Baal-hermon and Senir, and unto mount
 24 Hermon. And these *were* the heads of the house of their fathers, even Ephraim, and Ishi, and Eliel, and Aziel, and Jeremiah, and Hodaviah, and Jahdiel, mighty men of valour, ⁹famous men, and heads of the house of their fathers.
 25 And they ⁸transgressed against the God of their fathers, and went a-whoring after the gods of the people of the land, whom God destroyed
 26 before them. And the God of Israel stirred up the spirit of Pul king of Assyria, and the spirit of Tilgath-pilneser king of Assyria, and he carried them away, even the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh, and brought them unto Halah, and Habor, and Hara, and to the river Gozan, unto this day.
 6 THE sons of Levi; ⁴Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. And the sons of
 3 Kohath; Amram, Izhar, and Hebron, and Uzziel. And the children of Amram; Aaron, and Moses, and Miriam. The sons also of Aaron;
 4 ⁵Nadab, and Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. Eleazar begat Phinehas,
 5 Phinehas begat Abishua, and Abishua begat Bukki, and Bukki begat
 6 Uzzi, and Uzzi begat Zerariah, and Zerariah begat Meraioth, Meraioth
 8 begat Amariah, and Amariah begat Ahitub, and ⁶Ahitub begat Zadok,
 9 and ⁴Zadok begat Ahimaaaz, and Ahimaaaz begat Azariah, and Azariah
 10 begat Johanan, and Johanan begat Azariah, (he *it is that* ⁶executed the

cattle, dispossessed almost the whole of the original inhabitants, and colonized the district themselves. In fact, these four powerful Arabian nations entered into a great Bedonin alliance, at the head of which were the Hagarites and the Itureans, the descendants of Jetur, the tenth son of Ishmael, whose possessions lay in the Iturea of the Romans, the modern Jedur, to exterminate the trans-Jordanic tribes of the Hebrews. Nephish—or Naphish (Gen. xxv. 15; 1 Chr. i. 31) [Septuagint, *Ναφισάωφ*]. They were descended from the second-last son of Ishmael, but have not been identified with any existing Arab tribe. Nodab—sprang, according to *Jerome*, from Kedehmah, the twelfth son of Ishmael; but *Poole* inclines to think, from Nodab not being in the list of Ishmael's sons, that a grandson is referred to. The name Kedehmah is preserved in that of a town, Kedehma, on the gulf of the same name, situated in Hijron, on the Persian Gulf. Nodab is thought by some to be a *nom de guerre* from *nadab* (Arabian) *jaculatio, vibramen teli, et nomen tribus Arabicæ*, because the inhabitants of the district Kademah, on the Persian Gulf, were celebrated for their manufacture of spears. The distance need not appear too great to admit of their joining in the alliance; for even in the present day the remoteness of Syria from the Euphrates does not prevent the *Æneze* tribe from *feeding off*, every winter, the eight extensive wadys which lie between Ana and Tadmor, where a century ago they maintained a continual struggle with the Muwah, who were driven back into the desert near Aleppo (see further in *Foster's* 'Historical Geography of Arabia'). Divine Providence favoured, in a remarkable manner, the Hebrew army in this just war. 22. they dwelt in their steads until the captivity. It appears that

these acquisitions by conquest, which were made by the Reubenites, Gadites, and half tribe of Manasseh, reached to the banks of the Euphrates and the shores of the Persian Gulf, and were retained from the time of Saul until the period of the Assyrian captivity—*i. e.*, for about 300 years. This is an occurrence which, from its being incidentally recorded in a dry catalogue of genealogical names, is apt to be overlooked; but its important character, and the contiguity of the extended possessions of the trans-Jordanic tribes to the Euphrates, must have had great influence on their relations with Babylon.

26. the God of Israel stirred up the spirit of Pul—the Phal-luka of the Ninevite monuments (see on 2 Ki. xv. 19). and the spirit of Tilgath-pilneser—the son of the former. By them the trans-Jordanic tribes, including the other half of Manasseh settled in Galilee, were removed to Upper Media. This was the *first* captivity (2 Ki. xv. 29).

CHAP. VI. 1-48.—LINE OF THE PRIESTS.

5. Uzzi. It is supposed that, in his days, the high priesthood was, for unrecorded reasons, transferred from Eleazar's family to Ithamar's, in which it continued for several generations. 9. Ahimaaaz. *Lord A. Hervey* ('Genealogies')—'There is no evidence, beyond the assertion of *Josephus*, that he ever filled the office of high priest, and *Josephus* may have concluded that he did, merely because in this genealogy of the high priests he intervenes between Zadok and Azariah. Judging only from 1 Ki. iv. 2 compared with 1 Chr. vi. 10, we should conclude that Ahimaaaz died before his father Zadok, and that Zadok was succeeded by his grandson Azariah.' 10. he it is that executed the priest's office, &c. It is doubtful whether the

B C. 1500.

⁶ Ps. 22. 4, 5.
 Ps. 84. 11,
 12.

Jer. 17. 7, 8.
 Nah. 1. 7.
 Eph. 1. 12

⁷ led
 cap'ive

⁸ souls of
 men.
 Num. 31. 35.

⁹ Deut. 10. 1,
 4.

Josh. 10. 42.
 2 Chr 20. 15.
 2 Chr. 32. 8.

Rom. 8. 31.
⁷ 2 Ki. 15. 29.
 2 Ki. 17. 6.

⁹ men of
 names.
⁶ Deut. 32. 15.

Isa 1. 4.
 Jer. 5. 7.

CHAP. 6.
⁴ Gen. 46. 11.

⁶ Ex. 6. 13.
 Ex. 24. 1.
 Ex. 28. 1.

Lev. 10. 1.
 ch 24. 1.

⁶ 2 Sam 8. 7.
⁴ 2 Sam. 15.
 27.
 2 Sam. 17.
 17.
⁶ 2 Chr 2. 17.

11 priest's office ¹in the temple ²that Solomon built in Jerusalem:) and
 12 ³Azariah begat Amariah, and Amariah begat Ahitub, and Ahitub begat
 13 Zadok, and Zadok begat ⁴Shallum, and Shallum begat Hilkiah, and
 14 Hilkiah begat Azariah, and Azariah begat ⁵Seraiah, and Seraiah begat
 15 Jehozadak, and Jehozadak went *into captivity*, when ⁶the LORD carried
 away Judah and Jerusalem by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar.

16 The sons of Levi; ⁷Gershom, Kohath, and Merari. And these be the
 18 names of the sons of Gershom; Libni, and Shimei. And the sons of
 19 Kohath were Amram, and Izhar, and Hebron, and Uzziel. The sons of
⁸Merari; Mahli, and Mushi.

And these are the families of the Levites according to their fathers.
 20 Of Gershom; Libni his son, Jahath his son, Zimma his son, ⁹Joah
 22 his son, ¹⁰Iddo his son, Zerach his son, ¹¹Jeaterai his son. The sons of
 23 Kohath; ¹²Amminadab his son, Korah his son, Assir his son, Elkanah his
 24 son, and Ebiasaph his son, and Assir his son, Tahath his son, ¹³Uriel his
 25 son, Uziah his son, and Shaul his son. And the sons of Elkanah;
 26 ¹⁴Amasai, and Ahimoth. As for Elkanah: the sons of Elkanah; Zophai
 27 ¹⁵his son, and ¹⁶Nahath his son, ¹⁷Eliab his son, Jeroham his son, Elkanah
 28 his son. And the sons of Samuel; the first-born ¹⁸Vashni, and Abiah.
 29 The sons of Merari; Mahli, Libni his son, Shimei his son, Uzza his son,
 30 Shimea his son, Haggiah his son, Asaiah his son.

31 And these are they whom David set over the service of song in the
 32 house of the LORD, after that the ¹⁹ark had rest. And they ministered
 before the dwelling place of the tabernacle of the congregation with
 singing, until Solomon had built the house of the LORD in Jerusalem;
 and then they waited on their office according to their order.

33 And these are they that ²⁰waited with their children: of the sons of
 the Kohathites; Heman a singer, the son of Joel, the son of Shemuel,

person in favour of whom this testimony is borne be Azariah the grandfather or Azariah the grandson,—most probably the former. If the former, he is the same as Jehoiada, who rendered important public services (2 Ki. xi.); if the latter, it refers to the worthy and independent part he acted in resisting the unwarrantable encroachments of Uziah (2 Chr. xxvi. 17), in the temple that Solomon built—described in this particular manner to distinguish it from the second temple, which was in existence at the time when this history was written. 12. Ahitub begat Zadok. This succession of the same names as in *vr.* 7, 8 is suspicious, and as there is no historical record of a second Ahitub and a second Zadok, their insertion here is owing to the error of a copyist. 14. Azariah begat Seraiah. He filled the supreme pontifical office at the destruction of Jerusalem, and along with his deputy and others was executed by Nebuchadnezzar's orders at Riblah (2 Ki. xxv. 18, 21). The line of high priests under the first temple, which from Zadok amounted to twelve, terminated with him.

16. The sons of Levi; Gershom, &c. This repetition (see *v.* 1) is made, as the historian here begins to trace the genealogy of the Levitical families who were not priests. The list is a long one, comprising the chiefs or heads of their several families until David's reign, who made a new and different classification of them by courses.

20. Zimma his son—his grandson (*v.* 42). 24. Uriel—or Zephaniah (*v.* 36). Shaul his son. Lepsius ('Letters from Egypt, Ethiopia, and Sinaï') and Bunsen ('Egypt's Place,' pp. 176, 177) consider this name as that of king Saul. The interpretation is preposterous; for this Shaul belongs to a Levite, whereas king Saul was connected with a Benjamite, genealogy (see 'Introduction'). 25. the

sons of Elkanah; Amasai, and Ahimoth. This verse should stand, 'Elkanah his son, Amasai his son, Ahimoth his son' (cf. *vr.* 35, 36, in which the genealogy occurs in an inverse order). Ahimoth=Mahath (*v.* 35). 27. Elkanah—the father of the prophet Samuel (1 Sam. i. 1). The last clause, Samuel his son, has been omitted. 28. The sons of Samuel—are here named Vashni and Abiah. The first-born is called (1 Sam. viii. 2) Joel; and this name is given to him in *v.* 38 of this chapter. It is now generally thought by the best critics—*Mede, Kennicott, Jebb, &c.*—that, through an error of the copyists, an omission has been made of the eldest son's name, and that [ששון] 'and the second' has been exalted into the name of a person, Vashni. This critical emendation of the text makes all clear, as well as consistent with other passages relating to the family of Samuel.

31. these are they whom David set over the service of song. The sons of Korah, Asaph, Heman, Jeduthun or Ethan (Ps. lxxxix.), were set over the various departments of the musical services of the sanctuary. in the house of the Lord—i. e., in the tent which David had erected for receiving the ark after it was removed from the house of Obed-edom. This was a considerable time before the temple was built. This institution, as appears, *v.* 32, was originally intended to continue only until the erection of the temple; but its advantages were found to be so great as to ensure its permanent continuance (2 Chr. xxxv. 15), and it was revived after the restoration from Babylon (Neh. xii. 45, 46). 32. they waited on their office according to their order—which David, doubtless by the direction of the Holy Spirit, had instituted for the better regulation of divine worship.

33. Shemuel—i. e., Samuel. This is the exact

B. C. 1:00.

1 in the

houso.

/ 1 Ki. 6. 1.

° Ezra 7. 3.

° Or. Me-

shullam,

ch. 9. 11.

° Neh. 11. 11.

° 2 Ki. 25. 18.

j 1 x 6. 16.

k Num 3 33.

l ver 42.

Eh-n.

m ver. 41.

Aduah.

n ver 4.

° Ethni.

° vers 2, 18.

Izhar

p ver 3.

Zeph-

aniah,

Azariah,

Joel.

q vers. 35, 36.

r ver. 35.

Zuph.

s ver. 31.

Toah.

t ver. 31.

Liel.

° called also

Joel.

1 Sam. 8. 2.

° 2 Sam. 6. 17.

° stood.

34 the son of Elkanah, the son of Jeroham, the son of Eliel, the son of ⁵Toah,
 35 the son of ⁶Zuph, the son of Elkanah, the son of Mahath, the son of
 36 Amasai, the son of Elkanah, the son of ^vJoel, the son of Azariah, the son
 37 of Zephaniah, the son of Tahath, the son of Assir, the son of ^vEbiasaph,
 38 the son of Korah, the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi,
 39 the son of Israel. And his brother Asaph, who stood on his right hand,
 40 *even* Asaph the son of Berachiah, the son of Shimea, the son of Michael,
 41 the son of Baaseiah, the son of Malehiah, the son of ²Ethni, the son of
 42 Zerah, the son of Adaiah, the son of ^vEthan, the son of Zimmah, the son
 43 of Shimei, the son of Jahath, the son of Gershom, the son of Levi.
 44 And their brethren the sons of Merari stood on the left hand: ⁷Ethan
 45 the son of ⁸Kishi, the son of Abdi, the son of Malluch, the son of Hasha-
 46 biah, the son of Amaziah, the son of Hilkiah, the son of Amzi, the son of
 47 Bani, the son of Shamer, the son of Mahli, the son of Mushi, the son of
 48 Merari, the son of Levi. Their brethren also the Levites were appointed
 unto all manner of service of the tabernacle of the house of God.
 49 But Aaron and his sons offered ² upon the altar of the burnt offering,
 and ^a on the altar of incense, and were appointed for all the work of the
 place most holy, and to make an atonement for Israel, according to all
 50 that Moses the servant of God had commanded. And these are ^b the
 51 sons of Aaron; Eleazar his son, Phinehas his son, Abishua his son, Bukki
 52 his son, Uzzi his son, Zerabiah his son, Meraioth his son, Amariah his
 53 son, Ahitub his son, Zadok his son, Ahimaaz his son.
 54 Now ^c these are their dwelling places throughout their castles in their
 55 coasts, of the sons of Aaron, of the families of the Kohathites; for theirs
 56 was the lot. And ^d they gave them Hebron in the land of Judah, and
 57 the suburbs thereof round about it. But ^e the fields of the city, and the
 58 villages thereof, they gave to Caleb the son of Jephunneh. And ^f to the
 59 sons of Aaron they gave the cities of Judah, namely, Hebron, the city of
 refuge, and Libnah with her suburbs, and Jattir, and Eshtemoa, with
 60 their suburbs, and ^gHilen with her suburbs, Debir with her suburbs,
 61 and ^hAshan with her suburbs, and Beth-shemesh with her suburbs:
 62 and out of the tribe of Benjamin; Geba with her suburbs, and ⁱAlemeth
 with her suburbs, and Anathoth with her suburbs. All their cities
 61 throughout their families were thirteen cities. And unto the sons of
 Kohath, ^j which were left of the family of that tribe, were cities given out
 of the half tribe, namely, out of the half tribe of Manasseh, ^k by lot, ten
 cities.
 62 And to the sons of Gershom, throughout their families, out of the
 tribe of Issachar, and out of the tribe of Asher, and out of the tribe
 of Naphtali, and out of the tribe of Manasseh in Bashan, thirteen
 cities.
 63 Unto the sons of Merari were given by lot, throughout their families,

B. C. 1280.
⁵ ver. 26,
 Nahath.
⁶ Or, Zopha.
^v ver. 21,
 Shaul,
 Uzziath,
 Uriel.
² Ex. 6 21.
^v ver. 21,
 Jeaterai.
^v ver. 21,
 Joah.
⁷ Called
 Jeduthun,
 ch 9. 16.
 ch 25. 1, 3,
 6.
 2 Chr 35. 15.
 Ps 67,
 title.
⁸ Cr.
 Kushaiah,
 ch. 15. 17,
^c Ex 29. 38.
 Ex. 30. 1-7.
 Lev. 1. 9.
 Lev. 8. 9.
 Lev. 10. 21,
 22,
 Num 3. 10.
 Num 18. 7.
 Heb. 5. 1.
^a Ex. 30. 7.
^b Num. 26. 60.
 ch. 21. 1.
 Ezra 7. 2-5.
^c Josh. 21. 2,
 6-19.
 In this list,
 Gibeon
 and Juttah
 are
 omitted.
^d Josh. 21. 11,
 12.
^e Josh. 11. 13
 Josh. 15. 13.
^f Josh. 21. 13.
^v Josh. 21. 15,
 Holon,
^h Josh. 21. 16,
 Ain.
ⁱ Josh 21 18,
 Almon.
^j ver. 66.
^k Josh 21. 5.

representation of the Hebrew name. 39. his brother Asaph. They were brothers naturally, both being descended from Levi, as well as officially, both being of the Levitical order. 42. Ethan—or Jeduthun (ch. ix. 16; 2 Chr. xxxv. 15). Shimei. This name seems to be inserted here by mistake, probably to make good the number 15, when the scribe found that he had left out Libui from v. 43 (cf. v. 20 and v. 30).

48. Their brethren also the Levites were appointed unto all manner of service. Those of them who were endowed with musical tastes and talents were employed in various other departments of the temple service.

49-SL.—OFFICE OF AARON AND HIS SONS.

49. But Aaron and his sons offered, &c. The office and duties of the high priests having been

already described, the names of those who successively filled that important office are recorded.

60. thirteen cities. No more than eleven are named here; but two additional ones are mentioned, Josh. xxi. 16, 17, which makes up the thirteen. 61. unto the sons of Kohath, which were left—i. e., in addition to the priests belonging to the same family and tribe of Levi, by lot, ten cities (Josh. xxi. 26). The sacred historian gives an explanation, v. 66. Eight of these are mentioned, but only two of them are taken out of the half tribe of Manasseh (v. 70). The names of the other two are given, Josh. xxi. 21, where full and detailed notices of these arrangements may be found.

62. to the sons of Gershom—supply 'the children of Israel gave.'

out of the tribe of Reuben, and out of the tribe of Gad, and out of the 64 tribe of Zebulun, twelve ^lcities. And ^mthe children of Israel gave to the 65 Levites *these* cities with their suburbs. And they gave by lot out of the tribe of the children of Judah, and out of the tribe of the children of Simeon, and out of the tribe of the children of Benjamin, these cities which are called by *their* names.

66 And ⁿthe residue of the families of the sons of Kohath had cities of their 67 coasts out of the tribe of Ephraim. And ^othey gave unto them, of the cities of refuge, Shechem in mount Ephraim with her suburbs; *they gave* 68 also Gezer with her suburbs, and ^pJokmeam with her suburbs, and Beth- 69 horon with her suburbs, and Aijalon with her suburbs, and Gath-rimmon 70 with her suburbs: and out of the half tribe of Manasseh; Aner with her suburbs, and Bileam with her suburbs, for the family of the remnant of the sons of Kohath.

71 Unto the sons of Gershom *were given*, out of the family of the half 72 tribe of Manasseh, Golan in Bashan with her suburbs, and ^qAshtaroth 73 with her suburbs: and out of the tribe of Issachar; ^rKedesh with her 74 suburbs, Daberath with her suburbs, and Ramoth with her suburbs, and 75 Anem with her suburbs: and out of the tribe of Asher; Mashal with her 76 suburbs, and Abdon with her suburbs, and Hukok with her suburbs, and Rehob with her suburbs: and out of the tribe of Naphtali; Kedesh in Galilee with her suburbs, and Hammon with her suburbs, and Kirjathaim with her suburbs.

77 Unto the rest of the children of Merari *were given*, out of the tribe of 78 Zebulun, Rimmon with her suburbs, Tabor with her suburbs: and on the other side Jordan by Jericho, on the east side of Jordan, *were given them*, out of the tribe of Reuben, Bezer in the wilderness with her suburbs, 79 and Jahzah with her suburbs, Kedemoth also with her suburbs, and 80 Mephaath with her suburbs: and out of the tribe of Gad; Ramoth in 81 Gilead with her suburbs, and Mahanaim with her suburbs, and ^sHeshbon with her suburbs, and Jazer with her suburbs.

7 NOW the sons of ^aIssachar *were* ^bTola, and ^cPuah, Jashub, and 2 Shimron, four. And the sons of Tola; Uzzi, and Rephaiah, and Jeriel, and Jahmai, and Jibsam, and Shemuel, heads of their father's house, *to wit*, of Tola: *they were* valiant men of might in their generations; ^dwhose number *was* in the days of David two and twenty thousand and six 3 hundred. And the sons of Uzzi; Izrahiah: and the sons of Izrahiah; Michael, and Obadiah, and Joel, Ishiah, five: all of them ^echief men. 4 And with them, by their generations, after the house of their fathers, *were* bands of soldiers for war, six and thirty thousand *men*: for they had 5 many wives and sons. And their brethren among all the families of Issachar *were* valiant men of might, reckoned in all by their genealogies fourscore and seven thousand.

67. *they gave unto them, of the cities of refuge.* The names of the cities given here are considerably different from those applied to them, Josh. xxi. 14. In the lapse of centuries, and from the revolutions of society, changes might have been expected to take place in the form or dialectic pronunciation of the names of those cities, and this will sufficiently account for the variations that are found in the lists as enumerated here and in an earlier book. As to these cities themselves, that were assigned to the Levites, they were widely remote and separated, partly in fulfilment of Jacob's prophecy (Gen. xlix. 7), and partly that the various districts of the country might obtain a competent supply of teachers, who might instruct the people in the knowledge, and animate them to the observance, of a law which had so important a bearing on the promotion both of

their private happiness and their national prosperity.

CHAP. VII. 1-5.—SONS OF ISSACHAR.

1. Jashub—or Job (Gen. xlv. 13). 2. *whose number was, in the days of David.* Although a census was taken in the reign of David by order of that monarch, it is not certain that the sacred historian had it in his eye, since we find here the tribe of Benjamin enumerated, which was not taken in David's time; and there are other points of dissimilarity. 3. *five: all of them chief men.* Four only are mentioned; so that, as they are stated to be five, in this number the father, Izrahiah, must be considered as included, otherwise one of the names must have dropped out of the text. They were each at the head of a numerous and influential division of their tribe.

5. *fourscore and seven thousand—exclusive of*

B. C. 141.

^l Josh. 21. 7.

^m Num. 32. 1-

8.

ⁿ ver. 61.

^o Josh. 21. 21.

Josh. 24. 25.

Judg. 9. 1.

1 Ki. 11. 1.

2 Chr. 19. 1-

^p Josh. 11. 22-

25.

where

many of

these cities

have other

names.

Perhaps

some of

the cities

were

exchanged

for others.

^q Josh. 21. 27.

Beesh-

terah.

Deut. 1. 4.

^r Josh. 21. 24.

K shor.

Judg. 4. 9.

^s Num. 32. 3.

Deut. 2. 24.

Deut. 3. 2, 6.

Josh. 12. 2.

5.

Josh. 17. 10.

Judg. 11. 23.

Neh. 9. 22.

Song 7. 4.

Jer. 48. 31.

CHAP. 7.

^a Gen. 32. 17.

1.

Num. 1. 2,

29.

Num. 23. 23.

^b Gen. 46. 13.

Num. 26. 21.

^c Ge. 46. 13.

Thuvah,

Job.

^d 2 Sam. 24. 1.

2.

ch. 21. 1-5.

ch. 27. 1.

^e ch. 5. 21.

- 6, *The sons of Benjamin*; Bela, and Becher, and Jediael, three. And
 7 the sons of Bela; Ezbon, and Uzzi, and Uzziel, and Jerimoth, and Iri,
 five; heads of the house of *their* fathers, mighty men of valour; and were
 reckoned by their genealogies twenty and two thousand and thirty and
 8 four. And the sons of Becher; Zemira, and Joash, and Eliezer, and
 Elioenai, and Omri, and Jerimoth, and Abiah, and Anathoth, and
 9 Alameh. All these *are* the sons of Becher. And the number of them,
 after their genealogy by their generations, heads of the house of their
 fathers, mighty men of valour, *was* twenty thousand and two hundred.
 10 The sons also of Jediael; Bilhan: and the sons of Bilhan; Jeush, and
 Benjamin, and Ehud, and Chenaanah, and Zethan, and Tharshish, and
 11 Ahishahar. All these the sons of Jediael, by the heads of their fathers,
 mighty men of valour, *were* seventeen thousand and two hundred *soldiers*,
 12 fit to go out for war *and* battle. Shupimm ^aalso, and Hupimm, the
 children of ^bIr, *and* Hushim, the sons ^cof Aher.
 13 The sons of Naphtali; Jahziel, and Guni, and Gezer, and ^dShallum, the
 sons of Bilhah.
 14 The ^esons of Manasseh; Ashriel, whom she bare: (*but* his concubine
 15 the Aramites bare Machir the father of Gilead: and ^fMachir took to
 wife the *sister* of Hupimm and Shupimm, whose sister's name *was*
 Maachah;) and the name of the second *was* Zelophehad: and ^gZelophehad
 16 had daughters. And Maachah the wife of Machir bare a son, and she
 called his name Peresh: and the name of his brother *was* Sheresh: and
 17 his sons *were* Ulam and Rakem. And the sons of Ulam; ^hBedan. These
 18 *were* the sons of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh. And
 19 his sister Hammoleketh bare Ishod, and ⁱAbiezer, and Mahalah. And
 the sons of Shemidah were Ahian, and Shechem, and Likhi, and Aniam.

B. C. 1190.

^f Gen. 46. 21.
 Num. 27. 28.
 ch. 8. 1.
^g Num. 6. 29.
 Shupham.
 and
 Hup'an.
^a ver. 7.
 Iri.
^b Num. 26. 39.
 Ahiram
^c Gen. 46. 24.
 Shillem.
^d Num. 27. 1.
^e Hezron,
 a grandson
 of Judah,
 married
 Machir's
 daughter.
 and their
 child was
 reckoned
 to the
 tribe of
 Manasseh.
 ch. 2. 21-23.
^f Num. 27. 1-
 11.
 Num. 36. 1.
 Josh. 17. 3.
^g 1 Sam. 12.
 11.
^h Num. 26. 30.
 Jez-r.

the 58,600 men which the Tola branch had produced (v. 24), so that in the days of David the tribe would have contained a population of 45,600. This large increase was owing to the practice of polygamy, as well as the fruitfulness of the women. A plurality of wives, though tolerated among the Hebrews, was confined chiefly to the great and wealthy; but it seems to have been generally esteemed a privilege by the tribe of Issachar, "for they had many wives and sons."

6-12.—OF BENJAMIN.

6. The sons of Benjamin—ten are reckoned, Gen. xli. 21, but only five, ch. viii. 1; Num. xxvi. 38. Perhaps five of them were distinguished as chiefs of illustrious families, but two having fallen in the bloody wars waged against Benjamin (Judg. xx. 46), there remained only three branches of this tribe, and these only are enumerated; and Becher became incorporated, by marriage with an Ephraimite heiress, with the tribe of Ephraim (see on vv. 20, 21: cf. Num. xxvi. 35). Jediael—or Ashel (Gen. xli. 21). 7. The sons of Bela—each of them was chief or leader of the family to which he belonged. In an earlier period seven great families of Benjamin are mentioned (Num. xxvi. 38), five of them being headed by these five sons of Benjamin, and two descended from Bela. Here five families of Bela are specified, whence we are led to conclude that time or the ravages of war had greatly changed the condition of Benjamin, or that the five families of Bela were subordinate to the other great divisions that sprang directly from the five sons of the patriarch. 8. The sons of Becher. Although Becher himself was adopted into Ephraim, his sons continued Benjamites, and are here mentioned in the genealogy of that tribe (ch. vi. 60; Josh. xxi. 18). Some of these might be only grandsons of Becher. Abiah—Aphiah (1 Sam. ix. 1), was Saul's ancestor.

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12. Shupimm also, and Hupimm. They are called, Gen. xli. 21, Mupimm and Hupimm, and, Num. xxvi. 39, Hupham, or Huram, ch. viii. 5, and Shephuphan, ch. viii. 5: they were the children of Ir, or Iri. (v. 7). and Hushim the sons (son) of Aher. Aher signifies 'another,' and some eminent critics, taking Aher as a common noun, render the passage thus,—'and Hushim, another son.' Lord A. Hervey considers Aher a variation of Ehi (Gen. xli. 21) and Ahiram (Num. xxvi. 38). Shupimm, Mupimm, and Hushim are plural words, and therefore denote, not individuals, but the heads of their respective families; and as they were not comprised in the above enumeration (vv. 7, 9), they are inserted here in the form of an appendix. Some render the passage 'Hushim, the son of another,' i. e., tribe or family. The name occurs among the sons of Dan (Gen. xli. 23); and it is a presumption in favour of this being the true rendering, that after having recorded the genealogy of Naphtali (v. 13), the sacred historian adds, 'the sons of Bilhah, the handmaid, who was the mother of Dan and Naphtali.' We naturally expect, therefore, that these two will be noticed together, but Dan is not mentioned at all, if not in this passage.

13.—OF NAPHTALI.

13. Shallum—or Shillem (Gen. xli. 24). sons of Bilhah. As Dan and Naphtali were her sons, Hushim, as well as those enumerated in v. 13, were her grandsons.

14-40.—OF MANASSEH.

14. The sons of Manasseh—or descendants: for Ashriel was a grandson, and Zelophehad was a generation further removed in descent (Num. xxvi. 33). The text, as it stands, is so confused and complicated that it is exceedingly difficult to trace the genealogical thread, and a great variety of conjectures have been made with a view to clear away the obscurity. The passage should probably

- 20 And ^othe sons of Ephraim; Shuthelah, and Bered his son, and Tahath
 21 his son, and Eladah his son, and Tahath his son, and Zabad his son, and
 Shuthelah his son, and Ezer, and Elead, whom the men of Gath *that were*
 born in *that* land slew, because they came down to take away their cattle.
 22 And Ephraim their father ²mourned many days, and his brethren came
 23 to comfort him. And when he went in to his wife, she conceived and
 bare a son, and he called his name ²Beriah, because it went evil with his
 24 house. (And his daughter *was* Sherah, who built ⁴Beth-horon the nether,
 25 and the upper, and Uzzen-sherah.) And Rephah *was* his son, also
 26 Resheph, and Telah his son, and Tahan his son, Laadan his son, Ammilud
 27 his son, Elishama his son, Non ⁷his son, Jehoshua his son.

B. C. 1400

^o Num. 26. 35.^p Gen. 37. 31.

Job 2. 11.

John 11. 19.

² That is,

In evil.

Gen. 35. 18.

1 Saⁿ. 4. 21.⁴ Josh. 16. 3.

1 Sam. 13.

18.

⁷ Num. 13. 9.

Nun.

be rendered thus,—‘The sons of Manasseh were Ashriel, whom his Syrian concubine bare to him, and Machir, the father of Gilead, whom his wife bare to him. Machir took for a wife Maachah, sister to Huppim and Shuppim.’

20. **The sons of Ephraim.** Numerous and great difficulties encumber this passage. Some writers, indeed, supposing that the family of Ephraim, from his connection with Joseph, would, during the sojourn in Egypt, enjoy great advantages for preserving their genealogy entire, consider it as given here in full; and consequently that, as the names must be ranged in regular succession from father to son, the pedigree from Ephraim to Joshua is marked by eighteen descents. But this register, so far from being clear and intelligible, is in its present state exceedingly confused, and the obscurity in which, from its dislocated character, it is involved, is increased by several names, which are repeated in the same or slightly altered forms, being found to represent one person. Shuthelah, as the eldest son of Ephraim, is first mentioned, and his family is traced through a series of seven individuals to a second Shuthelah, the addition of the words “his son” indicating that the persons named followed in direct descent (see on Num. xxvi. 35, where the family of Suthalhites is mentioned). Ezer and Elead, not bearing the mark of filial relationship to Shuthelah, rank along with him as the sons of Ephraim. But the record, instead of proceeding, as might be expected, to enumerate their respective families, details the affecting incident of their early death in battle. 21. **whom the men of Gath that were born in that land slew**—*i. e.*, born in the eastern part of the Delta, or Lower Egypt; perhaps the extensive district of Goshen itself, where a multitude of Philistine nomads ranged, as being an outlying pastoral region under the jurisdiction of Egypt, but not an integral part of that country (Gen. xli. 34); or like the Cherehim, those men of Gath were mercenaries in Egyptian service, and had a portion of land allotted to them. This interesting little episode gives us a glimpse of the state of Hebrew society in Egypt; for the occurrence narrated seems to have taken place before the Israelites left that country; and it shows that, looking back to Palestine as their proper home, some of them, without waiting the appointed time, attempted prematurely, by dint of their own achievements, to take forcible possession of the promised land (cf. ch. iv. 22; Ps. lxxviii. 9). The patriarch Ephraim was then alive, though he must have arrived at a very advanced age; and the Hebrew people, at all events those of them who were his descendants, still retained their pastoral character. It was in perfect consistency with the ideas and habits of Oriental shepherds that they should have made a raid on the neighbouring tribe of the Philistines, for the purpose of plundering their flocks; for

nothing is more common among them than hostile incursions on the inhabitants of towns, or on other nomad tribes with whom they have no league of amity. But a different view of the incident is brought out, if, instead of “because,” we render the Hebrew particle ‘when’ they came down to take their cattle; for the tenor of the context leads rather to the conclusion that “the men of Gath” were the aggressors, who, making a sudden foray on the Ephraimite flocks, killed the shepherds, including several of the sons of Ephraim. The calamity spread a deep gloom around the tent of their aged father, and was the occasion of his receiving visits of condolence from his distant relatives in the other tribes, according to the custom of the East, which is remarkably exemplified in the history of Job (Job. ii. 11; cf. John xi. 19). 22. **Ephraim their father mourned many days.** The mourning lasted thirty days. The first three were days of weeping, the next seven were days of lamentation, and the remainder were passed in receiving numerous visits of sympathy from friends and acquaintances. 23. **when he went in to his wife.** The historian here returns to the genealogy of Ephraim. **she conceived and bare a son, and he called his name Beriah** [בְּרִיָּה]—signifying a gift or donation. Accordingly, *Michaelis* (‘Supplement,’ 224) renders the clause, ‘and he (Ephraim) called his name Beriah, because a gift was sent unto his house’—*i. e.*, this son, born to him in his old age, contrary to the course of nature, was regarded as sent by the special favour of God. [*Gesenius* proposes בְּרִיָּה, evil, as being from בָּרָא, with Beth pleonastic, and translates as in our version, ‘because evil (calamity) was unto his house.’ The Septuagint has ὅτι ἐν κακοῖς ἐγένετο ἐν οἴκῳ μου, because he was born amid evils in my house.] 24. (And his daughter was Sherah, who built Beth-horon the nether, and the upper, and Uzzen-sherah.) It is doubtful whether Sherah was the daughter of Ephraim or Beriah; most probably of the former, then consequently the sister of the latter. The names of women are never mentioned in these genealogical lists unless they were distinguished in some way; and Sherah is represented as the foundress of three cities, two of which were certainly existing at the time of the Israelite invasion of Canaan (Josh. x. 10, 11); but how, or in what circumstances, she obtained a settlement and power in that country is unknown. 25. **And Rephah was his son, also Resheph.** Here the historian traces the family of Beriah,—Rephah being his eldest son, and Resheph, not being accompanied by that addition, must be considered as the brother of Rephah, whose posterity is now described till the register terminates in Joshua. Such is the natural and apparent view of this genealogy. But a more minute examination both of the names contained in the register, and of the tenor of the historical incident

28 And their possessions and habitations *were* Beth-el and the towns thereof, and eastward ^sNaaran, and westward Gezer, with the ³towns thereof; Shechem also and the towns thereof, unto Gaza and the towns
 29 thereof: and by the borders of the children ^oof Manasseh, Beth-shean and her towns, Taanach and her towns, ^uMegiddo and her towns, Dor and her towns. In these dwelt the ^vchildren of Joseph the son of Israel.
 30 The ^wsons of Asher; Imnah, and Isuah, and Ishuai, and Beriah, and
 31 Serah their sister. And the sons of Beriah; Heber, and Malchiel, who *is*
 32 the father of Birzavith. And Heber begat Japhlet, and ^zShomer, and
 33 Hotham, and Shua their sister. And the sons of Japhlet; Pasach, and
 34 Bimhal, and Ashvath. These *are* the children of Japhlet. And the sons

B. C. 1409.
 * Josh. 16, 7,
 Naarath.
 † daughters.
 ‡ Josh. 17, 7.
 § Josh. 17, 11.
 ¶ 1 Ki. 9, 15.
 ** Judg. 1, 22-23.
 †† Gen. 46, 17.
 ††† Num. 23, 44.
 †††† 46.
 ††††† ver. 34,
 Shamer.

interwoven with it, will reveal singularities and difficulties which do not appear on the surface. 1. As to the names:—Shuthelah (v. 20, 21) and Telah (v. 25) refer to one person (cf. Num. xxvi. 35); Bered (v. 20) and Zabad (v. 21) are different designations of Becher (Num. xxvi. 35); Tahath, which occurs twice (v. 20), and Tahan (v. 25), are applicable to Tahan (Num. xxvi. 35); and Eladah (v. 20), Elead (v. 21), Laadan (v. 26), or Edan, as one Hebrew MS. has it, represent one and the same individual, who is Eran, or, as in the Samaritan text, Septuagint, Syriac, and some Hebrew MSS. “Edan” (Num. xxvi. 36). Omitting the repetitions, then, this record enumerates (v. 20) four sons of Ephraim—viz., Shuthelah, Bered or Becher, Tahath or Tahan, and Eladah or Eran, son of Shuthelah, exactly as in Num. xxvi. 35. 2. As to the character of the story of the slaughter of Ephraim’s sons embodied in this record, a great variety of different and even opposite explanations have been given of it. [It has been suggested that Ezer (v. 21) is not a proper name at all, but the verb עָזַר, to help; so that, removing the ו at the beginning of עֲזָרָה, and putting it to the end of the verb עָזַר, they helped, there is brought out the meaning—i. e., ‘Shuthelah, Bered or Becher, and Tahath went to help Elead (Laadan or Eran) against the men of Gath, by whom they were all, or several of them, killed.’] Having related this parenthetical episode, the genealogy of Ephraim is proceeded with, apparently in another line—that of Beriah—which, as being the ancestry of Joshua, is fully traced. But this view has also been controverted; for while the general opinion is that v. 25-27 contain the pedigree of Joshua from Beriah, some maintain that this passage is a resumption of the interrupted record of Shuthelah’s progeny; and others, who connect this 25th verse with the preceding, hold that “Rephah was his son,” should be rendered ‘Rephah built,’ &c. [בָּנִיתָ], “his son” being taken as some part of the verb [בָּנִיתָ] to build. With regard to v. 24, difficulties have also been raised respecting it. [Uzzen-sheerah, עֲזֵנ־שֶׁרָה, ear or corner of Sheerah, seems to have been a name bestowed by the foundress, rather than given in honour of a remote ancestress; and, as Lord Hervey remarks (‘Genealogies,’ p. 364), ‘in spite of the difference of the spelling of עֲזֵנ־שֶׁרָה and שֶׁרָה, it is not improbable that Timnath-serah (Josh. xix. 50) was also called from her, unless, indeed, it be actually the same place as Uzzen-sheerah. The identity of Sheerah with Serah is rendered yet more probable by the occurrence of שֶׁרָה, v. 30, combining the two spellings. If this supposition, that Serah was the daughter or sister of Joshua, and that he gave her a portion out of his own inheritance (Josh. xix. 49, 50), be well-founded, we must then suppose that the 24th verse has got out of its proper place, and a prob-

able cause for this, according to a well-known law of transcribers’ errors, may be found in the fact that the 23d verse ends with the word בָּרִית, which is almost identical with בָּרִיתָ.] This course supposes that the transaction relating to Sheerah did not take place till after the conquest of Canaan; and indeed Bertheau (‘Commentary,’ *in loco*) refers the whole genealogical record to that period, taking the references to Ephraim and his sons, not as applying to them as individuals, but to the heads of the branch-families or clans. In support of this view he appeals to Judg. xxi. 6. According to this interpretation, the slaughter of the Ephraimites occurred sometime after the Israelite settlement in their tribal possessions, and Beriah had some share in it, by apparently hastening to the relief of his brethren and the expulsion of the Gittites. Ephraim (v. 22, 23) denotes, not the patriarch, the son of Joseph, but the chief of the tribe, probably Joshua,—Serah, his daughter, whose family built the towns mentioned. Lord Hervey, in summing up the arguments for and against this view, says (‘Genealogies,’ p. 365), ‘Here is a passage which, as it now stands, is full of absurdities. It makes Ephraim alive and beget a son in the days of the eighth generation from himself. It obscures and makes unintelligible a most interesting narrative of the unfortunate fate of the sons of Ephraim during their father’s lifetime, which is nowhere else recorded, but which explains the circumstance of there being so few families of the Ephraimites in the days of Moses (Num. xxvi. 35, 37); it is in utter disagreement with the duplicate genealogy of Numbers; and it makes one of the most important characters of the Old Testament, Joshua, the son of Nun, live either 300 or 120 years after his true time. But immediately the passage is restored to even a partial soundness, all these contradictions vanish, and we find consistent genealogies, rational chronology, intelligible and valuable history, in their room. Putting together the inseparable difficulties in understanding the passage of the literal Ephraim and his literal sons and daughter, with the fact of the settlement of the Ephraimites in the mountainous district where Beth-horon, Gezer, Timnath-serah, &c., lay, which were exactly suited for a descent upon the plains of the Philistine country, where the men of Gath fed their cattle, and with the further facts, that the Ephraimites encountered a successful opposition from the Canaanites in Gezer (Josh. xvi. 10; Judg. i. 29), and that they apparently called in later the Benjamites to help them in driving away the men of Gath (1 Chr. viii. 13), it seems best to understand the narrative as of the times after the entrance into Canaan.’
 30. The sons of Asher. This list is identical with the genealogy of Asher contained in Gen. xli. 17; Num. xxvi. 44, 45. 31. Malchiel . . . father of Birzavith—i. e., founder of Birzavith (well of olives). Its site is unknown.

35 of ²Shamer; Ali, and Rohgah, Jehubbah, and Aram. And the sons of
 36 his brother Helem; Zophah, and Imna, and Shelesh, and Amal. The
 sons of Zophah; Suah, and Harnepher, and Shual, and Beri, and Imrah,
 37 Bezer, and Hod, and Shamma, and Shilshah, and Ithran, and Beera.
 38 And the sons of Jether; Jephunneh, and Pispah, and Ara. And the sons
 39 of Ulla; Arah, and Hanniel, and Rezia.
 40 All these were the children of Asher, heads of their father's house,
 choice and mighty men of valour, chief of the princes. And the ² number
 throughout the genealogy of them that were apt to the war and to battle
 was twenty and six thousand men.
8 NOW Benjamin begat ^aBela his first-born, Ashbel the second, and
 2 Aharah the third, Nohah the fourth, and Rapha the fifth. And the
 4 sons of Bela were ¹Addar, and Gera, and Abihud, and Abishua, and
 5 Naaman, and Ahoah, and Gera, and ²Shephuphan, and Huram. And
 6 these are the sons of ^bEhud: these are the heads of the fathers of the
 7 inhabitants of Geba, and they removed them ^cto Manahath: and Naaman,
 and Ahiah, and Gera, he removed them, and begat Uzza and Ahihud.
 8 And Shaharaim begat children in ^dthe country of Moab, after he had

B. C. 1^o 0.
¹ ver. 32.
^a ch. 21, 1, 5.
 2 Sam. 21, 1,
 8.
^b Deut. 2, 14.
 CHAP. 8.
^a Gen. 46, 21.
 Num 2, 33,
 ch. 7, 6.
¹ Or, Ard,
 Gen. 46, 21.
 Num. 26, 40.
² Or,
 Shephuphan,
 Num. 26, 39.
 ch. 7, 12,
 Shuppim.
^b ch. 7, .0.
 Jer 3, 20.
 Jer. 4, 1.
^c ch 2, 52.
^d Ruth 1, 1.

40. All these were the children of Asher, heads of their father's house, choice and mighty men of valour. They were an active, courageous, and enterprising tribe; and when the census was taken at Sinai, it was numerically stronger than Ephraim, Manasseh, or Benjamin (Num. i. 32-41). But the natural richness of its allotted possession fostered a love of ease and luxury, and consequently led to habits of inertness which were severely censured (Judg. v. 17, 18), and it gradually sank into insignificance, till its name was omitted from the list of tribes that furnished the princes or chief rulers (ch. xxvii. 16-22). It is observable that the tribes of Dan and Zebulun are omitted in the genealogies recorded in this chapter.

CHAP. VIII. 1-32.—SONS AND CHIEF MEN OF BENJAMIN.

1. Now Benjamin begat, &c. This chapter contains some supplementary particulars, in addition to what has been already said, regarding the tribe of Benjamin (ch. vii. 6). This statement is at variance with that contained, ch. vii. 6; Gen. xvi. 21. But this is most probably the correct reading, and the text in the other two passages is corrupt [בְּיָמֵינוּ הוּלֵד אֶת־דָּבֵל בְּכוֹרֵי אֲשֵׁרֵל]. [It is extremely likely that דָּבֵל was considered a proper name (Becher) by a transcriber mistaking it for בְּרֵר, first-born.] Benjamin had, according to this view, no son called Becher, and all the Scripture notices admit of being explained consistently with it. Ashbel [אֲשֵׁבֶל] (opinion of God) (cf. Num. xxvi. 33) = [אֲשֵׁבֶל], Jediael (known of God) (ch. vii. 6). Aharah [= אַחֲרֵי, Ebi and Rosh (combined) (Gen. xlv. 21), and Ahiram (Num. xxvi. 33)]. The names of many of the persons mentioned in the course of the chapter are different from those given by Moses—a diversity which may be accounted for in part on grounds formerly stated—viz., either that the person had more than one name, or that the word "sons" is used in a loose sense for grandsons or descendants (cf. *vs.* 3, 4 with Gen. xlv. 21 and Num. xxvi. 40). 3. the sons of Bela were Addar [אֲדָר = אֲדָר] (Gen. xlv. 21). Gera—though classed (Gen. xlv. 21) with the family of Benjamin, appears to have been a grandson, son of Bela, but is not mentioned in Num. xxvi. 33. "And Gera." This name, repeated twice (*vs.* 5, 7), designates

one individual, who is mentioned in Judg. iii. 15 and 2 Sam. xvi. 5 (see on Benjamin's genealogy, Gen. xlv. 21). Abihud—or [אֲבִיחֻד] Ehud (Judg. iii. 14-30). 4. Naaman—head of the Naamite family (Num. xxvi. 40). Ahoah—gave rise to the patronymic Aholite (2 Sam. xxiii. 9-28; 1 Chr. xi. 12-29; xxvii. 14). 5. Shephuphan—Shuppim (ch. vii. 12-15), or Shupham (Num. xxvi. 39), or Muphim (Gen. xlv. 21), a peculiarity of form which will be removed by annexing the last letter [שׁ] from the fictitious Kosh in that passage to the next word, Muphim, thus making Shemuphim or Shumpim—a near approximation to Shephuphan. and HURAM—called Huphim, ch. vii. 12, where he is stated to be a son of Ir, or Iri (*v.* 7), son of Bela (cf. Gen. xlv. 21), and Huphan, Num. xlv. 39 [Septuagint, Οὐραμ]. Both Shupham and Hupham were ancestors or heads of principal families of the Benjamite tribe. 6. these are the sons of Ehud: these are the heads of the fathers of the inhabitants of Geba [גֵּבָא אֲרָצֵי] heads of fathers; Septuagint, ἀρχοῦτες πατριῶν)—rulers in Geba. they removed them to Manahath. The site has not been ascertained, but it is most probable that the new settlement was not far from Geba. It must have been within the territory of Benjamin; for to remove from one tribe to another was in early times a very rare occurrence. Whether this migration was voluntary or compulsory cannot be determined; but it was done in an authorized and orderly manner, under the direction and superintendence of the three heads of fathers. 7. and begat Uzza, and Ahihud—*i. e.*, Gera. 8. And Shaharaim begat children in the country of Moab. Who was Shaharaim? his name has not previously occurred. [The words in the original are הַשְּׂדֵה הַחֵלֶב, and Shaharaim he begot בְּשֵׂדֵה הַחֵלֶב, in the field]—*i. e.*, the pasture or corn district of Moab, on the uplands, as distinct from Araboth, the plains (deserts of Moab, the arid low-lying Ghor).] Shaharaim had three wives, Hushim, Baara, and Hodesh (unless Hodesh is another name of one of these two. [The Septuagint has Ὠδὴ, Baadā, καὶ Ἀδὰ], and nine children. But there are other circumstances to be taken into account in considering the details of this chapter—viz., first, that the genealogies of the Benjamites were disordered or destroyed by the almost total extermination of this tribe (Judg. xx.); secondly, that a great number of Benjamites, born in Assyria, are

9 sent them away; Hushim and Baara were his wives. And he begat of
 10 Hodesh his wife, Jobab, and Zibia, and Mesha, and Malcham, and Jeuz,
 11 and Shachia, and Mirma. These were his sons, heads of the fathers. And
 12 of Hushim he begat Abitub, and Elpaal. The sons of Elpaal; Eber, and
 Misham, and Shamed, who built ^oOno and Lod, with the towns thereof:
 13 Beriah also, and ^jShema, who were heads of the fathers of the inhabitants
 14 ^gof Aijalon, who drove away the inhabitants of Gath: and Ahio, Shashak,
 15 and Jeremoth, and Zebadiah, and Arad, and Ader, and Michael, and
 17 Ispah, and Joha, the sons of Beriah; and Zebadiah, and Meshullam, and
 18 Hezeki, and Heber, Ishmerai also, and Jeziah, and Jobab, the sons of
 19 Elpaal; and Jakim, and Zichri, and Zabdi, and Elienai, and Zilthai, and
 21 Eliel, and Adaiah, and Beraiah, and Shimrath, the sons of ³Shimbi; and
 23 Ishpan, and Heber, and Eliel, and Abdon, and Zichri, and Hanan, and
 25 Hananiah, and Elam, and Antothijah, and Iphedeah, and Penuel, the
 26 sons of Shashak; and Shamsherai, and Shehariah, and Athaliah, and
 28 Jaresiah, and Eliah, and Zichri, the sons of Jeroham. These were heads
 of the fathers, by their generations, chief men. These dwelt in Jeru-
 salem.

29 And at Gibeon dwelt the ⁴father of Gibeon; whose ^hwife's name was
 30 Maachah: and his first-born son Abdon, and Zur, and Kish, and Baal,
 31, and Nadab, and Gedor, and Ahio, and ⁱZacher. And Mikloth begat
 32 ^jShimeah. And these also dwelt with their brethren in Jerusalem, over
 33 against them. And ^kNer begat Kish, and Kish begat Saul, and Saul
 34 begat Jonathan, and Malchi-shua, and ^lAbinadab, and ^mEsh-baal. And
 the son of Jonathan was ⁿMerib-baal; and Merib-baal begat ^oMicah.
 35 And the sons of Micah were Pithon, and Melech, and ^pTarea, and Ahaz.
 36 And Ahaz begat ^qJehoadah; and Jehoadah begat Alemeth, and Aznaveth,
 37 and Zimri; and Zimri begat Moza, and Moza begat Binea: ^rRapha was
 38 his son, Eleasah his son, Azel his son. And Azel had six sons, whose
 names are these, Azrikam, Bocheru, and Ishmael, and Sheariah, and

B. C. 1400
 * Ezra 2, 33.
 Neh. 7, 37.
 Neh. 11, 35.
 f ver. 21.
^g Josh. 19, 42.
³ Cr. Shema,
 ver. 13.
⁴ Called,
 Jehiel,
 ch. 9, 25.
^h ch. 9, 25.
ⁱ ch. 9, 27,
 Zechariah.
^j ch. 9, 38,
 Shimeam.
^k 1 Sam. 14,
 51.
 ch. 9, 26, 39.
 Act. 13, 21.
^l 1 Sam. 11,
 49.
 Ishui.
^m 2 Sam. 2, 8,
 Ish-
 bosheth.
ⁿ 2 Sam. 4, 4.
 2 Sam. 9, 6,
 10.
 Mephi-
 bosheth.
^o 2 Sam. 9, 12,
 ch. 9, 40.
^p ch. 9, 41,
 Tahrea.
^q ch. 9, 42,
 Jarah.
^r ch. 9, 43,
 Rephaiah.

mentioned here, who returned from the long captivity in Babylon, and established themselves, some in Jerusalem, others in different parts of Judea. There were more returned from Babylon of the families belonging to this tribe than to any other, except Judah; and hence many strange names are here introduced, some of which will be found in the list of the restored exiles. (cf. Ezra ii.)
 13. Beriah also, and Shema, who were heads . . . of the inhabitants of Aijalon—now Yalo, about two miles east of Emmaus (Nicopolis), now ¹Amwās, on a height overlooking the plain of Merj Iun 'Omein. who drove away the inhabitants of Gath—(see on ch. vii. 21, 22.) The explanation is this,—He had probably been driven to take refuge in that foreign land on the same calamitous occasion that forced Elimelech to emigrate thither (Ruth i. 1). But, destitute of natural affection, he forsook or divorced his two wives, and in the land of his sojourn married a third, by whom he had several sons. But there is another explanation given of the conduct of this Benjamite polygamist. His children by Hushim are mentioned, v. 11, while his other wife is unnoticed. Hence it has been thought probable that it is Baara who is mentioned under the name of Hodesh (new, recent), so called because her husband, after long desertion, returned and cohabited with her as before. 28. These dwelt in Jerusalem. The ordinary and stated inhabitants of Jerusalem were Judahites, Benjamites, and Levites. But at the time referred to here, the chiefs or heads of the principal families who are enumerated, vv. 14-27, established themselves in this city after their return from the captivity.

33 40.—STOCK OF SAUL AND JONATHAN.

33. Ner begat Kish. The father of Ner, though not mentioned here, is stated, ch. ix. 35, to have been Jehiel. Moreover, the father of Kish is said, 1 Sam. ix. 1, to have been Abiel, the son of Zeror; whence it would seem that Abiel and Ner were names of the same person. and Saul begat Jonathan, and Malchi-shua (king of help), and Abinadab—the same as Ishui (1 Sam. xiv. 49). He occupied a place in the family intermediate between Jonathan and Malchi-shua; and as his name is omitted both here and in ch. ix., as well as in 1 Sam. xxxi. 2, where Abinadab has the middle position assigned to him, it is concluded they refer to the same. and Esh-baal—popularly called [אִשְׁבַּח־בַּא] man of shame, or, according to *Gesenius*, bashful. Others, however, are of opinion that, as he was born after Saul had departed from the Lord, the name given to this youngest son indicates that his father had apostatized to the worship of Baal, and hence Ishbosheth, a man of shame—that Hebrew word, *bosheth*, being always applied by the sacred penmen—especially the prophets—to denote an idol, as exposing the devotee to shame, as well as being an abomination to the Lord (cf. Judg. vi. 32). 34. And the son of Jonathan was Merib-baal (contender against Baal) (cf. ch. ix. 40)—popularly changed into Mephibosheth, the destroyer of shame, or, according to *Gesenius*, exterminator of idols. 36. Jehoadah—or Jara (ch. ix. 42). 38. Azel had six sons . . . Azrikam, Bocheru. [The second is made a proper name, but the word is בְּכֹרִי, first-born; i. e., Azrikam, his first-born son; and so the Septuagint,

- 39 Obadiah, and Hanan. All these *were* the sons of Azel. And the sons of Eshek his brother *were* Ulam his first-born, Jehush the second, and
 40 Eliphelet the third. And the sons of Ulam were mighty men of valour, archers, and had many sons, and sons' sons, an hundred and fifty. All these *are* of the sons of Benjamin.
- 9 SO ^aall Israel were reckoned by genealogies; and, behold, they *were* written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah, *who* were ^bcarried away to Babylon for their transgression.
- 2 Now ^cthe first inhabitants that *dwell* in their possessions in their cities
 3 *were* the Israelites, the priests, Levites, and ^dthe Nethinims. And in Jerusalem dwelt of the children of Judah, and of the children of Benjamin, and of the children of Ephraim, and Manasseh;
- 4 Uthai the son of Ammihud, the son of Omri, the son of Imri, the
 5 son of Bani, of the children of ^ePharez the son of Judah. And of the
 6 Shilonites; Asaiah the first-born, and his sons. And of the sons of Zerah; Jeuel and their brethren, six hundred and ninety.
- 7 And of the sons of Benjamin; Sallu the son of Meshullam, the son of
 8 Hodaviah, the son of Hasenuah, and Ibneiah the son of Jeroham, and Elah the son of Uzzi, the son of Michri, and Meshullam the son of
 9 Shephathiah, the son of Reuel, the son of Ibnijah; and their brethren, according to their generations, nine hundred and fifty and six. All these men *were* chief of the fathers in the house of their fathers.
- 10, And ^gof the priests; Jedaiah, and Jehoiarib, and Jachin, and ¹Azariah
 11 the son of Hilkiah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Zadok, the son of
 12 Meraioth, the son of Ahitub, the ruler of the house of God; and Adaiah the son of Jeroham, the son of Pashur, the son of Malchijah, and Maasiai the son of Adiel, the son of Jahzerah, the son of Meshullam, the son of
 13 Meshillemith, the son of Immer; and their brethren, heads of the house of their fathers, a thousand and seven hundred and threescore; ²very able men for the work of the service of the house of God.
- 14 And of ^hthe Levites; Shemaiah the son of Hashub, the son of Azrikam,
 15 the son of Hashabiah, of the sons of Merari; and Bakbakkar, Heresh, and Galal, and Mattaniah the son of Micah, the son of Zichri, the son of

B. C. 1409.

* ch. 12. 2.
 2 Chr 14. 9.
 2 Chr. 24. 14.
 Neh. 4. 13.
 Eph. 6. 11-20.

CHAP. 9.
^a Ezra 2. 69.
 Neh. 7. 5.
^b 2 Chr 33 11.
 2 Chr 36 5.
 Isa. 5. 13.
 Jer. 10. 18.
 Jer. 16 13.
 Jer 20. 4-6.
 Jer. 39. 9.
 Jer. 51. 14, 15.
 Dan. 1. 2.
^c Ezra 2. 70.
 Neh. 7. 73.
 Neh. 11. 3.
^d Josh. 9. 27.
 Ezra 2. 43.
 Ezra 8. 10.
^e Neh. 11. 1.
 Gen. 46. 12.
 Num. 26. 20.
 ch. 2. 5.
 ch. 2.
 Neh. 11. 4.
 6.
^g Neh. 11. 10.
 Neh. 12. 19.
¹ Neh. 11. 11.
 Seraiah.
² mighty men of valour.
^h ch 6. 19.
 Neh. 11. 15-19.

Εξοκία πρωτότοκος αὐτοῦ (see on ch. vii. 6). 39. the sons of Eshek his brother were Ulam his first-born. The word is rightly translated here. 40. mighty men of valour, archers—(see on Judg. xx. 16.) Great strength as well as skill was requisite in ancient archery, as the bow, which was of steel, was bent by treading with the feet and pulling the strings with both hands.

CHAP. IX. 1-26.—ORIGINAL REGISTERS OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH'S GENEALOGIES.

1. all Israel were reckoned by genealogies. From the beginning of the Hebrew nation, public records were kept, containing a registration of the name of every individual, as well as the tribe and family to which he belonged. "The book of the kings of Israel and Judah" does not refer to the two canonical books that are known in Scripture by that name, but to authenticated copies of those registers, placed under the official care of the sovereigns; and as a great number of the Israelites (*c.* 3) took refuge in Judah during the invasion of Shalmaneser, they carried the public records along with them. The genealogies given in the preceding chapters were drawn from the public records in the archives both of Israel and Judah; and those given in this chapter relate to the period subsequent to the restoration; whence it appears (*cf.* ch. iii. 17-24) that the genealogical registers were kept during the captivity in Babylon. These genealogical tables, then, are of the highest authority for truth and

correctness, the earlier portion being extracted from the authenticated records of the nation; and as to those which belong to the time of the captivity, they were drawn up by a contemporary writer, who, besides enjoying the best sources of information, and being of the strictest integrity, was guided and preserved from all error by Divine inspiration.

2. the first inhabitants that dwell in their possessions. This chapter relates wholly to the first returned exiles. Almost all the names recur in Nehemiah (ch. xi.), although there are differences, which will be explained there. The same division of the people into four classes was continued *after*, as before, the captivity—viz., the priests, Levites, natives who now were called by the common name of Israelites, and Nethinims, i. e., *given* (to the sanctuary). This designation, applied first to the Levites (Num. iii. 9), became afterwards the distinctive title of the Gibeonites (Josh. ix. 27; Ezra ii. 43; viii. 20). When the historian speaks of "the first inhabitants that dwell in their possessions," he implies that there were others who afterwards returned and settled in possessions not occupied by the first. Accordingly we read of a great number returning successively under Ezra, Nehemiah, and at a later period. And some of those who returned to the ancient inheritance of their fathers, had lived before the time of the captivity (Ezra iii. 12; Hagg. ii. 4, 10).

16 Asaph; and Obadiah the son of Shemaiah, the son of Galal, the son of Jeduthun, and Berechiah the son of Asa, the son of Elkanah, that dwelt
 17 in the villages of ¹the Netophathites. And the ²porters were Shallum, and Akkub, and Talmon, and Ahiman, and their brethren: Shallum
 18 was the chief; who hitherto waited in ³the king's gate eastward: they
 19 were porters in the companies of the children of Levi. And Shallum the son of Kore, the son of Ebiasaph, the son of Korah, and his brethren, of the house of his father, ⁴the Korahites, were over the work of the service, keepers of the ⁵gates of the tabernacle: and their fathers, being over the
 20 host of the LORD, were keepers of the entry. And ⁶Phinehas the son of Eleazar was the ruler over them in time past, and the LORD was with
 21 him. And Zechariah the son of Meshelemiah was porter of the door of
 22 the tabernacle of the congregation. All these which were chosen to be porters in the gates were two hundred and twelve. These were reckoned by their genealogy in their villages, whom ⁷David and Samuel ⁸the seer
 23 ⁹did ordain in their ¹⁰set office. So they and their children had the oversight of the gates of the house of the LORD, namely, the house of the
 24 tabernacle, by wards. In ¹¹four quarters were the porters, toward the

B. C. 1200.

¹ ch. 2. 54.
 Neh. 7. 21.
 Neh. 12. 23, 29.
² ch. 26. 1.
 Ps. 54. 10.
³ 2 Ki. 11. 19.
 Eze 41. 23.
⁴ Ps. 42, title.
 ch. 6. 33, 38.
⁵ thresholds.
⁶ Num 25. 11.
 Num 31. 6
 Ps. 106. 30
⁷ ch. 26. 1, 2.
⁸ 1 Sam 9. 9.
⁹ founded.
¹⁰ Or, trust.
¹¹ ch. 26. 13-19.

18. Who hitherto waited in the king's gate eastward [מִן־הַיָּמִין, until now]. But *Houbigant* and others consider these words as a proper name: 'And Adana was over the king's gate eastward'—the only one of the gates that is particularly mentioned, probably because of its magnificence and pre-eminent importance as the entrance of the kings of Judah into the temple. they were porters in the companies of the children of Levi—*i. e.*, according to the orders or courses into which the tribe was divided did they render this service; for the office of porter about the doors of the tabernacle was one which was assigned exclusively to Levites. The king had a gate from his palace into the temple (2 Ki. xvi. 18), which doubtless was kept constantly close except for the monarch's use; and although there was no king in Israel on the return from the captivity, yet the old ceremonial was kept up, probably in the hope that the sceptre would, ere long, be restored to the house of David. It is an honour, by which Eastern kings are distinguished, to have a gate exclusively devoted to their own special use, and which is kept constantly closed, except when he goes out or returns (Ezek. xlv. 2). There being no king then in Israel, this gate would be always shut. 19. Shallum . . . and his brethren . . . the Korahites, were over the work of the service, keepers of the gates of the tabernacle. They occupied a higher position, their office being more directly connected with the sacred service than the former (*v.* 18). 21. Zechariah the son of Meshelemiah was porter (principal porter; *viz.*, in the reign of David, ch. xxvi. 1, 2; xxvii. 2) of the door of the tabernacle of the congregation—*i. e.*, kept the door which opened from the priests' court into the tabernacle, which contained the ark (2 Sam. vi. 17). 22. All these which were chosen to be porters in the gates were two hundred and twelve. So great a number being appointed to posts of the nature specified, implies that they performed their duties by a system of rotation. These were reckoned by their genealogy in their villages, whom David and Samuel the seer did ordain. For a long time after the entrance into Canaan there was great disorder and irregularity prevailing amongst the Levites, both as to the time and manner of discharging their sacred duties. Samuel, amongst the many important services which, by his public administration as a judge, he rendered to his

country, devised a plan for the methodical arrangement of the Levitical functions in the tabernacle. And as his scheme seems to have been only partially developed at the period of his compulsory retirement from public life, he communicated his intentions to David (most probably at Nob, cf. 1 Sam. xix. 18), who, when he was fully established on the throne, finally matured the project, by distributing the Levitical tribe into twenty-four courses, which were called in rotation to do duty at the sanctuary. They were required, according to the royal regulations, to travel from the cities and villages where they were located, to Jerusalem, at stated seasons in succession, for the purpose of ministering in or about the temple during their allotted term of service. [Samuel is called "the seer;" for he retained during his lifetime, and was known ever after by the simple name נָבִי, "the seer," a name which preceded the introduction and use of the higher designation נָבִיא. The distinction between these was wide and important; for although they related to an office of the same generic character—*viz.*, that of a receiver of a special revelation—the latter belonged to a more advanced state of the ancient preparatory church: "the seer" had respect to receiving revelation as an act, but the prophet as a function.] 23. So they and their children had the oversight of the gates—*i. e.*, as they were appointed in David's time, so their families continued in the hereditary office. of the house of the LORD, namely, the house of the tabernacle. In David's reign the old tabernacle continued at Gibeon (1 Ki. iii. 2; 2 Chr. i. 3, 5), whither worshippers repaired from distant parts of the country. A temporary tabernacle was provided by that king for the ark on its removal to Jerusalem, before the temple was built, and some have conjectured from this passage, that after the return from Babylon another provisional tabernacle was constructed, in which the duties of the Lord's house were performed, and before which the daily sacrifices prescribed by the Mosaic law were offered, until the second temple was completed. by wards [מִשְׁמָרוֹת]—according to watches, each in his set time at the gates. There is a strong presumption that the preceding list relates to the staff of Levitical officials who did duty at Gibeon, rather than at Jerusalem

25 east, west, north, and south. And their brethren, *which were* in their villages, *were* to come ²after seven days from time to time with them.

26 For these Levites, the four chief porters, were in *their* ⁶set office, and

27 were over the ⁷chambers and treasuries of the house of God. And they lodged round about the house of God, because the charge *was* upon them,

28 and the opening thereof every morning *pertained* to them. And *certain* of them had the charge of the ministering vessels, that they should

29 ⁸bring them in and out by tale. *Some* of them also *were* appointed to oversee the vessels, and all the ⁹instruments of the sanctuary, and the fine flour, and the wine, and the oil, and the frankincense, and the spices.

30 And *some* of the sons of the priests made ⁷the ointment of the spices.

31 And Mattithiah, *one* of the Levites, who *was* the first-born of Shallum the Korahite, had the ¹⁰set office ⁸over the things that were made ¹¹in

32 the pans. And *other* of their brethren, of the sons of the Kohathites,

33 *were* over the ¹²showbread, to prepare *it* every sabbath. And these *are* ⁴the singers, chief of the fathers of the Levites, *who remaining* in the chambers *were* free; for ¹³they were employed in *that* work day and

34 night. These chief fathers of the Levites *were* chief throughout their generations: these dwelt at Jerusalem.

35 And in Gibeon dwelt the father of Gibeon, Jehiel, whose wife's name

36 *was* Maachah: and his first-born son Abdon, then Zur, and Kish, and

37 Baal, and Ner, and Nadab, and Gedor, and Ahio, and Zechariah, and

38 Mikloth. And Mikloth begat Shimeam. And they also dwelt with

39 their brethren at Jerusalem, over against their brethren. And ⁹Ner begat Kish, and Kish begat Saul, and Saul begat Jonathan, and Malchi-

40 shua, and Abinadab, and Esh-baal. And the son of Jonathan *was*

41 Merib-baal: and Merib-baal begat Micah. And the sons of Micah *were*

42 Pithon, and Melech, and ¹⁴Yahrea, ¹⁰and Ahaz. And Ahaz begat

¹⁵Jarah; and Jarah begat Alemeth, and Azmaveth, and Zimri; and

43 Zimri begat Moza; and Moza begat Binea; and ¹⁶Rephaiah his son,

44 Eleasah his son, Azel his son. And Azel had six sons, whose names *are* these, Azrikam, Bocheru, and Ishmael, and Sheariah, and Obadiah, and Hanan. These *were* the sons of Azel.

10 NOW ^athe Philistines fought against Israel; and the men of Israel fled from before the Philistines, and fell down ¹slain in mount Gilboa.

B. C. 1. 00.

² 2 Ki. 11. 6.² Chr. 23. 8.⁶ Or. trust.⁷ Or. store-

houses.

⁸ bring them

in by tale,

and carry

them out

by tale.

⁹ Or, vessels.⁷ Ex. 30. 23.

Ex. 37. 29.

Ps 45. 8.

Song 1, 3,

13.

¹⁰ Or, trust.³ Lev. 6. 21.¹¹ Or, on flat

plates, or

slices

¹² bread of

ordering

⁴ ch. 6. 31.

ch. 13. 8.

ch. 15. 16-

22.

¹³ upon

them.

¹⁴ ch. 8. 29.⁵ ch. 8. 33.¹⁴ Or, Tarea,

ch. 8. 25.

¹⁵ ch. 8. 35.¹⁵ Or,

Jehoadah,

ch. 8. 34.

¹⁶ Or, Rapha,

ch. 8. 37.

CHAP. 10.

^a 1 Sam. 31. 1.¹ thrust

through,

or,

wounded.

after the captivity, furnished by the introduction of the name of Gibeon; which, on any other hypothesis appears abrupt and unaccountable.

24. In four quarters were the porters—*i. e.*, the principal porters, with their assistants, toward the east [מִזְרָח]—from the rising of the sun. [מִיָּם, seaward—*i. e.*, west, as looking to the Mediterranean; מִצְפֹּן, north, because the ancients regarded the north as dark or unknown; and מִדְּבָרָה, south, the region south of Palestine being an arid, parched desert.] These words, expressing the cardinal points of the compass, were, among the Hebrews, derived from the characteristic features of their own land, or from the prevalent impressions of the people of the direction spoken of. 31. Mattithiah . . . had the set office over the things that were made in the pans [מִתְּבַחִים, things cooked or fried. מִתְּבַחַת is the word used for a pan, Lev. vi. 21].

35. And in Gibeon dwelt the father of Gibeon—chief man of Gibeon (cf. ch. viii. 21, where the same thing is mentioned without any individual's name). Jehiel [יְהִיֵּל. The Chethib has יְהִיֵּל, Jeuel; Septuagint, Vatican, Ἰεῖλα; Alexandrine, Ιεμῆλ]. Jehiel is supposed to be another name for Abiel (1 Sam. ix. 1); although the letter *ain* in the

former creates a difficulty. whose wife's name was Maachah [Septuagint, Vatican, Μααχά]. Her husband's name and hers are recorded as being prominent ancestors in the genealogy of Saul. 36. Ner. This name ranks here as fifth son, but it is omitted, ch. viii. 30, although in both passages Ner is stated to have been the father of Kish. 39. Kish begat Saul. Here, as well as in the pedigree as given, ch. viii. 33, he is represented as the great-grandson of Abiel (Jehiel); whereas he appears as grandson, 1 Sam. ix. 1; xiv. 51. The explanation is, that a link has been dropped—a circumstance common to all the genealogies. 44. Azel had six sons . . . Azrikam, Bocheru, &c. [בְּכָרִי]. The Septuagint, apparently reading קְבָרִי, has Ἐξοικῆμι πρωτότοκος αὐτοῦ (cf. ch. viii. 38), his first-born.]

CHAP. X. 1-7.—SAUL'S OVERTHROW AND DEATH.

1. Now the Philistines fought against Israel. The details of this chapter have no relation to the preceding genealogies, and seem to be inserted solely to introduce the narrative of David's elevation to the throne of the whole kingdom. The parallel between the books of Samuel and Chronicles commences with this chapter, which relates the issue of the fatal battle of Gilboa almost in

- 2 And the Philistines followed hard after Saul, and after his sons; and the Philistines slew Jonathan, and ²Abinadab, and Malchi-shua, the sons of
 3 Saul. And the battle went sore against Saul, and the ³archers ⁴hit him,
 4 and he was wounded of the archers. Then said Saul to his armour-bearer, Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith, lest these uncircumcised come and ⁵abuse me. But his armour-bearer would not;
 5 for he was sore afraid. So Saul took a sword, and fell upon it. And when his armour-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he fell likewise on the
 6 sword, and died. So Saul died, and his three sons, and all his house
 7 died together. And when all the men of Israel that *were* in the valley saw that they fled, and that Saul and his sons were dead, then they forsook their cities, and fled: and the Philistines came and dwelt in them.
- 8 And it came to pass on the morrow, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his sons fallen in mount Gilboa.
- 9 And when they had stripped him, they took his head, and his armour, and sent into the land of the Philistines round about, to carry tidings
 10 unto their idols, and to the people. And ^bthey put his armour in the house of their gods, and fastened his head in the temple of Dagon.
- 11 And when all Jabesh-gilead heard all that the Philistines had done to
 12 Saul, they arose, all the valiant men, and took away the body of Saul, and the bodies of his sons, and brought them to Jabesh, and buried their bones under the oak in Jabesh, and fasted seven days.
- 13 So Saul died for his transgression which he ^ccommitted against the LORD, *even* ^cagainst the word of the LORD, which he kept not, and also for asking *counsel* of one that had a ^dfamiliar spirit, ^eto enquire of it;
 14 and enquired not of the LORD: therefore he slew him, and ^fturned the kingdom unto David the son of ^gJesse.

B C 105.
² Cr. Ishui,
¹ Sam 14.
49.
³ shooters
with bows.
⁴ found him.
⁵ Or, mock
me.
Judg 16 21.
^b 1 Sam. 31.
10.
Isa 48, 5.
⁶ trans-
gressed.
^c 1 Sam 13.
13.
¹ Sam 15.
23.
² Sam 12.
7-9.
¹ Ki 18, 18.
² Chr. 16, 9.
^d Ex. 12, 14.
^e Lev. 19, 31.
^f Lev. 10, 6.
27.
^g Deut. 18, 11.
² Ki. 21, 6.
Isa. 5, 19.
^h 1 Sam 28, 7.
ⁱ 1 Sam 13.
14.
¹ Sam. 15.
28.
¹ Sam. 16, 1.
11.
⁷ Isai.

the very same words as 1 Sam. xxxi. 3. the archers hit him, and he was wounded. The Hebrew words may be thus rendered:—'The archers found (attacked) him with the bow, and he was in pain from the archers.' He was not wounded, at least dangerously, when he resolved on committing suicide. The deed was the effect of sudden terror and overwhelming depression of spirits (*Calmet*). 4. his armour-bearer . . . was sore afraid. He was, of course, placed in the same perilous condition as Saul. But it is probable that the feelings that restrained him from complying with Saul's wish were a profound respect for royalty, mingled with apprehension of the shock which such a catastrophe would give to the national feelings and interests. 6. Saul died . . . and all his house—his sons and courtiers who were here engaged in the battle. But it appears that Ishbosheth and Meplibosheth were kept at Gibeah on account of their youth.

8-10.—THE PHILISTINES TRIUMPH OVER HIM.

10. put his armour in the house of their gods. It was common among the heathen to vow to a national or favourite deity, that, in the event of a victory, the armour of the enemy's king, or of some eminent leader, should be dedicated to him as an offering of gratitude. Such trophies were usually suspended on the pillars of the temple. Thus *Virgil* ('*Aeneid*,' xi., 5) describes the temple in which King Latinus received the messengers of Aeneas,—

'Hung on the pillars all appears
 A row of trophies, helmets, shields, and spears,
 And solid bars, and axes keenly bright,
 And naval beaks, and chariots seized in fight.'

(*Tacitus*, '*Annales*,' ii., 22; *Curtius*, viii., 1: cf. iii., 288; *Ovid*, '*Ars Amator*,' ii., 744.) fastened his head in the temple of Dagon—(see on 1 Sam. v. 2.) This temple continued till it was destroyed in the time of the Maccabees (1 Macc. x. 82-85). The trunk or headless corpse was affixed to the wall of Beth-shan (1 Sam. xxxi. 10).

12. They arose, all the valiant men, and took away the body of Saul, and the bodies of his sons—(see on 1 Sam. xxxi. 12.) and buried their bones under the oak in Jabesh. The tree, which was called [תְּמָרִים] the tamarisk, is said here to be [אֵילָה] the oak. 'This discrepancy,' says *Wilton* ('*Negeb*,' pp. 195, 196), 'although formidable at first sight, is obviated by a consideration of the primary meaning of Elah. Derived from a root which imports strength, it generally denotes "the tree" or "the strong tree," while it applies specifically to the principal or characteristic tree of the particular region referred to.'

13. Saul died for his transgression—in having spared the king of the Amalekites, and taking the flocks of the people as spoil, as well as in having consulted a Pythoness. Both of these acts were great sins; the first as a violation of God's express and positive command, and the second as contrary to a well-known statute of the kingdom (Lev. xix. 31).

14. And enquired not of the Lord. He had done so in form (1 Sam. xxviii. 6), but not in the spirit of a humble penitent, nor with the believing confidence of a sincere worshipper. His enquiry was, in fact, a mere mockery, and his total want of all right religious impressions was manifested by his rushing from God to a wretched impostor in the service of the devil.

11 THEN ^aall Israel gathered themselves to David unto Hebron, saying,
2 Behold, we *are* thy bone and thy flesh. And moreover ¹in time past, even when Saul was king, thou *wast* he that leddest out and broughtest in Israel: and the LORD thy God said unto thee, Thou shalt ²feed my
3 people Israel, and thou shalt be ruler over my people Israel. Therefore came all the elders of Israel to the king to Hebron; and David made a covenant with them in Hebron before the LORD; and ^bthey anointed David king over Israel, according to the word of ^cthe LORD ³by ^dSamuel.
4 And David and all Israel ^ewent to Jerusalem, which *is* Jebus, ^fwhere the Jebusites *were*, the inhabitants of the land. And the inhabitants of Jebus said to David, Thou shalt not come hither. Nevertheless David
6 took the castle of Zion, which *is* the city of David. And David said, Whosoever smiteth the Jebusites first shall be ⁴chief and captain. So
7 Joab the son of Zeruiah went first up, and was chief. And David dwelt ⁵in the castle; therefore they called ⁵it the city of David. And he built the city round about, even from Millo round about: and Joab ⁶repaired
9 the rest of the city. So David ⁷waxed greater and greater: for the LORD of hosts *was* with him.
10 These *are* also the chief of the mighty men whom David had, who ⁸strengthened themselves with him in his kingdom, *and* with all Israel, to make him king, according to ^hthe word of the LORD concerning Israel.
11 And this *is* the number of the mighty men whom David had; Jashobeam, ⁹an Hachmonite, the chief of the captains: he lifted up his spear
12 against three hundred, slain *by* him at one time. And after him *was* Eleazar the son of Dodo, the Ahohite, who *was* one of the three mighties.
13 He was with David at ¹⁰Pas-dammim, and there the Philistines were gathered together to battle, where was a

B. C. 1043.
 CHAP. 11.
^a 2 Sam. 5. 1.
¹ both yesterday and the third day.
² Or rule.
^b 2 Sam. 5. 3.
^c Rom. 8. 31.
³ by the hand of.
^d 1 Sam. 16. 1.
^e ch. 13. 14.
^f 2 Sam. 5. 6.
^g Judg. 1. 21.
^h Judg. 13. 10.
⁴ head
⁵ That is, Zion.
⁶ 2 Sam. 5. 7.
⁷ revived.
⁸ went in going and increasing.
⁹ 2 Sam. 23. 5.
¹⁰ Or, held strongly with him.
¹¹ 1 Sam. 16. 1.
¹² Or, son of Hachmoni.
¹³ Or, Ephesdammim, 1 Sam. 17. 1.

CHAP. XI 1-3.—DAVID MADE KING.

1. Then all Israel gathered themselves to David unto Hebron. This event happened on the death of Ishbosheth (see on 2 Sam. v. 1-3). The convention of the estates of the kingdom, the public and solemn homage of the representatives of the people, and the repeated anointing of the new king in their presence and by their directions, seem to have been necessary to the general acknowledgment of the sovereign on the part of the nation (cf. 1 Sam. xi. 15).

4-9.—HE WINS THE CASTLE OF ZION FROM THE JEBUSITES BY JOAB'S VALOUR.

4. David and all Israel went to . . . Jebus—(see on 2 Sam. v. 6-13.) **6.** David said, Whosoever smiteth the Jebusites [יְבוּסִי], a Jebusite (cf. 2 Sam. v. 8). The Septuagint has Ἰᾶς τῦπτων Ἰεβουσαίων, every one striking a Jebusite]. **8.** And he built the city round about, even from Millo round about—(see on 2 Sam. v. 9.) [Septuagint, Vatican, καὶ ἀφειλόμισε τὴν πόλιν κύκλῳ, and he built the city in a circuit. The Alexandrine adds this clause, καὶ ἐπολέμισε καὶ ἔλαβε τὴν πόλιν, and he made war and took the city.] Joab repaired the rest of the city. David built a new town to the north of the old one on mount Zion; but Joab was charged with a commission to restore the part that had been occupied by the ancient Jebus, to repair the breaches made during the siege, to rebuild the houses which had been demolished or burned in the sacking of the town, and to preserve all that had escaped the violence of the soldiery. This work of reconstruction is not noticed elsewhere (*Calmet*). **9.** So David waxed greater and greater [וַיִּגְדַּל וַיִּתְקַדַּם, and David went going, and increasing; Septuagint, καὶ ἐπορευετο Δαυὶδ πορευόμενος καὶ μεγαλυνόμενος].

10-47.—A CATALOGUE OF HIS WORTHIES.

10. These . . . are the chief of the mighty men—(see on 2 Sam. xxiii. 8-39.) They are here described as those who held strongly with him (margin) to make him king, &c. In these words the sacred historian assigns a reason for introducing the list of their names immediately after his account of the election of David as king, and the conquest of Jerusalem—viz., that they assisted in making David king. In the original form of the list, and the connection in which it occurs in Samuel, there is no reference to the choice of a king; and even in this passage, it is only in the clause introduced into the superscription that such a reference occurs (*Keil*). **11.** Jashobeam, an Hachmonite—or son of Hachmoni. He is called also son of Zabdiel (ch. xxvii. 2), so that he was the grandson of Hachmoni (cf. ch. xxvii. 32). **lifted up his spear against three hundred, slain by him at one time** [וַיִּקַּח יָשׁוּבֵאִם אֶת־הַיָּרֵךְ וַיִּקְרַע אֶת־הַיָּרֵךְ בְּאַחַד הַיּוֹמִים, Septuagint, οὗτος ἐπάσαστο τὴν ῥομφαίαν αὐτοῦ]. This is more intelligible than the text in the parallel passage, 2 Sam. xxiii. 8: cf. *Gesenius*, sub voce [יָרֵךְ]. The feat is said, 2 Sam. xxiii. 8, to have been a slaughter of eight hundred in one day. Some endeavour to reconcile the statements in that passage and in this, by supposing that he slew eight hundred on one occasion, and three hundred on another; while others conjecture that he attacked a body of eight hundred, and having slain three hundred of them, the rest fled. **12.** the three mighties. Only two are mentioned—viz., Jashobeam and Eleazar; the third, Shammah (see on 2 Sam. xxiii. 11), is not named in this passage. **13.** He was with David at Pas-dammim. It was at the time when he was a fugitive in the wilderness; and, parched with thirst under the burning heat of noon-day, he wisely thought of the cool fountain of his native

14 and the people fled from before the Philistines: and they ¹¹set themselves in the midst of *that* parcel, and delivered it, and slew the Philistines; and the LORD saved *them* by a great ¹²deliverance.

15 Now ¹³three of the thirty captains went ⁱdown to the rock to David, into the cave of Adullam; and the host of the Philistines encamped ^jin the valley of ¹⁴Rephaim. And David *was* then in the hold, and the 17 Philistines' garrison *was* then at Beth-lehem. And David longed, and said, Oh that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Beth-18 lehem, that *is* at the gate! And the three brake through the host of the Philistines, and drew water out of the well of Beth-lehem, that *was* by the gate, and took *it*, and brought *it* to David: but David would not drink of 19 it, but poured it out to the LORD, and said, My God forbid it me, that I should do this thing: shall I drink the blood of these men: ¹⁵that have put their lives in jeopardy? for with the *jeopardy* of their lives they brought it. Therefore he would not drink it. These things did these three mightiest.

20 And ^kAbishai the brother of Joab, he was chief of the three: for lifting up his spear against three hundred, he slew *them*, and had a name 21 among the three. Of ^lthe three he was more honourable than the two, for he was their captain: howbeit he attained not to the *first* three.

22 Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the son of a valiant man of Kabzeel, ¹⁶who had done many acts; ^mhe slew two lion-like men of Moab: also he 23 went down and slew a lion in a pit in a snowy day. And he slew an Egyptian, ¹⁷a man of *great* stature, five cubits high; and in the Egyptian's hand *was* a spear like a weaver's beam; and he went down to him with a staff, and plucked the spear out of the Egyptian's hand, and slew him 24 with his own spear. These *things* did Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and 25 had a name among the three mighties. Behold, he was honourable among the thirty, but attained not to the *first* three: and David set him over his guard.

26 Also the valiant men of the armies *were* ⁿAsahel the brother of Joab,

B. C. 1017.
 11 Or, stood.
 12 r.
 salvation.
 1 ro. 21. 7.
 13 Or, three
 captains
 over the
 thirty.
 14 Josh 12 15.
 2 Sam. 23.
 13.
 15 ch 14 9.
 16 r. giants.
 Isa. 17. 5.
 15 with their
 lives.
 17 1 Sam 23. 6.
 1 Sam. 2. 18.
 2 Sam. 3. 30.
 2 Sam. 20.
 10.
 2 Sam. 23.
 15.
 ch. 2. 16.
 16 2 Sam. 23.
 19.
 1 Cor 15 11.
 16 great of
 deeds.
 17 2 Sam. 23.
 10.
 ch. 12. 8.
 17 a man of
 measurs.
 n 2 Sam. 2. 18-
 21.
 2 Sam. 23.
 21.
 ch. 27. 7.

village. This is a notice of the achievement to which Eleazar owed his fame, but the details are found only in 2 Sam. xxiii. 9-11, where it is further said that he was aided by the valour of Shammah—a fact corroborated in the passage before us (v. 14), where it is recorded of the heroes that “they set themselves in the midst of that parcel.” As the singular number is used in speaking of Shammah, 2 Sam. xxiii. 12, the true view seems to be that when Eleazar had given up from exhaustion, Shammah succeeded, and by his fresh and extraordinary prowess preserved the field. barley—or lentiles (2 Sam. xxiii. 11). 14. and the Lord saved them by a great deliverance [Septuagint, *καὶ ἐποίησε κύριος σωτηρίαν μεγάλην.*] Ephes-dammim was situated between Shocoh and Azekah, in the west of the Judahite territory. These feats were performed when David acted as Saul’s general against the Philistines.

17. David longed, and said, Oh . . . drink . . . of the well of Beth-lehem—(see 2 Sam. xxiii. 15.) This chivalrous act evinces the enthusiastic devotion of David’s men, that they were ready to gratify his smallest wish at the risk of their lives. It is probable that, when uttering the wish, David had no recollection of the military posted at Beth-lehem. It is generally taken for granted that those who fought a way to the well of Beth-lehem were the three champions just mentioned. But this is far from being clear, and, on the contrary, it would seem, from the want of the article before [שְׁלוֹשָׁה] three, not the three, that three different heroes are referred to, for Abishai (v. 20) was one of them. The camp of the Philistines was in the

valley of Rephaim (v. 15), which lay on the west of Jerusalem, but an outpost was stationed at Beth-lehem (v. 16), and through this garrison they had to force a passage (see on 2 Sam. viii. 6, 14; xxiii. 14).

21. howbeit he attained not to the first three—(see on 2 Sam. xxiii. 19.)

22. Benaiah . . . of Kabzeel—a town in the south of Judah (Josh. xv. 21; Neh. xi. 25). It is said that he “had done many acts,” though three only are mentioned as specimens of his daring energy and fearless courage. slew two lion-like men of Moab—*lit.*, lions of God, *i. e.*, great lions, or champions. This gallant feat was probably achieved in David’s hostile invasion of Moab (2 Sam. viii. 2). also he went down and slew a lion in a pit in a snowy day—probably a cave into which Benaiah had taken refuge from the snowstorm, and in which he encountered a savage lion which had its lair there. In a spacious cave the achievement would be far greater than if the monster had been previously snared or caged in a pit. 23. he went down—the ordinary phraseology for expressing an engagement in battle. The encounter of Benaiah with this gigantic Egyptian reminds us, in some respects, of David’s combat with Goliath. At least the height of this giant, which is about eight feet, and his armour, resembled him of Gath. with a staff—*i. e.*, having no other weapon in his hand than his walking-stick. 25. David set him over his guard—the Cherethites and Pelethites that composed the small body-guard in immediate attendance on the king.

26. Also the valiant men of the armies. This was the third degree of military rank, and Asahel

- 27 Elhanan the son of Dodo of Beth-lehem, ¹⁸Shammoth the ¹⁹Harorite, Helez
 28 the ²⁰Pelonite, Ira the son of Ikkes the Tekoite, Abiezer the Antothite,
 29 Sibbecai the Hushathite, Ithai the Ahobite, Maharai the Netophathite,
 31 Heled the son of Baanah the Netophathite, Ithai the son of Ribai of
 Gibeah. *that pertained* to the children of Benjamin, Benaiah the Pirath-
 32 onite, Hurai of the brooks of Gaash, Abiel the Arbathite, Azmaveth the
 34 Baharumite, Eliahba the Shaalbonite, the sons of Hashem the Gizonite,
 35 Jonathan the son of Shage the Hararite, Ahiam the son of Sacar the
 36 Hararite, Eliphal the son of ²¹Ur, Hephher the Mecherathite, Ahijah the
 37 Pelonite, ²²Hezro the Carmelite, ²³Naarai the son of Ezbai, Joel the
 39 brother of Nathan, Mibhar ²⁴the son of Haggeri, Zelek the Ammonite,
 40 Naharai the Berothite, the armour-bearer of Joab the son of Zeruiah, Ira
 41 the ²⁵Ithrite, Gareb the Ithrite, Uriah ²⁶the Hittite, ²⁵Zabad the son of
 42 Ahlai, Adina the son of Shiza the Reubenite, a captain of the Reubenites,
 43 and thirty with him, Hanan the son of Maachah, and Josphaphat the
 44 Mithnite, Uzzia the Ashterathite, Shama and Jehiel the sons of Hothan
 45 the Aroerite, Jedaiel the son of Shimri, and Joha his brother, the Tizite,
 46 Eliel the Mahavite, and Jeribai and Joshaviah, the sons of Elnaam, and
 47 Ithmah the Moabite, Eliel, and Obed, and Jasiel the Mesobaite.
- 12** NOW ^athese *are* they that came to David to ^bZiklag, ¹while he yet kept
 himself close because of Saul the son of Kish: and they *were* among the
 2 mighty men, helpers of the war. *They were* armed with bows, and could
 use both the right hand and ^cthe left in *hurling* stones and *shooting*
 3 arrows out of a bow, *even* of Saul's brethren of Benjamin. The chief
was Ahiezer, then Joash, the sons of ²Shemaah the Gibeathite; and
 Jeziel, and Pelet, the sons of Azmaveth; and Berachah, and Jehu ^dthe
 4 Antothite, and Ismaiah the ^eGibeonite, a mighty man among the thirty,
 and over the thirty; and Jeremiah, and Jahaziel, and Johanan, and Joza-

B. C. 1017.
¹⁸ r.
Shammah.
¹⁹ Or.
Harodite.
²⁰ Or.
Ialtite.
²¹ Or.
Ahasbel
²² Or, Hezrai.
²³ Or, I'azrai
the Arbite.
²⁴ Or. the
Haggerite
²⁵ Josh. 15.48.
ch. 2. 50, 53.
²⁶ 2 Sam. 11. 3.
²⁵ Perhaps
these last
sixteen
were of less
note, and
so are not
added in
2 Sam. 21.
CHAP. 12.
^a 1 Sam 27. 2.
^b 1 Sam 27. 6.
¹ being y-t
shut up.
^c Judg. 10.16.
² Cr.
Hasmaah.
^d Josh. 21. 18.
^e Josh. 1. 2'. 25.

was their chief: the names of few of those mentioned are historically known. The variation of the names will be seen to be very great and numerous, on comparing this passage with 2 Sam. xxiii. 24-39, and with the Septuagint version, particularly the Alexandrine. 27. Shammoth. Between this name and Helez, that of Elikah has evidently fallen out, as we may see, 2 Sam. xxiii. 25 (*Bertheau*, 'Commentary,' *in loco*; also *Kemnicott*, 'Dissertation,' p. 182, who suggests a conjectural reason for the omission). 30. Maharai—chief of the detachment of the guards who attended on the king in the tenth month, January (ch. xxvii. 13; 2 Sam. xxiii. 28). 39. Naharai—armour-bearer to Joab (2 Sam. xxiii. 37). The non-occurrence of Joab's name in any of the three catalogues is most probably to be accounted for by the circumstance that his office as commander-in-chief raised him to a position superior to all these orders of military knighthood. 41. Uriah the Hittite. The enrolment of this name in such a list, attesting, as it does, his distinguished merits as a brave and devoted officer, aggravates the criminality of David's outrage on his life and honour. Zabad the son of Ahlai (1 Chr. ii. 31-36). The number of the names from v. 26 to v. 41 (exclusive of Asahel and Uriah, who were dead) is thirty, and from v. 41 to 47 is sixteen, making together forty-eight, (see on ch. xxvii.) Of those mentioned, vv. 26-41, the greater part belonged to the tribes of Judah and Benjamin; the sixteen names, vv. 41-47, are all associated with places unknown, or with cities and districts on the east of the Jordan. The northern tribes do not appear to have furnished any leaders (*Bertheau*).

CHAP. XII. 1-22.—THE COMPANIES THAT CAME TO DAVID AT ZIKLAG.

1. Now these are they that came to David to

Ziklag. There are three lists given in this chapter, arranged apparently according to the order of time when the parties joined the standard of David. *while he yet kept himself close because of Saul* (צָוַר אֶת-פָּנָיו מִסָּוֵל שָׁאוּל, shut out from the presence of Saul)—*i. e.*, when the king's jealousy had driven him into exile from the court and the country. "Ziklag"—(see on 1 Sam. xxvii. 6.) It was during his retirement in that Philistine town that he was joined in rapid succession by the heroes who afterwards contributed so much to the glory of his reign. 2. of Saul's brethren of Benjamin—*i. e.*, of the tribe of Benjamin (cf. v. 29); but some of them might be relatives of the king. This movement, to which the parties were led, doubtless, by the secret impulse of the Spirit, was of vast importance to the cause of David, as it must have been founded on their observation of the evident withdrawal of God's blessing from Saul, and His favouring presence with David, to whom it was universally known the Divine King of Israel had given the crown in reversion. The accession of the Benjamites who came first, and their resolution to share his fortunes, must have been particularly grateful to David, as it was a public and emphatic testimony, by those who had enjoyed the best means of information, to the unblemished excellence of his character, as well as a decided protest against the grievous wrong inflicted by causelessly outlawing a man who had rendered such eminent services to his country. 4. Ismaiah the Gibeonite. It appears that not only the Canaanites who were admitted into the congregation (Josh. ix.), but people of the tribe of Benjamin, were among the inhabitants of Gibeon. The mention of "the Gederathite," probably from Gaderah (Josh. xv.

- 5 had the Gederathite, Eluzai, and Jeremoth, and Bealiah, and Shemariah, 6 and Shephatiah the Haruphite, Elkanah, and Jesiah, and Azareel, and 7 Joezer, and Jashobeam, the Korhites, and Joelah, and Zebadiah, the sons of Jeroham of Gedor.
- 8 And of the Gadites there separated themselves unto David into ^{the} hold to the wilderness men of might, and men ^{of} war fit for the battle, that could handle shield and buckler, whose ^{of} faces were like the faces of 9 lions, and were ^{as} swift as the roes upon the mountains; Ezer the 10 first, Obadiah the second, Eliab the third, Mishmannah the fourth, 11 Jeremiah the fifth, Attai the sixth, Eliel the seventh, Johanan the 12 eighth, Elzabad the ninth, Jeremiah the tenth, Machbanai the eleventh. 13 These were of the sons of Gad, captains of the host: ^{of} one of the least 14 was over an hundred, and the greatest over a thousand. These are they that went over Jordan in the first month, when it had ^{of} overflowed all his ^{of} banks; and they put to flight all them of the valleys, both toward the east and toward the west.
- 16 And there came of the children of Benjamin and Judah to the hold unto 17 David. And David went out ^{to} meet them, and answered and said unto them, If ye be come peaceably unto me to help me, mine heart shall ^{be} knit unto you: but if ye be come to betray me to mine enemies, seeing there is no ^{of} wrong in mine hands, the God of our fathers look 18 thereon, and rebuke it. Then ^{of} the spirit came upon Amasai, who was chief of the captains, and he said, Thine are we, David, and on thy side, thou son of Jesse: peace, peace be unto thee, and peace be to thine helpers; for thy God helpeth thee. Then David received them, and made them captains of the band.
- 19 And there fell some of Manasseh to David, ^{of} when he came with the Philistines against Saul to battle: but they helped them not: for the lords of the Philistines upon advisement sent him away, saying, He ^{of} will 20 fall to his master Saul ^{of} to the jeopardy of our heads. As he went to Ziklag, there fell to him of Manasseh, Adnah, and Jozabad, and Jediel,

B. C. 1055

1 Sam 23.
14, 29.
3 of the hes.
2 Sam. 17.
10.
2 Sam. 23.
24.
4 as the roes
upon the
mountains
to make
haste
2 Sam 2 18.
6 Or, one
that was
least cou'd
resist an
hundred,
and the
greatest a
thousand
6 filled over.
7 before
8 them.
8 be one.
9 Cr.
vio' e'ca.
Zech 3. 2
Jude 9.
10 the spirit
clothed
11 Amasai.
12 Sam. 17.
25.
ch 2. 17.
1 Sam 29, 2.
1 Sam 29, 4.
11 on our
heads.

36), in the lowlands of Judah; of the Korhites (v. 6), from Korah (ch. ii. 43), and of Gedor (v. 7), a town in Judah, to the south-west of Bethlehem (cf. ch. iv. 4), shows that this first list contains men of Judah as well as Benjamin (*Bertheau*).

8. of the Gadites there separated themselves unto David—*i. e.*, from the service of Saul, and from the rest of the Gadites who remained steadfast adherents of his cause. into the hold [צִיָּבָה], the fastness on a hill—or fortress; *i. e.*, of Ziklag, which was in the wilderness of Judah. whose faces were like the faces of lions, &c. A fierce lion-like countenance (2 Sam. i. 23), and great agility in pursuit [2 Sam. ii. 18, צִיָּבָה, gazelles—*Antelope Arabica*], were qualities of the highest estimation in ancient warfare. 14. one of the least was over an hundred, &c. David, while at Ziklag, had not so large an amount of forces as to give to each of these the command of so many men. Another meaning, therefore, must obviously be sought, and excluding *was*, which is a supplement by our translators, the import of the passage is, that one of the least could discomfit a hundred, and the greatest was worth a thousand ordinary men—a strong hyperbole to express their uncommon valour. 15. These are they that went over Jordan in the first month—*i. e.*, they swam the Jordan in spring, when the swollen river generally fills up the banks of its channel (see on Josh. iii. 15; iv. 19; v. 10). They deserved to be honourably mentioned, and accordingly the names of each are recorded. they put to flight all them of the valleys. This was probably done at the

time of their separating themselves; and their purpose being discovered, they had to cut their passage through the opposing adherents of Saul, both on the eastern and western banks. The impossibility of taking the fords at such a time, and the violent rapidity of the current at flood-time, make this crossing of the Jordan—in whatever way these Gadites accomplished it—a remarkable feat.

16. the children of Benjamin and Judah. It is probable that the Benjamites invited the Judahites to accompany them, in order to prevent David being suspicious of them. Their anticipations, as the result showed, were well-founded. He did suspect them of being secret emissaries of Cush (see Ps. vii., inscription), but the doubts of David as to their object in repairing to him were promptly dispelled by Amasai or Amasa, who, by the secret impulse of the Spirit, assured him of their strong attachment and their zealous services, from a unanimous conviction that his cause was owned and blessed of God (1 Sam. xviii. 12-14).

19. There fell some of Manassch. The period of their accession is fixed as the time when David came with the Philistines against Saul to battle. but they helped them not—(see on 1 Sam. xxix. 4.) 20. As he went to Ziklag. If those Manassites joined him on his return to Ziklag, after his dismissal from the Philistine army, then their arrival took place before the battle of Gilboa could have been fought (cf. 1 Sam. xxix. 11). Convinced of the desperate state of Saul's affairs, they abandoned him, and re-

and Michael, and Jozabad, and Elibu, and Zilthai, captains of the thousand
 21 sands that were of Manasseh. And they helped David ¹²against ¹⁰the
 band of the rovers; for they were all mighty men of valour, and were
 22 captains in the host. For at that time day by day there came to David
 to help him, until it was a great host, like the host of God.
 23 And these are the numbers of the ¹³bands that were ready armed to
 the war, and ¹¹came to David to Hebron, to ⁹turn the kingdom of Saul to
 24 him, ²according to the word of the LORD. The children of Judah that
 bare shield and spear were six thousand and eight hundred, ready ¹⁴armed
 25 to the war. Of the children of Simeon, mighty men of valour for the war,
 26 seven thousand and one hundred. Of the children of Levi, four thousand
 27 and six hundred. And Jehoiada was the leader of the Aaronites, and
 28 with him were three thousand and seven hundred; and ⁹Zadok, a young
 man mighty of valour, and of his father's house twenty and two captains.
 29 And of the children of Benjamin, the ¹⁵kindred of Saul, three thousand:
 for hitherto ¹⁶the greatest part of them had kept the ward of the house
 30 of Saul. And of the children of Ephraim twenty thousand and eight
 hundred, mighty men of valour, ¹⁷famous throughout the house of their
 31 fathers. And of the half tribe of Manasseh eighteen thousand, which
 32 were expressed by name, to come and make David king. And of the
 children of Issachar, which were men that had understanding of the times,
 to know what Israel ought to do; the heads of them were two hundred;
 33 and all their brethren were at their commandment. Of Zebulun, such as
 went forth to battle, ¹⁸expert in war, with all instruments of war, fifty
 thousand, which could ¹⁹keep rank: they were ²⁰not of double heart.
 34 And of Naphtali a thousand captains, and with them with shield and
 35 spear thirty and seven thousand. And of the Danites expert in war
 36 twenty and eight thousand and six hundred. And of Asher, such as went
 37 forth to battle, ²¹expert in war, forty thousand. And on the other side
 of Jordan, of the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and of the half tribe of

B. C. 1056
 12 Or, with
 a band.
 10 1 Sam 30 1.
 13 heads, or,
 captains,
 or, men.
 11 2 Sam 2. 3.
 9 ch 10. 14.
 2 1 Sam. 10. 1.
 14 ch 11. 10.
 14 Or,
 pr pared.
 9 2 Sam. 2. 17.
 1 Ki. 1. 8.
 1 Ki. 2. 35.
 ch. 6. 8. 35.
 Eze. 41. 15.
 15 brethren.
 Gen. 31. 23.
 16 a multi-
 tude of
 them.
 17 men of
 names.
 Gen. 6. 4.
 18 Or, rang-
 ers of
 battle,
 or, ranged
 in battle
 19 Or, set the
 battle in
 array.
 20 without a
 heart and
 a heart.
 Ps 12. 2.
 21 Or, keep-
 ing their
 rank.

solved to transfer their allegiance to David. But some learned men think that they came as fugitives from that disastrous field (*Calmet* and *Ewald*). captains of the thousands . . . of Manasseh. Those seven were commanders of the large military divisions of their tribe. 21. they helped David against the band—i. e., the Amalekites who had pillaged Ziklag in David's absence. This military expedition was made by all his men (1 Sam. xxx. 9), who, as David's early helpers, are specially distinguished from those who are mentioned in the latter portion of the chapter. 22. the host of God—i. e., a great and powerful army. 'Of all the Hebrew tribes, there were no men better fitted than these by their native training to form the nucleus of David's army. They covered the whole ground described as the land of the patriarchs. Hebron and Ziklag, lying in the north and south, and Adullam amongst the mountains of Judah on the west, are chiefly marked as three of the boundaries of the territory covered by them, and we recognize the fourth in Sebbeh, the ancient Masada, on the west of the Dead Sea. That this was "the hold" mentioned, *v.* 8: cf. 1 Sam. xx. 4, 5, may be inferred from the identity of name; and to the same effect is the testimony of *Josephus* ('Jewish Wars,' b. iv., ch. vii.) when he speaks of Masada as a fortress erected by our ancient kings as a place of safe deposit for their wealth during war, and as a place of safety for their persons' (*Drew's* 'Scripture Lands,' p. 133).

23-40.—THE ARMIES THAT CAME TO HIM AT HEBRON.

23. these are the numbers of the bands that . . . came to David to Hebron—after the death of Ishbosheth (2 Sam. v. 1). to turn the kingdom . . . according to the word of the Lord (ch. x. 14; xi. 3, 10). The account commences with the southern tribes, Levi being associated with Judah and Simeon, as the great majority of the leading men in this tribe resided in Judah, and, after recounting the representatives of the northern tribes, concludes with those on the east of Jordan. 27. Jehoiada . . . the leader of the Aaronites—not the high priest, for that was Abiathar (1 Sam. xxiii. 9), but the leader of the Aaronite warriors, supposed to be the father of Benaiah (ch. xi. 22). 29. Benjamin . . . three thousand. This small number shows the unpopularity of the movement in this tribe; and, indeed, it is expressly stated that the mass of the population had, even after Ishbosheth's death, anxiously endeavoured to secure the crown in the family of Saul. 32. children of Issachar . . . that had understanding of the times, &c. Jewish writers say that the people of this tribe were eminent for their acquirements in astronomical and physical science; and the object of the remark was probably to show that the intelligent and learned classes were united with the military, and had declared for David; 33. Zebulun . . . could keep rank—i. e., were more disciplined soldiers than the rest. not of double heart. Though their numbers were large, all were in a high degree well affected to David. 34. of Naphtali a thousand captains [נָּרִיָּם, princes]—(cf. Ps. lxxviii. 27.) 37. And on the other side of

Manasseh, with all manner of instruments of war for the battle, an hundred and twenty thousand.

38 All these men of war, that could keep rank, came with a perfect heart to Hebron, to make David king over all Israel: and all the rest also of Israel were of one heart to make David king. And there they were with David three days, eating and drinking: for their brethren had prepared for them. Moreover they that were nigh them, even unto Issachar and Zebulun and Naphtali, brought bread on asses, and on camels, and on mules, and on oxen, and meat, meal, cakes of figs, and bunches of raisins, and wine, and oil, and oxen, and sheep abundantly; for there was joy in Israel. 13 AND David consulted with the captains of thousands and hundreds, and with every leader. And David said unto all the congregation of Israel, If it seem good unto you, and that it be of the LORD our God, let us send abroad unto our brethren every where, that are left in all the land of Israel, and with them also to the priests and Levites which are in their cities and suburbs, that they may gather themselves unto us: and let us bring again the ark of our God to us: for we enquired not at it in the days of Saul. And all the congregation said that they would do so: for the thing was right in the eyes of all the people.

B. C. 1018. 22 Or, victual of meal. CHAP. 13. 2 Sam. 5. 1. 2 Sam. 6. 1. 1 Ki 8. 1. ch. 12. 14, 20, 32. Ps. 132. 1-6. Pro. 15. 22. 1 le: us break forth and send. b ch. 10. 7. Isa. 37. 4. 2 in the cities of their suburbs. 3 bring about. c 1 Sam. 7. 1. 1 Sam. 14. 18.

Jordan . . . an hundred and twenty thousand. From a comparison of the whole list, it appears that the tribes beyond Jordan, over whom Ish-bosheth reigned, sent the largest numbers of deputies. The relative numbers stand thus:—

Table with 2 columns: Tribe and Number of soldiers. Ephraim, 20,800; Manasseh (one half-tribe), 18,000; Zebulun, 50,000; Asher, 40,000; Naphtali, 37,000; Danites, 28,600; Reubenites, Gadites, and Manasseh (other half-tribe), 120,000.

38. all the rest also of Israel were of one heart to make David king—i. e., entertained a unanimous desire for his elevation. 39. there they were with David three days, eating and drinking. According to the statements made in the preceding verses, the number of armed warriors assembled in Hebron on this occasion amounted to 300,000. Supplies of provisions were abundantly furnished, not only by the people of the neighbourhood, but from distant parts of the country; for all wished the festivities to be on a scale of liberality and magnificence suitable to the auspicious occasion. 40. Moreover they that were nigh them. . . brought bread [לֶחֶם]. The original reading most probably was לֶחֶם, to them; so Septuagint, ἐσθίουσιν αὐτοῖς]. Dropping and, which our translators have put in italics, the verse will stand thus: 'They brought on asses, and on camels, and on mules, and on oxen, meat, meal, &c.'

CHAP. XIII. 1-8.—DAVID FETCHES THE ARK FROM KIRJATH-JEARIM.

1. David consulted with the captains of thousands and hundreds; &c. Gratitude for the high and splendid dignity to which he had been elevated would naturally, at this period, impart a fresh animation and impulse to the habitually fervent piety of David; but, at the same time, he was animated by other motives: he fully understood his position as ruler under the theocracy, and, on entering on his duties, was resolved to fulfil his mission as a constitutional king of Israel. Accordingly, his first act as a sovereign related to the interests of religion, and the ark being then the grand instrument and ornament of it, he takes

the opportunity of the official representatives of the nation being with him, to consult them about the propriety of establishing it in a more public and accessible locality. The assembly at which he spoke of this consisted of the [קְהָלֵי] princes of thousands and hundreds (2 Sam. vi. 1; cf. Exod. xviii. 25). During the reign of the late king the ark had been left in culpable neglect, and the consequence was that the people had, to a great extent, been careless about the ordinances of Divine worship, or had contented themselves with offering sacrifices at Gibeon, without any thought of the ark, though it was the chief and most vital part of the tabernacle. The duty and advantages of this religious movement suggested by the king were apparent, and the proposal met with universal approval. 2. David said unto all the congregation of Israel [קְהָלֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל]—i. e., those who were thus convoked; the deliberative assembly. If it seem good unto you, and that it be of the Lord—i. e., I shall conclude that this favourite measure of mine is agreeable to the mind of God, if it receive your hearty concurrence. let us send abroad unto our brethren every where. He wished to make it known throughout the country, in order that there might be a general assembly of the nation, and that preparations might be made on a scale and of a kind suitable to the inauguration of the august ceremonial. priests and Levites . . . in their cities and suburbs—(see on Num. xxxv.) The original terms, "let us send," imply immediate execution. 3. let us bring again the ark of our God to us: for we enquired not at it in the days of Saul. This neglect, so unwonted in those early times, is spoken of as an unhappy sign of the religious degeneracy produced by the influence and example of the late king. [But קְהָלֵי may denote, according to the meaning of the verb, 'we did not seek it in order to provide a proper place for it'; and so the Septuagint renders it, οὐκ ἐζητήσαμεν αὐτήν, because they sought it not.] Doubtless the publication of the royal edict would have been followed by the appointment of an early day for the contemplated solemnity, had it not been retarded by a sudden invasion of the Philistines, who were twice repulsed with great loss (2 Sam. v. 17), by the capture of Jerusalem, and the transference of the seat of government to that city.

- 5 So ^aDavid gathered all Israel together, from ^bShihor of Egypt even unto the entering of Hamath, to bring the ark of God from ^cKirjath-jearim. And David went up, and all Israel, to Baalah, ^dthat is, to Kirjath-jearim, which *belonged* to Judah, to bring up thence the ark of God the LORD, ^ethat dwelleth *between* the cherubim, whose name is called ^fon it. And they ^gcarried the ark of God ^hin a new cart out of the house of Abinadab: and Uzza and Ahio drave the cart. And ⁱDavid and all Israel played before God with all *their* might, and with ^jsinging, and with harps, and with psalteries, and with timbrels, and with cymbals, and with trumpets. And when they came unto the threshing-floor of ^kChidon, 10 Uzza put forth his hand to hold the ark; for the oxen ^lstumbled. And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzza, and he smote him, ^mbecause he put his hand to the ark: and there he died ⁿbefore God. 11 And David was displeased, because the LORD had made a breach upon 12 Uzza: wherefore that place is called ^oPerez-uzza to this day. And David was afraid of God that day, saying, How shall I bring the ark of God 13 *home* to me? So David ^pbrought not the ark *home* to himself to the city of David, but carried it aside into the house of Obed-edom the Gittite. 14 And ^qthe ark of God remained with the family of Obed-edom in his house three months. And the LORD blessed ^rthe house of Obed-edom, and all that he had.
- 14 NOW ^sHiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and timber of 2 cedars, with masons and carpenters, to build him an house. And David perceived that the LORD had confirmed him king over Israel; for his kingdom was lifted up on high, because of his people Israel.
- 3 And David took ^tmore wives at Jerusalem: and David begat more 4 sons and daughters. Now ^uthese *are* the names of *his* children which he had in Jerusalem; Shammua, and Shobab, Nathan, and Solomon, 5 and Ibhaz, and Elishua, and Elpalet, and Nogah, and Nepheg, and 7 Japhia, and Elishama, and ^vBeeliada, and Eliphalet.
- 8 And when the Philistines heard that David ^wwas anointed king over all Israel, all the Philistines went up to seek David: and David heard ^xof 9 *it*, and went out against them. And the Philistines came and spread 10 themselves in the valley of ^yRephaim. And David enquired of God, saying, Shall I go up against the Philistines? and wilt thou deliver

B. C. 1045.

- ^a 2 Sam. 6. 1.
^b Josh. 13. 3.
^c 1 Sam. 6. 21.
^d 1 Sam. 7. 1.
^e Josh. 15. 9.
^f 60.
^g Ex. 25. 22.
^h Num. 7. 89.
ⁱ 1 Sam. 4. 4.
^j made the ark to ride.
^k Num. 4. 15.
^l 2 Sam. 6. 5.
^m 5 songs.
ⁿ 2 Sam. 6. 6.
^o shook it.
^p Num. 4. 15.
^q ch. 15. 13.
^r 1.
^s Lev. 10. 2.
^t That is, 'The breach of Uzza.'
^u removed.
^v 2 Sam. 5. 11.
^w Gen. 30. 27.
^x ch. 26. 5.
^y Ps. 37. 22.
^z Pro. 10. 22.

CHAP. 14.

- ^a 2 Sam. 5. 11.
^b 1 Ki. 5. 1,
 8-12.
^c 1 yet.
^d Deut. 17. 14.
^e 17.
^f 2 Sam. 5. 14.
^g ch. 3. 5.
^h 2 (r, Eliada,
 2 Sam. 5. 16,
ⁱ 2 Sam. 5. 17.
^j ch. 11. 3.
^k Ps. 2. 1-5.
^l 3 Or, giants.
^m ch. 11. 15.

Finding, however, soon after, peace restored and his throne established, he resumed his preparations for removing the ark to the metropolis.

5. **from Shihor of Egypt** (Josh. xv. 4, 47; Num. xxxiv. 5; 1 Ki. viii. 65; 2 Ki. xxiv. 7; 2 Chr. vii. 8)—Wady el-Arish. This is taken by many writers for the Nile; but the Septuagint has ἀπὸ ὀρίων Αἰγύπτου; and the Syriac, 'from the river of Egypt.' A small brook flowing into the Mediterranean, near the modern el-Arish, which forms the southern boundary of Palestine. **unto the entering of Hamath.** The defile between the mountain ranges of Syria and the extreme limit of Palestine on the north. 6. **David went up . . . to Baalah** (see on 2 Sam. vi. 1-11)—for Baalah in the Hebrew text, the Vulgate has Collis *Cariatharim*. whose name is called on it—rather, 'who is worshipped there' (see on 2 Sam. vi. 2).

CHAP. XIV. 1-2.—HIRAM'S KINDNESS TO DAVID—DAVID'S FELICITY.

1. **Now Hiram king of Tyre.** The alliance with this neighbouring king, and the important advantages derived from it, were amongst the most fortunate circumstances in David's reign. The providence of God appeared concurrent with His promise, in smoothing the early course of his reign. Having conquered the Jebusites, and made Zion the royal residence, he had now, along

with internal prosperity, established an advantageous treaty with a neighbouring prince; and hence, in immediate connection with the mention of this friendly league, it is said, "David perceived that the Lord had confirmed him king over Israel." 2. **his kingdom was lifted up on high, because of his people Israel.** This is an important truth, that sovereigns are invested with royal honour and authority, not for their own sakes so much as for that of their people. But while it is true of all kings, it was especially applicable to the monarchs of Israel, and even David was made to know that all his glory and greatness were given only to fit him, as the minister of God, to execute the Divine purposes towards the chosen people.

3-7.—HIS WIVES.

3. **David took more wives at Jerusalem**—(see on 2 Sam. iii. 5.) His concubines are mentioned, ch. iii. 9; where also is given a list of his children (*vv.* 5-8), and those born in Jerusalem (2 Sam. v. 14-16). In that, however, the names of Eliphalet and Nogah do not occur, and Beeliada appears to be the same as Eliada.

8-17.—HIS VICTORIES OVER THE PHILISTINES. 8. **all the Philistines went up to seek David.** In the hope of accomplishing his ruin (for so the phrase is used, 1 Sam. xxiii. 15; xxiv. 2, 3), before

them into mine hand? And the LORD said unto him, Go up; for I will deliver them into thine hand. So they came up to Baal-perazim; and David smote them there. Then David said, God hath broken in upon mine enemies by mine hand like the breaking forth of waters: therefore they called the name of that place ⁴Baal-perazim. And when they had left their gods there, David gave a commandment, and they were burned with fire.

13 And ^athe Philistines yet again spread themselves abroad in the valley.

14 Therefore David enquired again of God; and God said unto him, Go not up after them; turn away from them, ^cand come upon them over against the mulberry trees. And it shall be, when thou shalt hear a sound of going in the tops of the mulberry trees, *that* then thou shalt go out to battle: for God is gone forth before thee, to smite the host of the Philistines. David therefore did as God commanded him: and they smote the host of the Philistines from ⁷Gibeon even to Gazer.

17 And ⁹the fame of David went out into all lands; and the LORD ^bbrought the fear of him upon all nations.

15 AND *David* made him houses in the city of David, and prepared ^aa place for the ark of God, and pitched for it a tent. Then David said, ¹None ought to carry the ^bark of God but the Levites: for them hath the LORD chosen to carry the ark of God, and to minister unto him for ever.

3 And David ^cgathered all Israel together to Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the LORD unto his place which he had prepared for it. And

B. C. 1017.
⁴ That is, Lord of breaches, Isa. 28. 21.
^a 2 Sam. 5. 22.
¹ Ki. 20. 22.
² Josh. 8. 6, 7.
² Sam. 5. 23.
⁷ 2 Sam. 5. 25, Geba.
⁹ Josh. 6. 27.
² Chr. 26. 9.
¹ Matt. 4. 24.
¹ Matt. 14. 1.
^a Deut. 2. 25.
¹ Deut. 11. 25.
 CHAP. 15.
^a ch. 16. 1.
¹ Ps. 132. 2-5.
¹ It is not to carry the ark of God, but for the Levites.
^b Num. 4. 2. 15.
¹ Deut. 10. 8.
¹ Josh. 3. 3.
^c 1 Ki. 8. 1. ch. 13. 5.

his throne was consolidated. Their hostility arose, both from a belief that his patriotism would lead him, ere long, to wipe out the national dishonour at Gilboa; and by fear, that in any invasion of their country, his thorough knowledge of their weak points would give him superior advantages. They resolved, therefore, to surprise and crush him ere he was fairly seated on his throne. 11. they came up to Baal-perazim; and David smote them there. In an engagement fought at mount Perazim (Isa. xxviii. 21), in the valley of Rephaim, a few miles west of Jerusalem, the Philistines were defeated and put to flight. 12. when they had left their gods—(see on 2 Sam. v. 21.)

13. the Philistines yet again spread themselves. They renewed the campaign the next season, taking the same route. David, according to Divine directions, did not confront them. 14. Go not up after them. The text in 2 Sam. v. 23 more correctly has, "Go not up," turn away from them—i. e., by stealing round a Baca-grove, come upon their rear. for God is gone forth before thee. The sound of the going in the tops of the mulberry-trees—i. e., the rustling of the leaves by a strong breeze suddenly rising—was the sign by which David was divinely apprised of the precise moment for the attack. The impetuosity of his onset was like the gush of a pent-up torrent, which sweeps away all in its course; and in allusion to this incident the place got its name. 16. from Gibeon . . . to Gazer—Geba or Gibe'a (2 Sam. v. 25), now Jib'a, in the province of Judah. The line from this to Gazer was intersected by the roads which led from Judah to the cities of the Philistines; and to recover possession of it, therefore, as was effected by this decisive battle, was equivalent to setting free the whole mountains of Judah as far as their most westerly slope (Bertheau).

17. And the fame of David went out into all lands [וְהַשְׁמָעָה לְכָל־אֲרָצוֹת, into all the lands]. and the Lord brought the fear of him upon all nations

[וְהַשְׁמָעָה לְכָל־אֲרָצוֹת, upon all the nations, i. e., around. So the Septuagint, ἐν πάση τῇ γῆ, ἐπὶ πάντα τὰ ἔθνη.]

CHAP. XV. 1-24.—DAVID BRINGS THE ARK FROM OBED-EDOM.

1. David made him houses in the city of David. Through the liberality of his Tyrian ally (ch. xiv. 1), David was enabled to erect not only a palace for himself, but to furnish suitable accommodation for his numerous family. Where polygamy prevails, each wife has a separate house, or suite of apartments, for herself and children. prepared a place for the ark of God, and pitched for it a tent—i. e., made an entirely new one upon the model of the former, the old tabernacle, which Moses had constructed in the wilderness, and which had hitherto served the purpose of a sacred covering, being to be left at Gibeon, in consequence either of the unwillingness of the inhabitants to part with such a venerable relic, or of there being no use for it in Jerusalem, where a more solid and sumptuous edifice was contemplated. If it appear surprising that David "made him houses" before he prepared this new tabernacle, it should be remembered that he had received no divine intimation respecting such a work. 2. Then David said. After the lapse of three months (ch. xiii. 14) the purpose of transporting the ark to Jerusalem was resumed. Time and reflection had led to a discovery of the cause of the painful catastrophe that marred the first attempt, and in preparing for the solemn procession that was now to usher the sacred symbol into its resting-place, David took special care that the carriage should be regulated in strict conformity to the law (Num. iv. 5, 15; vii. 9; x. 17). The rule was explicit and absolute that the Kohathite Levites were to bear it upon their shoulders; and yet David had strangely overlooked this when he ordered the ark to be put upon a cart (ch. xiii. 7).

3. David gathered all Israel together. Some are of opinion that this was done on one of the

5 David assembled the children of Aaron, and the Levites: of the sons of ^aKohath; Uriel the chief, and his ²brethren an hundred and twenty: 6 of the sons of Merari; Asaiah the chief, and his brethren two hundred 7 and twenty: of the sons of Gershon; Joel the chief, and his brethren an 8 hundred and thirty: of the sons of ^eElizaphan; Shemaiah the chief, and 9 his brethren two hundred: of the sons of ^jHebron; Eliel the chief, and 10 his brethren fourscore: of the sons of Uzziel; Amminadab the chief, and his brethren an hundred and twelve.

11 And David called for Zadok and Abiathar the priests, and for the Levites, for Uriel, Asaiah, and Joel, Shemaiah, and Eliel, and Amminadab, and said unto them, Ye *are* the chief of the fathers of the Levites: ^gsanctify yourselves, both ye and your brethren, that ye may bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel unto the place that I have prepared for it.

13 For ⁴because ye *did it* not at the first, the ⁱLORD our God made a breach upon us, for that we sought him not after the due order.

14 So the priests and the Levites sanctified themselves to bring up the 15 ark of the LORD God of Israel. And the children of the Levites bare the ark of God upon their shoulders with the staves thereon, as ^jMoses commanded according to the word of the LORD.

16 And David spake to the chief of the Levites to appoint their brethren *to be* the singers with ^kinstruments of music, psalteries and harps and 17 cymbals, sounding, by lifting up the voice with joy. So the Levites appointed ^lHeman the son of Joel; and of his brethren, ^mAsaph the son of Berechiah; and of the sons of Merari their brethren, ⁿEthan the son 18 of Kushaiah; and with them their brethren of the second *degree*, Zechariah, Ben, and Jaaziel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehiel, and Unni, Eliab, and Benaiah, and Maaseiah, and Mattithiah, and Eliphelah, and Mikneiah, and Obed-edom, and Jeiel, the porters. So the singers, Heman, 20 Asaph, and Ethan, were appointed to sound with cymbals of brass; and Zechariah, and ³Aziel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehiel, and Unni, and 21 Eliab, and Maaseiah, and Benaiah, with psalteries on ⁴Alamoth; and Mattithiah, and Eliphelah, and Mikneiah, and Obed-edom, and Jeiel, and Azariah, with harps ⁵on the Sheminith to excel.

22 And Chenaniah, chief of the Levites, ⁶was for ⁷song: he instructed

B. C 1011.
^a Ex. 6, 16, 18.
² Or. kinsmen.
^e Ex. 6, 22.
^f Ex. 6, 18, Num. 26, 68.
^g Lev. 19, 10, Lev. 0 3.
² Chr 5, 11.
² Chr 29, 5, Eze 48, 11.
^h 2 Sam 6, 3, ch. 13, 7.
ⁱ ch. 13, 10, 11.
^j Ex 25, 14, Num 4, 13, Num. 7, 9.
^k Ps. 33, 2, Ps. 68, 25, 1's: 160, 2-5.
^l ch. 6, 33, m. ch. 6, 39.
ⁿ ch. 6, 41.
³ Jaaziel, ver 18.
⁴ That is virginal, or, treble. Ps. 46, title.
⁵ Or, on the eighth to oversee, Ps. 6, title.
⁶ Or, was for the carriage: he instructed about the carriage.
⁷ lifting up.

three great festivals; but at whatever time the ceremonial took place, it was of great importance to summon a general convocation of the people, many of whom, from the long-continued disorders of the kingdom, might have had little or no opportunity of knowing anything of the ark which had been allowed to remain so long in obscurity and neglect. 4. David assembled the children of Aaron, and the Levites. The children of Aaron were the two priests (v. 11), Zadok and Abiathar, heads of the two priestly houses of Eleazar and Ithamar, and colleagues in the high priesthood (2 Sam. xx. 25). The Levites were the chiefs of their father's house (v. 12), four belonging to the Kohathite branch, on whose shoulders the ark was to be borne—viz., Uriel, Shemaiah, descended from Elizaphan or Elzaphan (Exod. vi. 22), Hebron (Exod. vi. 18; ch. vi. 2), and Amminadab, from Uzziel (Exod. vi. 22).

12. sanctify yourselves. This special sanctification, which was required on all grave and important occasions, consisted in observing the strictest abstinence, as well as cleanliness, both in person and dress (see on Gen. xxxv. 2; Exod. xix. 10, 15), and in the neglect of these rules no step could have been taken (2 Chr. xxx. 3).

16. David spake appoint singers with instruments. These eminent Levites were instructed to train the musicians and singers

who were under them for the solemn procession. The performers were ranged in three choirs or bands, and the names of the principal leaders are given, vv. 17, 18, 21, with the instruments respectively used by each (קְלַיִם וְכִנֹּרוֹת וְצִלְצִלִּים, psalteries, and harps, and cymbals. Josephus says that these instruments were made of electrum, a precious alloy of gold, of a pale yellow colour). Ben, v. 18, is omitted in v. 20. Either it was used merely as a common noun, to intimate that Zechariah was the son of Jaaziel or Aziel, or Ben is the same as Azaziah. 20. on Alamoth [עַל-עֲלָמוֹת]—after the manner of virgins or girls; i. e., with the female voice (see Gesenius, sub voce [עַלְמָה]). Alamoth and Sheminith denote different parts of music; the former answering probably to our treble, or soprano, and the latter to the bass, or perhaps an octave below the treble. In short, Alamoth is supposed to mean with treble voices; Sheminith probably means with bass voices. 21. Mattithiah . . . with harps on the Sheminith to excel. Gesenius renders it, 'Mattithiah . . . played on harps in the octave' (i. e., deep tone, the bass) [עַל-בַּסֵּף], so as to lead the song; i. e., to regulate the singing—to act the part of a precentor.

22. Chenaniah, chief of the Levites. He was not of the six heads of the Levitical families,

- 23 about the song, because he *was* skilful. And Berechiah and Elkanah *were* door-keepers for the ark.
- 24 And Shebaniah, and Jehoshaphat, and Nethaneel, and Amasai, and Zechariah, and Benaiah, and Eliezer, the priests, °did blow with the trumpets before the ark of God: and Obed-edom and Jehiah *were* door-keepers for the ark.
- 25 So °David, and the elders of Israel, and the captains over thousands, went to bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of the house of
- 26 Obed-edom °with joy. And it came to pass, when God helped the Levites that bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, that they °offered seven bullocks and seven rams. And David *was* clothed with a robe of fine linen, and all the Levites that bare the ark, and the singers, and Chenaniah the master of the °song with the singers: David also *had* upon him an ephod of linen. Thus °all Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of the LORD with shouting, and with sound of the cornet, and with trumpets, and with cymbals, making a noise with psalteries and harps.
- 29 And it came to pass, °as the ark of the covenant of the LORD came to the city of David, that Michal the daughter of Saul, looking out at a window, saw king David dancing and playing; and she °despised him in her heart.
- 16 SO °they brought the ark of God, and set it in the midst of the tent that David had pitched for it: and they offered burnt sacrifices and peace offerings before God. And when David had made an end of offering the burnt offerings and the peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD. And he dealt to every one of Israel, both man and woman, to every one a loaf of bread, and a good piece of flesh, and a flagon of wine.
- 4 And he appointed *certain* of the Levites to minister before the ark of

R. C. 1012.
 ° Num 10. 8.
 ch. 16. 6.
 2 Chr. 5. 12,
 13.
 Es. 51. 3.
 Joel 2. 15.
 P 2 Sam. 6. 12,
 13.
 1 Ki. 8. 1.
 ° Deut. 1. 15.
 Deut. 12. 7,
 18.
 1 Sam. °. 12.
 1 Sam. 10.
 19.
 ch 13. 11,
 12.
 Ezra 6. 16.
 Mic. 5. 2.
 ° Num. 23. 1,
 2. 4, 29.
 Num 29. 32.
 Job 42. 8.
 Eze. 3. 23.
 ° Or.
 carr'age.
 ° ch. 13. 8.
 ° 2 Sam. 6.
 16.
 ° Ac's 2. 13.
 CHAP. 16.
 ° 2 Sam. 6. 17-
 19.
 1 Ki. 8. 6.
 2 Chr. 5. 7.

but a chief in consequence of his office, which required learning, without regard to birth or family. instructed about the song. He directed all these bands as to the proper time when each was to strike in or change their notes; or, as some render the passage, "He led the burdens, for he was skilled"—i. e., in the custom which it was necessary to observe in the carriage of the holy things (*Bertheau*). 23. Berechiah and Elkanah were door-keepers—who marched immediately in front, while Obed-edom and Jehiel went in the rear, of the ark.

25. So David, and the elders . . . and the captains . . . went. The pious design of David in ordering all his principal ministers and officers to take part in this solemn work, and imparting so much pomp and imposing ceremony to the procession, was evidently to inspire the popular mind with a profound veneration for the ark, and to give the young, especially, salutary impressions of religion, which would be renewed by the remembrance that they had been witnesses of the august solemnity in which the king and the highest aristocracy of the land participated, vying with all other classes to do honour to the God of Israel. 26. it came to pass, &c.—(see on 2 Sam. vi. 13-23.) they offered seven bullocks and seven rams. The Levites seem to have entered on this duty with fear and trembling; and finding that they might advance without any such indications of Divine wrath as Uzzah had experienced (ch. xiii. 10), they offered an ox and a fatted sheep immediately after starting (2 Sam. vi. 13), and seven bullocks and seven rams—a perfect sacrifice—at the close of the procession (ch. xvi. 1). It is probable that preparations had been made for the offering of similar sacrifices at regular intervals along the way. 27. a robe of fine linen. [יָרֵב is rather

supposed in the later books to denote cotton. The Septuagint has Δαυὶδ περιζωσμενος ἐν στολῇ βυσσίνῃ.] an ephod—a shoulder garment, a cincture or cape over his dress. It was worn by the priests, but was not so peculiar to them as to be forbidden to others (1 Sam. ii. 18; xxii. 18). 28. Thus all Israel brought up the ark . . . with shouting, and with sound of the cornet, &c. The Egyptians conducted their religious processions in the same style (*Wilkinson's* 'Ancient Egyptians,' ii., p. 279).

29. Michal . . . saw . . . David dancing and playing. His movements would be slow and measured, suitable to the grave and solemn character of the music. Though his royal robes were laid aside, he was attired like the other officials, showing a becoming humility in the immediate presence of God. The feelings manifested by Michal were only an ebullition of spleen from a proud and passionate woman.

CHAP. XVI. 1-6.—DAVID'S FESTIVAL SACRIFICE AND LIBERILITY TO THE PEOPLE.

2. he blessed the people in the name of the Lord. The king commended their zeal, supplicated the Divine blessing upon them, and ordered the remains of the thank offerings, which had been profusely sacrificed during the procession, to be distributed in certain proportions to every individual, that the ceremonial might terminate with appropriate festivities (Deut. xii. 7). 3. flagon of wine. The two latter words are a supplement by our translators, and the former is, in other versions, rendered not a "flagon," but a 'cake'—a confection, as the Septuagint renders it—made of flour and honey (see on 2 Sam. vi. 19).

4. he appointed certain of the Levites to minister. No sooner was the ark deposited in its tent than the Levites who were to officiate in

the LORD, and to ^brecord, and to thank and praise the LORD God of
 5 Israel: Asaph the chief, and next to him Zechariah, Jeiel, and Shemir-
 amoth, and Jehiel, and Mattithiah, and Eliab, and Benaiah, and Obed-
 edom: and Jeiel ¹with psalteries and with harps; but Asaph made a
 6 sound with cymbals; Benaiah also and Jahaziel the priests with trumpets
 continually before the ark of the covenant of God.
 7 Then on that day David delivered first ^cthis psalm, to thank the LORD,
 into the hand of Asaph and his brethren.
 8 Give ^dthanks unto the LORD, call upon his name,
 Make known his deeds among the people.
 9 Sing ^eunto him, sing psalms unto him,—talk ye of all his wondrous works.
 10 Glory ^fye in his holy name:
 Let the heart of them rejoice that seek the LORD.
 11 Seek ^gthe LORD and his strength,—seek his face continually.
 12 Remember his ^hmarvellous works that he hath done,
 His wonders, and the judgments of his mouth;
 13 O ye seed of Israel his servant,—ye children of Jacob, his chosen ones.
 14 He *is* the LORD our God;—his judgments *are* in all the earth.
 15 Be ye mindful always of his covenant,
 The word *which* he commanded to a thousand generations;
 16 *Even of the ⁱcovenant* which he made with Abraham,
 And of his oath unto Isaac;
 17 And hath confirmed the same to Jacob for a law,
 And to Israel for an everlasting covenant,
 18 Saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan,
²The lot of your inheritance;
 19 When ye were but ³few,—^jeven a few, and strangers in it.
 20 And *when* they went from nation to nation,
 And from *one* kingdom to another people,
 21 He suffered no man to do them wrong;
 Yea, ^khe reprov'd kings for their sakes,
 22 *Saying*, ^l'Touch not mine anointed,—and do my prophets no harm.
 23 Sing ^munto the LORD, all the earth;
 Show forth from day to day his salvation.
 24 Declare ⁿhis glory among the heathen;
 His marvellous works among all nations.
 25 For ^ogreat *is* the LORD, and greatly to be praised:
 He also *is* to be feared above all gods.
 26 For all the gods ^pof the people *are* idols:
 But the LORD made the heavens.
 27 Glory ^qand honour *are* in his presence;
 Strength and gladness *are* in his place.

B. C. 1012.
^b Ps. 33.
 Ps. 70.
 title.
¹ with in-
 struments
 of psal-
 teries and
 harps.
^c 2 Sam. 22. 1.
^d Ps. 105. 1.
 Ps. 146. 1.
^e Ps. 95. 1, 2.
 Ps. 100. 1.
^f Ps. 31. 3.
 Isa. 45. 25.
^g Amos 5. 6.
 14.
^h Ps. 103. 2.
 Ps. 111. 2.
ⁱ Gen. 17. 2.
 Gen. 26. 3.
 Gen. 28. 13.
 Gen. 35. 11.
 Ex. 3. 15.
 Neh. 9. 8.
 Heb. 6. 13-
 18.
² the cord.
³ men of
 number
^j Gen. 34. 30.
 Acts 7. 5.
 Heb. 11. 13
^k Gen. 12. 17.
 Gen. 20. 3.
 Ex. 7. 16-
 18.
^l Ps. 105. 15.
 1 John 2. 27.
^m Ps. 47. 1.
 Ps. 96. 1.
ⁿ Ps. 22. 27.
 Isa. 12. 4.
^o Ps. 19. 6-9.
 Isa. 40. 25,
 26.
^p Lev. 19. 4.
 Isa. 44. 9-
 20.
 Jer. 10. 3.
 Hab. 2. 18.
 1 Cor. 8. 4.
^q Ps. 8. 1.
 Acts 2. 58.
 Eph. 4. 10.

the choirs before it entered upon their duties—a select number of the musicians being chosen for the service from the list (ch. xv. 19-21) of those who had taken a prominent part in the recent procession. The same arrangement was to be observed in their duties, now that the ark was again stationary: Asaph, with his associates, composing the first or principal company, played with cymbals; Zechariah and his colleagues, with whom were conjoined Jeiel and Obed-edom, forming the second company, used harps and similar instruments. 5. Jeiel—is the same as Aziel, ch. xv. 20. 6. Benaiah also and Jahaziel. The name of the former is mentioned among the priests, ch. xv. 24, but not the latter. The office assigned to them was that of blowing the trumpets at regular intervals before the ark and in the tabernacle (cf. Wilkinson's 'Ancient Egyptians,' ii., pp. 271-278).

7-43.—HIS PSALM OF THANKSGIVING.

7. Then on that day David delivered first this psalm. Amongst the other preparations for this solemn inauguration, the royal bard had composed a special hymn for the occasion. Doubtless it had been previously in the hands of Asaph and his assistants, but it was now publicly committed to them as they entered for the first time on the performance of their sacred duties. It occupies the greater part of this chapter (vv. 8-36), and seems to have been compiled from other psalms of David previously known to the Israelites, as the whole of it will be found with very slight variations in Ps. xcvi.; cv. 1-15; cvi. 47, 48. In the form, however, in which it is given by the sacred historian, it seems to have been the first psalm given for use in the tabernacle service; and abounding, as it does, with the liveliest ascriptions of praise

- 28 Give unto the LORD, ye kindreds of the people,
Give unto the LORD glory and strength.
- 29 Give unto the LORD the glory *due* unto his name:
Bring an offering, and come before him;
Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.
- 30 Fear before him, all the earth:
The world also shall be stable, that it be not moved.
- 31 Let the ^rheavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice;
And let *men* say among the nations, The LORD reigneth.
- 32 Let ^sthe sea roar, and the fulness thereof:
Let the fields rejoice, and all that *is* therein.
- 33 Then shall the trees of the wood sing out at the presence of the LORD,
Because he cometh to judge the earth.
- 34 O ^tgive thanks unto the LORD; for *he is* good:
For his mercy *endureth* for ever.
- 35 And ^usay ye, Save us, O God of our salvation,
And gather us together, and deliver us from the heathen,
That we may give thanks to thy holy name,—*and* glory in thy praise.
- 36 Blessed ^vbe the LORD God of Israel for ever and ever.
And all ^wthe people said, Amen, and praised the LORD.
- 37 So he left there, before the ark of the covenant of the LORD, Asaph
and his brethren, to minister before the ark continually, as every day's
38 work required: and Obed-edom with their brethren, threescore and eight;
39 Obed-edom also the son of Jeduthun, and Hossah, *to be* porters: and
Zadok the priest, and his brethren the priests, ^xbefore the tabernacle of
40 the LORD, ^yin the high place that *was* at Gibeon, to offer burnt offerings
unto the LORD upon the altar of the burnt offering continually ^zmorning
and evening, and *to do* according to all that is written in the law of the
41 LORD, which he commanded Israel; and with them Heman and Jeduthun,
and the rest that were chosen, who were expressed by name, to give
42 thanks to the LORD, ^abecause his mercy *endureth* for ever; and with
them Heman and Jeduthun, with trumpets and cymbals for those that
should make a sound, and with musical instruments of God. And the
43 sons of Jeduthun *were* ^bporters. And ^call the people departed every
man to his house: and David returned to bless ^dhis house.
- 17 NOW ^eit came to pass, as David sat in his house, that David said to
Nathan the prophet, Lo, ^fI dwell in an house of cedars, but the ark of

B. C. 1012.

^r Ps 19. 1.
Ps. 69. 5.
Isa 35. 10.
Luke 2. 13.
Rev. 14. 2.
^s Ps 56 10.
^t Ps 106. 1.
Ps. 107. 1.
Ps. 118. 1.
Ps. 136. 1.
^u Ps 108. 47.
48.
^v 1 Ki. 8. 15.
Ps. 72. 18.
19.
^w Deut 27. 15.
Neh. 8. 6.
^x ch. 21. 29.
^y 2 Chr. 1. 3.
^z 1 Ki. 3. 4.
^a in the
morning.
and in the
evening
Ex 29. 37.
Num. 28. 3.
^b 2 Chr. 5. 13.
^c 2 Chr. 7. 3.
Ezra 3. 11.
Neh. 9. 17.
Ps 55. 10.
Ps. 33. 5.
Jer 37. 11.
Joel 2. 13.
Luke 6. 36.
Jas. 1. 11.
^d for the
gate.
^e 2 Sam 6 19,
29.
^f Gen. 18. 19.
Josh. 24. 15.
CHAP. 17.
^a 2 Sam 7. 1.
Dan. 4. 7,
29. 39.
^b Hag 1. 4.
Acts 7. 46.

to God for the revelation of His glorious character and the display of His marvellous works—containing, as it does, so many pointed allusions to the origin, privileges, and peculiar destiny of the chosen people—it was admirably calculated to animate the devotions and call forth the gratitude of the assembled multitude.

36. **all the people said, Amen.**—(cf. Ps. lxxii. 19, 20; cvi. 48.) In the former the author of the doxology utters the amen himself, while in the latter the people are exhorted to say amen. This may arise from the fact that the latter psalm originally concluded with the injunction to say amen. But in this historical account of the festival, it was necessary to relate that the people obeyed this injunction on the occasion referred to, and therefore the words "let them praise" were altered into "and they praised" (*Bertheau*).

37. **So he left there, &c.** The sequel of the chapter describes the appointment of the sacred musicians and their respective duties. 38. **Obed-edom with their brethren**—Hossah, mentioned at the close of the verse, and a great number besides, (see on ch. xxvi.) **to be porters**—door-keepers. 39. **And Zadok . . . before the tabernacle . . .**

at Gibeon. While the officers above-mentioned, under the superintendence of Abiathar, were appointed to officiate in Jerusalem, whither the ark had been brought, Zadok and the priests subordinate to him were stationed at Gibeon, to perform the sacred service before the ancient tabernacle which still remained there. 40. **continually morning and evening**—as the law enjoined (Exod. xxix. 38; Num. xxviii. 3, 6). **and to do according to all that is written in the law**—(see Num. xxviii.) Thus, in the time of David, the worship was performed at two places, where the sacred things that had been transmitted from the age of Moses were preserved. Before the ark in Jerusalem, Asaph and his brethren officiated as singers, Obed-edom and Hossah served as door-keepers, Benaiah and Jahaziel blew the trumpets; while at the tabernacle and burnt offering in Gibeon, Heman and Jeduthun presided over the sacred music, the sons of Jeduthun were door-keepers, and Zadok, with his suite of attendant priests, offered the sacrifices.

CHAP. XVII. 1-10.—DAVID FORBIDDEN TO BUILD GOD AN HOUSE.

1. as David sat in his house. The details of

2 the covenant of the LORD *remaineth* under curtains. Then Nathan said unto David, Do all that *is* in thine heart; for God *is* with thee.
 3 And it came to pass the same night, that the word of God came
 4 to Nathan, saying, Go and tell David my servant, Thus saith the LORD,
 5 Thou shalt not build me an house to dwell in: for I have not dwelt in an house since the day that I brought up Israel unto this day; but
 1 have gone from ^etent to tent, and from *one* tabernacle to *another*.
 6 Whersoever I have walked with all Israel, spake I a word to any of the judges of Israel, whom I commanded to feed my people, saying, Why
 7 have ye not built me an house of cedars? Now therefore thus shalt thou say unto my servant David, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, I took thee from the sheep-cote, *even* ²from following the sheep, that thou shouldest
 8 be ruler over my people Israel; and I have been with thee whithersoever thou hast walked, and have cut off all thine enemies from before thee, and have made thee a name like the name of the great men that *are* in
 9 the earth. Also I ^awill ordain a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, and they shall dwell in their place, and shall be moved no more; neither shall the children of wickedness waste them ^eany more, as
 10 at the beginning, and since the time that I commanded judges *to be* over my people Israel. Moreover I will subdue all thine enemies. Further-
 11 more I tell thee that the LORD will build thee an house. And it shall come to pass, when thy days be expired that thou must go *to be* with thy fathers, that I will raise up thy seed after thee, which shall be of thy
 12 sons; and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build me an house, and I will establish his throne for ever. I ^fwill be his father, and he shall be my son; and I will not take my mercy away from him, as I
 14 took *it* from *him* that was before thee: but ^gI will settle him in mine

B. C. 1012.
 1 have been.
 Ex. 40. 2.
 2 Sam. 6. 17.
 1 Ki. 8. 4. 16.
 2 from after.
 Jer. 31. 3. 12.
 Eze. 34. 13. 14.
 2 Chr. 15. 2.
 Isa. 41. 17.
 2 Sam. 7. 11. 15.
 ch. 22. 10.
 ch. 28. 6.
 Heb. 1. 5.
 Ps. 2. 6.
 1s. 72. 17.
 Ps. 69. 33.
 1s. 110. 1.
 Isa. 9. 7.
 Eze. 37. 25.
 Dan. 2. 44.
 Dan. 7. 14-27.
 Mic. 4. 1.
 Matt. 21. 1-11.
 Luke. 1. 33. 33.
 Heb. 1. 8.
 Heb. 3. 6.

this chapter were given in nearly similar terms, 2 Sam. vii. The date was toward the latter end of David's reign; for it is expressly said in the former book to have been at the cessation of all his wars. But as to narrate the preparations for the removal of the ark and the erection of the temple was the principal object of the historian, the exact chronology is not followed.

5. I . . . have gone from tent to tent, &c. The literal rendering is, 'I was walking in a tent and in a dwelling.' The evident intution (as we may see from v. 6) was to lay stress upon the fact that God was a *Mithhallek* (a travelling God), and went from one place to another with His *tent* and His entire *dwelling*. The dwelling included not merely the tent, but the fore-courts, with the altar of burnt offerings, &c. (*Bertheau.*)
 6. spake I a word to any of the judges. In 2 Sam. vii. 7 it is "any of the tribes" of Israel. Both are included. But the judges, 'who were commanded to feed the people,' form the more suitable antithesis to David. Why have ye not built me an house of cedars?—*i.e.*, a solid and magnificent temple.
 7. Thus saith the Lord . . . I took thee from the sheep-cote [שֶׁבֶט־צֹאן]. The flocks of nomad people are commonly kept in the open country, without being put within folds. In other circumstances they are driven into uncovered enclosures raised in various parts of their pastoral range. These are the 'sheep-cotes'—a rude structure of mud walls, generally in the form of a round tower of rude construction, high-walled, but open at the top, in which sheep are often inclosed at night to protect them from wild beasts. The meaning is, I elevated you to the throne from a humble condition solely by an act of Divine grace, and not from any antecedent merits of your own (see on 1 Sam. xvi. 11), and enabled you to acquire renown equal or superior to any other

monarch. Your reign will be ever afterwards regarded as the best and brightest era in the history of Israel, for it will secure to the nation a settled inheritance of prosperity and peace, without any of the oppressions or disorders that afflicted them in early times. 9. at the beginning, 10. And since the time that I commanded judges—*i. e.*, including the whole period from Joshua to Saul. I tell thee that the Lord will build thee an house. This was the language of Nathan himself, who was specially directed to assure David, not only of personal blessing and prosperity, but of a continuous line of royal descendants. [שֶׁבֶט־צֹאן] "I tell thee." The Septuagint, combining these two words, have one word, שֶׁבֶט־צֹאן, which they render by *καὶ αὐξήσω σε*, 'and I will increase thee.' The sense is good, and in full accordance with the tenor of the Divine promise. But to found upon a clause thus acquired an argument that the LXX. had a Hebrew text before them superior to our present one will appear unwarranted, when it is considered that these words are translated one way in Samuel and another way here. The Septuagint contains an additional error in this passage; for in that version the words (v. 4) שֶׁבֶט־צֹאן: שֶׁבֶט־צֹאן, "that the Lord will build thee an house," are rendered, *ὁτι οἶκον οἰκοδομήσεις αὐτῶν*, 'that thou wilt build an house to him.' 11. I will raise up thy seed (2 Sam. vii. 12). 13. I will not take my mercy away from him, as I took it. My procedure in dealing with him will be different from my disposal of Saul. Should his misconduct call for personal chastisement, I shall spare his family. If I see it necessary to withdraw my favour and help for a time, it will be a corrective discipline, only to reform and restore, not to destroy. On this passage some have founded an argument for

house and in my kingdom for ever; and his throne shall be established for evermore.

15 According to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David.

16 And ^hDavid the king came and sat before the LORD, and said, ⁱWho am I, O LORD God, and what *is* mine house, that thou hast brought me

17 hitherto? And *yet* this was a small thing in thine eyes, O God; for thou hast *also* spoken of thy servant's house for a great while to come, and

18 hast regarded me according to the estate of a man of high degree, O LORD God. What can David *spe*ak more to thee for the honour of thy servant?

19 for ^jthou knowest thy servant. O LORD, for thy servant's sake, and according ^kto thine own heart, hast thou done all this greatness, in making

20 known all *these* ³great things. O LORD, *there is* ^lnone like thee, neither *is there any* God besides thee, according to all that we have

21 heard with our ears. And what one nation in the earth *is* like thy people Israel, whom God went to *redeem to be* his own people, to make thee a

22 name of greatness and terribleness, by driving out nations from before thy people, whom thou hast redeemed out of Egypt? For thy people

23 Israel didst thou make thine own people for ever; and thou, LORD, becamest their God. Therefore now, LORD, let the thing that thou hast

24 spoken concerning thy servant, and concerning his house, be established for ever, and do as thou hast said. Let it even be established, that ^mthy

25 name may be magnified for ever, saying, The LORD of hosts *is* the God of Israel, *even* a God to Israel; and *let* the house of David thy servant *be*

26 established before thee. For thou, O my God, ⁴hast told thy servant that thou wilt build him an house: therefore thy servant hath found *in*

27 *his heart* to pray before thee. And now, LORD, thou art God, and hast ⁿpromised this goodness unto thy servant: Now therefore ⁵let it please

28 thee to bless the house of thy servant, that it may be before thee for ever: for ^othou blessest, O LORD, and *it shall be* blessed for ever.

18 NOW after this ⁶it came to pass, that David smote the Philistines, and subdued them, and took Gath and her towns out of the hand of the Philistines.

2 And he ^bsmote Moab; and the Moabites became David's servants, and brought gifts.

3 And David smote ¹Hadarezer king of Zobah unto Hamath, as he ^cwent

Solomon's repentance and return to God. 14. I will settle him in mine house—over my people Israel, and in my kingdom. God here asserts His right of supreme sovereignty in Israel. David and Solomon, with their successors, were only the viceregerents whom He nominated or, in His providence, permitted. his throne shall be established for evermore. The posterity of David inherited the throne in a long succession, but not always. In such a connection as this, the phrase, "for evermore," is employed in a restricted sense (see on Lam. iii. 31). We naturally expect the prophet to revert to David before concluding, after having spoken (v. 12) of the building of Solomon's temple. The promise that his house should be blessed was intended as a compensation for the disappointment of his wish to build the temple; and hence this assurance is appropriately repeated at the conclusion of the prophet's address (*Bertheau*).

15. According to all . . . this vision. The revelation of the Divine will was made to the prophet in a dream.

16. David the king . . . sat before the Lord, and said—(see on 2 Sam. vii. 18-29.)

CHAP. XVIII. 1, 2.—DAVID SUBDUES THE PHILISTINES AND MOABITES.

B. C. 10 2.

^k 2 Sam 7. 18.2 Ki 1^a. 14.ⁱ Gen. 32. 10.

Job 7. 17.

^j Ps. 139. 1.

John 21. 17.

Rev. 2. 23.

^h Matt 11. 26.

Eph 1. 11.

³ great-

nesses.

ⁱ Ex. 15. 11.

Deut 3. 4.

Deut. 3. 23.

Ps 66. 8.

^m 2 Chr 6. 33.

Ps 21. 13.

Ps. 72. 19.

Matt. 6. 9.

John 12. 23.

John 17. 1.

Phil. 2. 11.

1 Pet 4. 11.

⁴ hast re-

vealed the

ear of thy

servant.

ⁿ Ex. 34. 6.

Heb. 6. 18.

Tit. 1. 2.

⁵ Or, it hath

pleased

thee.

^o Gen. 27. 33.

Ps 72. 17.

Rom. 1. 29.

CHAP. 18.

^a 2 Sam. 8. 1.^b Num. 4. 17.¹ Or, Hadad-

ezer,

² Sam. 8. 3.^c Gen 15. 18.

Deut. 11. 21.

Ps 10.

title.

1. David . . . took Gath and her towns. The full extent of David's conquests in the Philistine territory is here distinctly stated; whereas in the parallel passage, 2 Sam. viii. 1, it is only described in a general way. Gath was the "Methegammah," or 'arm-bridge,' as it is there called, either from its supremacy, as the capital, over the other Philistine towns, or because, in the capture of that important place and its dependencies, he obtained the complete control of his restless neighbours.

2. he smote Moab. The terrible severities by which David's conquest of that people was marked, and the probable reason of their being subjected to such a dreadful retribution, are narrated, 2 Sam. viii. 2. the Moabites . . . brought gifts—*i. e.*, became tributary to Israel.

3-13.—SMITES HADAREZER AND THE SYRIANS.

3. Hadarezer—or Hadadezer (2 Sam. viii. 3), which was probably the original form of the name, was derived from Hadad, a Syrian deity. It seems to have become the official and hereditary title of the rulers of that kingdom. Zobah. Its situation is determined by the words "unto," or 'towards,' "Hamath," a little to the north-east of Damascus, and is supposed by some to be the

- 4 to establish his dominion by the river Euphrates. And David took from him a thousand chariots, and ^aseven thousand horsemen, and twenty thousand footmen: David also houghed all the chariot *horses*, but reserved of them an hundred chariots.
- 5 And when the Syrians of ²Damascus came to help Hadarezer king of
- 6 Zobah, David slew of the Syrians two and twenty thousand men. Then David put *garrisons* in Syria-damascus; and the Syrians became David's servants, and brought gifts. Thus the LORD preserved ^eDavid whithersoever he went. And David took the shields of gold that were on the
- 8 servants of Hadarezer, and brought them to Jerusalem. Likewise from ³Tibhath, and from Chun, cities of Hadarezer, brought David very much brass, wherewith ^fSolomon made the brasen sea, and the pillars, and the vessels of brass.
- 9 Now when ⁹Tou king of Hamath heard how David had smitten all the
- 10 host of Hadarezer king of Zobah, he sent ^bHadoram his son to king David, ⁴to enquire of his welfare, and ⁵to congratulate him, because he had fought against Hadarezer, and smitten him; (for Hadarezer ⁶had war with Tou;) and *with him* all manner of vessels of gold and silver and
- 11 brass. Them also king David dedicated unto the LORD, with the silver and the gold that he brought from all *these* nations; from Edom, and from Moab, and from the children of Ammon, and from the Philistines, and from Amalek.
- 12 Moreover ⁷Abishai the son of Zeruiah slew of the Edomites in the
- 13 valley of Salt eighteen ⁱthousand. And ^jhe put garrisons in Edom; and all the Edomites became David's servants.
- Thus the LORD preserved David whithersoever he went.
- 14 So David reigned over all Israel, and executed judgment and justice
- 15 among all his people. And Joab the son of Zeruiah *was* over the host; and Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud, ⁸recorder; and Zadok the son of Ahitub, and ⁹Abimelech the son of Abiathar, *were* the priests; and
- 17 ¹⁰Shavsha *was* scribe; and ^kBenaiah the son of Jehoiada *was* over the

- B C. 1019
- ^d 2 Sam. 8. 4, seven hundred.
- ² Darmesek.
- ^e Ps. 91. 14.
- ³ Called in the book of Samuel, Betah and Berothai.
- ^f 1 Ki 7. 15.
- ^g 2 Chr. 4. 12.
- ^h 2 Sam. 6. 9, Toi.
- ⁱ 2 Sam 8.10, Joram.
- ^j Ps. 121. 2.
- ^k Or, to salute.
- ^l to bless.
- ^m was the man of wars.
- ⁿ Abshai.
- ^o 2 Sam 7. 3.
- ^p Gen. 27. 29. Num. 24.18.
- ^q Or, remembrancer.
- ^r Called, Abimelech,
- ^s 2 Sam 8.17.
- ^t Called, Seriah,
- ^u 2 Sam. 8.17, and Shisha,
- ^v 1 Ki 4. 3
- ^w 2 Sam. 8.13.

same place as in earlier times was called Hobah (Gen. xiv. 15). Previous to the rise of Damascus, Zobah was the capital of the kingdom which held supremacy among the petty states of Syria. as he went to establish his dominion by the river Euphrates. Some refer this to David, who was seeking to extend his possessions in one direction towards a point bordering on the Euphrates, in accordance with the promise, Gen. xv. 18; Num. xxiv. 17. But others are of opinion that, as David's name is mentioned, *v. 4*, this reference is most applicable to Hadarezer. 4. David took from him a thousand chariots—(see on 2 Sam. viii. 3-14.) In that passage David is said to have taken 700 horsemen, whereas here it is said that he took 7,000. This great discrepancy in the text of the two narratives seems to have originated with a transcriber in confounding the two Hebrew letters which indicate the numbers, and in neglecting to mark or observe the points over one of them. We have no means of ascertaining whether 700 or 7,000 be the more correct. Probably the former should be adopted (*Davidson's* 'Hermeneutics'). but reserved of them an hundred chariots—probably to grace a triumphal procession on his return to Jerusalem, and after using them in that way, to destroy them like the rest.

8. from Tibhath, and from Chun. These places are called Betah and Berothai, 2 Sam. viii. 8. Perhaps the one might be the Jewish, the other the Syrian name of these towns. Neither their situation nor the connection between them is known. The Arabic version makes them to be Emesa (now

Hems) and Baalbeck, both of which agree very well with the relative position of Zobah.

9. Tou—or Toi, whose dominions border on those of Hadarezer (see on 2 Sam. viii. 9-12; 1 Ki. xi. 15).

12. Moreover Abishai the son of Zeruiah slew of the Edomites in the valley of Salt eighteen thousand. The conduct of the Edomites having provoked a war, David sent an army into their country, subdued it, and made it a tributary province of his kingdom (cf. 2 Sam. viii. 13). 'At the southern extremity of the Dead Sea is a marshy flat, called by the Arabs el-Ghor, probably the place where David defeated the Edomites, and which in Scripture is called "the valley of Salt." This plain in winter is often overflowed. Afterwards, when the rains cease, the waters recede, and a salt, bituminous, slimy morass remains behind, which, seen from afar, from the glittering of the particles of salt, has the appearance of a sheet of water, but on a nearer approach reveals its true character' (*Van de Velde*, ii., pp. 119, 120).

13. he put garrisons in Edom; and all the Edomites became David's servants. This annexation of Edom enlarged the border of Israel on the south-east to the Red Sea, conformably to the Divine promise (Exod. xxiii. 31), and gave him command of its ports.

16. Abimelech—elsewhere Abimelech (cf. ch. xxiv. 6; see on 1 Sam. xiv. 3; xxii. 20; 2 Sam. viii. 17) [Septuagint, Ἀχιμέλεχ. So also the Vulgate, as well as the Syriac and Arabic versions]. Drusus remarks that there were two Abimelechs—one the grandson of Ahitub,

Cherethites and the Pelethites; and the sons of David *were* chief¹¹ about the king.

- 19** NOW^a it came to pass after this, that Nahash the king of the children of Ammon died, and his son reigned in his stead. And David said, I will show kindness unto Hanun the son of Nahash, because his father showed kindness to me. And David sent messengers to comfort him concerning his father. So the servants of David came into the land of
- 3** the children of Ammon to Hanun, to comfort him. But the princes of the children of Ammon said to Hanun, 'Thinkest thou that David doth honour thy father, that he hath sent comforters unto thee? are not his servants come unto thee for to search, and to overthrow, and to spy out
- 4** the land? Wherefore Hanun took David's servants, and shaved them, and cut off their garments in the midst hard by their buttocks, and sent
- 5** them away. Then there went *certain*, and told David how the men were served: and he sent to meet them: for the men were greatly ashamed. And the king said, Tarry at Jericho^b until your beards be grown, and *then* return.
- 6** And when the children of Ammon saw that they had made themselves² odious to David, Hanun and the children of Ammon sent a thousand talents of silver to hire them chariots and horsemen out of Mesopotamia,
- 7** and out of Syria-maachah,^c and out of Zobah. So they hired thirty and two thousand chariots, and the king of Maachah and his people; who came and pitched before^d Medeba. And the children of Ammon gathered themselves together from their cities, and came to battle.
- 8** And when David heard *of it*, he sent Joab, and all the host of the
- 9** mighty men. And the children of Ammon came out, and put the battle in array before the gate of^e the city: and the kings that were come *were*
- 10** by themselves in the field. Now when Joab saw that³ the battle was set

B C. 10 0

¹¹ at the hand of the king. ch. 23. 28.

CHAP. 19.
^a Judg 10. 7-9.

Judg. 1^o. 12-28.

1 Sam. 11. 1, 2.

1 Sam. 12. 12.

2 Sam. 10. 1.

¹ In thine eyes doth David, etc.

^b Josh. 6. 21, 26.

Judg 16 23.

1 Ki 16. 31.

² to stink.

^c 1 Sam 11. 47.

2 Sam. 8. 3.

2 Sa n. 10. 6.

1 Ki. 11. 23. ch. 1^o. 5, 9.

^d Num. 21. 30.

Josh. 13. 9.

Isa 15. 2.

^e 2 Sam. 11. 1.

³ the face of the battle was.

and the other the son of Abiathar. **17. the Cherethites and the Pelethites**—who formed the royal body-guard. The Cherethites were most probably those brave men who all along accompanied David while among the Philistines, and from that people derived their name (1 Sam. xxx. 14; Ezek. xxv. 16; Zeph. xii. 5), as well as their skill in archery; while the Pelethites were those who joined him at Ziklag, took their name from Pelet, the chief man in the company (ch. xii. 3), and, being Benjamites, were expert in the use of the sling.

CHAP. XIX. 1-5.—DAVID'S MESSENGERS, SENT TO COMFORT HANUN, ARE DISGRACEFULLY TREATED.

1. after this. This phrase seems to indicate that the incident now to be related took place immediately, or soon after the wars described in the preceding chapter. But the chronological order is loosely observed, and the only just inference that can be drawn from the use of this phrase is, that some further account is to be given of the wars against the Syrians. **Nahash the king of the children of Ammon died.** There had subsisted a very friendly relation between David and him, begun during the exile of the former, and cemented, doubtless, by their common hostility to Saul. **3. are not his servants come unto thee for to search?—i. e., thy capital, Rabbah (2 Sam. x. 3).** **4. shaved them**—not completely, but only the half of their face. This disrespect to the beard, and indecent exposure of their persons by their clothes being cut off from the girdle downwards, was the grossest indignity to which Jews, in common with all Orientals, could be subjected. No wonder that the men were ashamed to appear in public—that the king recommended

them to remain in seclusion on the border till the mark of their disgrace had disappeared—and then they might, with propriety, return to the court.

6-15.—JOAB AND ABISHAI OVERCOME THE AMMONITES.

6. when the children of Ammon saw that they . . . odious to David. One universal feeling of indignation was roused throughout Israel, and all classes supported the king in his determination to avenge this unprovoked insult on the Hebrew nation. **Hanun . . . sent a thousand talents of silver**—a sum equal to £342,100; to procure the services of foreign mercenaries. **chariots and horsemen out of Mesopotamia . . . Syria-maachah, and . . . Zobah.** The Mesopotamian troops did not arrive during this campaign (v. 16). Syria-maachah lay on the north of the possessions of the trans-Jordanic Israelites, near Gilead. "Zobah" (see on ch. xviii. 3). **7. they hired thirty and two thousand chariots** [כָּרֹסִים, chariots]—but also riders, or cavalry, accustomed to fight either on horseback or in chariots, and occasionally on foot; and accepting this as the true rendering, the number of hired auxiliaries mentioned in this passage agrees exactly with the statement in 2 Sam. x. 6 (see *Davidson's* 'Hermeneutics,' p. 552). 20,000 from Zobah, 12,000 from Tob, equal to 32,000, and 1,000 with the king of Maachah.

8. David . . . sent Joab, and all the host of the mighty men. The whole forces of Israel, including the great military orders, were engaged in this war. **9. children of Ammon . . . put the battle in array before the gate of the city—i. e., outside the walls of Medeba, a frontier town on the Arnon. the kings that were come were by themselves in the field.** The Israelitish

against him before and behind, he chose out of all the ⁴choice of Israel, and put *them* in array against the Syrians. And the rest of the people he delivered unto the hand of ⁵Abishai his brother, and they set *themselves* in array against the children of Ammon. And he said, If the Syrians be too strong for me, then thou shalt help me: but if the children of Ammon be too strong for thee, then I will help thee. Be of good courage, and let us behave ourselves valiantly for our people, and for the cities of our God: and let the LORD do *that which is good* in his sight.

14 So Joab and the people that *were* with him drew nigh before the 15 Syrians unto the battle; and they ^ffled before him. And when the children of Ammon saw that the Syrians were fled, they likewise fled before Abishai his brother, and entered into the city. Then Joab came to Jerusalem.

16 And when the Syrians saw that they were put to the worse before Israel, they sent messengers, and drew forth the Syrians that *were* beyond the ⁶river: and ^gShophach the captain of the host of Hadarezer *went* before them. And it was told David; and he gathered all Israel, and passed over Jordan, and came upon them, and set *the battle* in array against them. So when David had put the battle in array against the 18 Syrians, they fought with him. But the Syrians ^hfled before Israel; and David slew of the Syrians seven thousand *men which fought in* chariots, and forty thousand footmen, and killed Shophach the captain of the host.

19 And when the servants of Hadarezer saw that they were put to the worse before Israel, they made peace with David, and became his servants: neither would the Syrians help the children of Ammon any more.

20 AND ^ait came to pass, that ¹after the year was expired, at the time that kings go out to *battle*, Joab led forth the power of the army, and wasted the country of the children of Ammon, and came and besieged Rabbah. But David tarried at Jerusalem. And ^bJoab smote Rabbah, and destroyed 2 it. And David ^ctook the crown of their king from off his head, and found it ²to weigh a talent of gold, and *there were* precious stones in it; and it was set upon David's head: and he brought also exceeding much 3 spoil out of the city. And he brought out the people that *were* in it, and ³cut *them* with saws, and with harrows of iron, and with axes. Even so

B. C. 10 7.
⁴ Or, young men.
⁵ Abshai, ch. 18. 12.
^f Lev 23 7, 9. Num 14 9. Deut. 23 7. Deut 32 30. Josh 10 10, 11. Josh. 23. 0.
 1 Ki. 20, 13, 14, 19-21.
⁶ That is, Euphrates.
^g 2 Sam. 10 16, Shobach.
^h Ps. 33. 16. Pro. 21. 31.

CHAP. 20.
^a 2 Sam 11. 1. 1 Ki. 10. 22.
¹ at the return of the year.
^b 2 Sam 12. 26. Jer. 49. 2. Eze. 21. 20. Eze. 25. 5.
^c 2 Sam. 12. 30, 31.
² the weight of.
³ Or, made them sawers of stone, diggers of iron, and cutters wood.

army being thus beset by the Ammonites in front, and by the Syrian auxiliaries behind, Joab resolved to attack the latter—the more numerous and formidable host—while he directed his brother Abishai, with a suitable detachment, to attack the Ammonites. Joab's address before the engagement displays the faith and piety that became a commander of the Hebrew people. The mercenaries being defeated, the courage of the Ammonites failed, so that, taking flight, they entrenched themselves within the fortified walls.

16-19.—SHOPHACH SLAIN BY DAVID.
 16. And when the Syrians saw that they were put to the worse—(see on 2 Sam. x. 15-19.) 18. seven thousand men—(cf. 2 Sam. x. 18, which has seven hundred chariots.) Either the text in one of the books is corrupt (*Keil, Davidson*), or the accounts must be combined, giving this result: 7,000 horsemen, 700 chariots, and 40,000 footmen (*Kennicott, Howbigant, Calmet*).

CHAP. XX. 1-3.—RABBAH BESIEGED BY JOAB, SPOILED BY DAVID, AND THE PEOPLE TORTURED.

1. at the time that kings go out to battle—in spring, the usual season, in ancient times, for entering on a campaign; *i. e.*, a year subsequent to the Syrian war. Joab led forth the power . . . and wasted the country . . . of Ammon. The former campaign had been disastrous, owing chiefly to the hired auxiliaries of the Ammonites;

and as it was necessary, as well as just, that they should be severely chastised for their wanton outrage on the Hebrew ambassadors, Joab ravaged their country, invested their capital, Rabbah, and having, after a protracted siege, taken one part of it, the lower town or 'city of waters,' insulated by the winding course of the Jabbock, he, knowing that the fort called 'the royal city' would soon fall, invited the king to come in person, and have the honour of storming it. The knowledge of this fact (mentioned 2 Sam. xii. 26) enables us to recollect the two statements, "David tarried at Jerusalem" (v. 1), and "David and all the people returned to Jerusalem" (v. 3). 2. crown of their king . . . weigh a talent of gold—equal to 125 lbs. Some think that *Malcom*, rendered in our version "their king," should be taken as a proper name, Milcom, or Molech, the Ammonite idol, which, of course, might bear a heavy weight. But, like many other state crowns of Eastern kings, the crown got at Rabbah was not worn on the head, but suspended by chains of gold above the throne. precious stones—Hebrew, a stone, or cluster of precious stones, which was set on David's head. 3. cut them with saws, &c. The Hebrew word, "cut them," is, with the difference of the final letter, the same as that rendered "put them," in the parallel passage of Samuel; and many consider that putting them to saws, axes, &c., means nothing more than that

dealt David with all the cities of the children of Ammon. And David and all the people returned to Jerusalem.

4 And it came to pass after this, that there ⁴arose war at ⁵Gezer with the Philistines; at which time Sibbechai the Hushathite slew ⁶Sippai, *that was* of the children of ⁷the giant: and they were subdued.

5 And there was war again with the Philistines; and Elhanan the son of ⁸Jair slew Lahmi the brother of Goliath the Gittite, whose spear's staff *was* like a weaver's beam.

6 And yet again there was war at Gath, where was ⁹a man of great stature, whose fingers and toes *were* four and twenty, six *on each hand*, 7 and six *on each foot*: and he also was ¹⁰the son of the giant. But when he ¹¹defied Israel, Jonathan the son of ¹²Shimea, David's brother, slew 8 him. These were born unto the giant in Gath; and they fell by the hand of David, and by the hand of his servants.

21 AND ^aSatan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number 2 Israel. And David said to Joab, and to the rulers of the people, Go, number Israel from Beer-sheba even to Dan; ^band bring the number of 3 them to me, that I may know *it*. And Joab answered, The LORD make his people an hundred times so many more as they *be*: but, my lord the king, *are* they not all my lord's servants? why then doth my lord require 4 this thing? why will he be a cause of trespass to Israel? Nevertheless the the ^cking's word prevailed against Joab: wherefore Joab departed, and 5 went throughout all Israel, and came to Jerusalem. And Joab gave the sum of the number of the people unto David. And all *they* of Israel were a thousand thousand and an hundred thousand men that drew sword; and Judah *was* four hundred threescore and ten thousand men that drew 6 sword. But ^dLevi and Benjamin counted he not among them: for the king's word was abominable to Joab.

B. C. 1418.
⁴ stood, or, continued.
⁵ Or, Gob.
⁶ Or, Saph.
⁷ Or, Raphah.
 2 Sam. 21. 13.
⁸ Jaare-oregim,
 2 Sam. 21. 19.
⁹ a man of measure.
¹⁰ born to the giant, or, Raphah.
¹¹ Or, reproached.
¹² Called Shamamah,
 1 Sam. 16. 9.

CHAP. 21.
^a 2 Sam 21. 1.
 1 Ki. 22. 10-22.
 Job 1. 6.
 Zech 3. 1.
 Matt. 4. 3.
^b ch 27, 33.
^c Fro. 29. 15.
 Eccl 8. 4.
 Acts 4. 19.
^d Num. 1. 47-49.
 ch. 27. 24.

David condemned the inhabitants of Rabbah to hard and penal servitude.

48.—THREE OVERTHROWS OF THE PHILISTINES, AND THREE GIANTS SLAIN.

4. war at Gezer—or Gob (see on 2 Sam. xxi. 18-22).

CHAP. XXI. 1-13.—DAVID SINS IN NUMBERING THE PEOPLE.

1. Satan stood up against Israel. God, by withdrawing His grace at this time from David, permitted the Tempter to prevail over him; and as the result of this successful temptation was the entail of a heavy calamity as a punishment from God upon the people, it might be said that "Satan stood up against Israel." "Satan" has not hitherto been used in the sacred history as a name for the devil. For the true meaning of the term, see on 2 Sam. xxiv. 1. number Israel. In the act of taking the census of a people there is not only no evil, but much utility. But numbering Israel—that people who were to become as the stars for multitude—implying a distrust of the Divine promise, was a sin; and though it had been done with impunity in the time of Moses, at that enumeration each of the people had contributed 'half a shekel towards the building of the tabernacle,' that there might be no plague among them when he numbered them (Exod. xxx. 12). Hence the numbering of that people was in itself regarded as an undertaking by which the anger of God could be easily aroused; but when the arrangements were made by Moses for the taking of the census, God was not angry, because the people were numbered for the express purpose of the tax for the sanctuary, and the money which was thus collected, "the atonement money" (Exod. xxx. 16), appeased Him. Everything depended, therefore, upon the design of the census

(Bertheau). The sin of David numbering the people consisted in its being either to gratify his pride, to ascertain the number of warriors he could muster for some meditated plan of conquest, or, perhaps, more likely still, to institute a regular and permanent system of taxation, which he deemed necessary to provide an adequate establishment for the monarchy, but which was regarded as a tyrannical and oppressive exaction—an innovation on the liberty of the people—a departure from ancient usage unbecoming a king of Israel. 3. why will he be a cause of trespass to Israel?—or bring an occasion of punishment on Israel. In Hebrew the word sin is often used synonymously with the punishment of sin. In the course of Providence the people frequently suffer for the misconduct of their rulers. 5. Joab gave the sum. It amounted to 1,100,000 men in Israel capable of bearing arms, inclusive of the 300,000 military (ch. xxvii.), which, being already enlisted in the royal service, were not reckoned, 2 Sam. xxiv. 9, and to 470,000 men in Judah, omitting 30,000 which formed an army of observation stationed on the Philistine frontier (2 Sam. vi. 1). The Syriac version gives the same number in this passage as is stated in the parallel one, 2 Sam. xxiv. 9. So large a population at this early period, considering the limited extent of the country, and comparing it with the earlier census (Num. xxvi.), is a striking proof of the fulfilment of the promise, Gen. xv. 5. 6. Levi and Benjamin counted he not. If this census was ordered with a view to the imposition of taxes, this alone would account for Levi, who were not warriors (v. 5), not being numbered (see on Num. i. 47-55). The population of Benjamin had been taken (see on ch. vii. 6-11), and the register preserved in the archives of that

- 7 And ¹God was displeased with this thing; therefore he smote Israel.
 8 And David said unto God, ²I have sinned greatly, because I have done this thing: but ³now, I beseech thee, do away the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very foolishly.
 9, And the LORD spake unto Gad, David's ⁴seer, saying, Go and tell David, 10 saying, Thus saith the LORD, I ⁵offer thee three *things*: choose thee one 11 of them, that I may do *it* unto thee. So Gad came to David, and said 12 unto him, Thus saith the LORD, ⁶Choose thee either ⁷three years' famine; or three months to be destroyed before thy foes, while that the sword of thine enemies overtaketh *thee*; or else three days the sword of the LORD, even the pestilence, in the land, and the angel of the LORD destroying throughout all the coasts of Israel. Now therefore advise thyself what 13 word I shall bring again to him that sent me. And David said unto Gad, I am in a great strait: let me fall now into the hand of the LORD; for very ⁸great *are* his mercies: but let me not fall into the hand of man.
 14 So the LORD sent pestilence upon Israel: and there fell of Israel seventy 15 thousand men. And God sent an ⁹angel unto Jerusalem to destroy it: and as he was destroying, the LORD beheld, and ¹⁰he repented him of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed, It is enough, stay now thine hand. And the angel of the LORD stood by the threshing-floor of ¹¹Ornan the Jebusite. And David lifted up his eyes, ¹²and saw the angel of the LORD stand between the earth and the heaven, having a drawn sword in his hand stretched out over Jerusalem: then David and the elders of 17 *Israel, who were* clothed in sackcloth, fell upon their faces. And David

B. C. 117.

- ¹ And it was evil in the eyes of the LORD concerning this thing.
² 2 Sam. 24. 10.
 Job 42. 2, 6.
³ 2 Sam. 12. 13.
⁴ 1 Sam. 9. 9.
⁵ stretch out.
⁶ Take to thee.
⁷ 2 Sam. 24. 13.
⁸ Or, many, Lam. 3. 22, 2 Sam. 24. 16.
 Jer. 7. 12. Jer. 21. 9, 18.
⁹ Gen. 6. 6.
 Judg. 2. 14.
¹⁰ Araunab, 2 Sam. 24. 18.
¹¹ 2 Chr. 3. 1.

tribe. This, however, was taken on another occasion, and by other agency than that of Joab. The non-numbering of these two tribes might have originated in the special and gracious providence of God, partly because Levi was devoted to His service, and Benjamin had become the least of all the tribes (Judg. xxi.); and partly because God foresaw that they would remain faithful to the house of David in the division of the tribes, and therefore would not have them diminished. From the course followed in this survey (see on 2 Sam. xxiv. 4-8), it would appear that Judah and Benjamin were the last tribes that were to be visited, and that, after the census in Judah had been finished, Joab, before entering on that of Benjamin, had to return to Jerusalem, where the king, now sensible of his great error, gave orders to stop all further proceedings in the business. Not only the remonstrance of Joab at the first, but his slow progress in the survey (2 Sam. xxiv. 8), showed the strong repugnance, and even horror, of the old general at this unconstitutional measure.

9. the Lord spake unto Gad, David's seer. Although David was himself endowed with a prophetic gift, yet, in matters relating to himself or his kingdom, he was in the habit of consulting the Lord through the medium of the priests, and when he failed to do so, a prophet was sent on extraordinary occasions to admonish or chastise him. Gad, a private friend, was occasionally employed as the bearer of these prophetic messages. 11. Choose thee, &c. To the three evils these correspond in beautiful agreement: three years, three months, three days (*Bertheau*). (See on 2 Sam. xxiv. 13.) 13. let me fall now into the hand of the Lord. . . let me not fall into the hand of man. Experience had taught him that human passion and vengeance had no bounds, whereas our wise and gracious Father in heaven knows the kind, and regulates the extent, of chastisement which every one needs.

14. So the Lord . . . 15. sent an angel unto

Jerusalem to destroy it. The infliction only of the pestilence is here noticed, without any account of its duration or its ravages, while a minute description is given of the visible appearance and menacing attitude of the destroying angel. (As to the reality of this angelic appearance, and the insuperable objections to the opinion that the "angel" was only a bold figure or poetical description of the pestilence, see on 2 Sam. xxiv.) stood by the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite. Ornan was probably his Hebrew or Jewish, Araunah his Jebusite or Canaanitish, name. Whether he was the old king of Jebus, as that title is given to him, 2 Sam. xxiv. 23, or not, he had been converted to the worship of the true God, and was possessed both of property and influence. 16. David lifted up his eyes, and saw the angel . . . stand between the earth and the heaven. This vision was exhibited to David, that he might have time to offer up prayers for the city, which was going to have the infliction of the plague. So that the hovering of the angel was to show that there was room to pray for mercy, just as God was going to deal out the punishment. It was not as yet fallen on the land, nor yet had done any execution. 'When God's wrath is to be executed, the earthly and visible ministers of His judgments, and the unseen armies of heaven, are evermore leagued together. The natural eye sees only those; the spiritual eye beholds the other also behind. It is ever at such moments as it was with Israel of old. The multitude, to whom the purged spiritual eye was wanting, beheld only the outward calamity—the wasting pestilence; but "David lifted up his eyes, and saw the angel of the Lord stand between the earth and the heaven, having a drawn sword in his hand" (*Trench*, 'On the Parables,' p. 225). David and the elders . . . clothed in sackcloth, fell upon their faces. They appeared in the garb, and assumed the attitude, of humble penitents, confessing their sins and deprecating the wrath of God.

said unto God, *Is it* 'not I *that* commanded the people to be numbered? even I it is that have sinned, and done evil indeed; but *as for* ^m these sheep, what have they done? Let ⁿ thine hand, I pray thee, O LORD my God, be on me, and on ^o my father's house; but not on thy people, that they should be plagued.

18 Then the angel of the LORD commanded Gad to say to David, that David should go up, and set up an altar unto the LORD in the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite. And David went up at the saying of Gad,

19 which he spake in the name of the LORD. ⁶And Ornan turned back, and saw the angel; and his four sons with him hid themselves. Now Ornan was threshing wheat. And as David came to Ornan, Ornan looked, and saw David, and went out of the threshing-floor, and bowed himself to David with *his* face to the ground. Then David said to Ornan, ⁷Grant me the place of *this* threshing-floor, that I may build an altar therein unto the LORD: thou shalt grant it me for the full price; that the plague may be ^pstayed from the people. And Ornan said unto David, Take *it* to thee, and let my lord the king do *that which is* good in his eyes: lo, I give *thee* the oxen *also* for burnt offerings, and the threshing instruments for wood, and the wheat for the meat offering; I give it all. And king David said to Ornan, Nay; but I will verily buy it for the full price: for I will not take *that which is* thine for the LORD, nor offer burnt offerings without cost. So ²David gave to Ornan for the place six hundred shekels of gold by weight. And David built there an altar unto the LORD, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings, and called upon the LORD;

B. C. 107.
 2 Sam. 4. 17.
 1s 51. 4.
 Eze. 16 63.
 1 Ki 22. 17.
 Ps. 44. 11.
 Gen 41. 33.
 Ex. 32. 32, 33.
 John 10. 11, 12.
 Rom 9 3
 1 John 3. 16.
 Ex. 20. 5.
 Isa. 39. 7. 8.
 Or, When Ornan turned back and saw the angel, then he and his four sons with him hid themselves.
 7 Give.
 Num 16. 18.
 Num. 25. 8.
 2 Sam. 21. 21.

18-30.—HE BUILDS AN ALTAR.

18. the angel of the Lord commanded Gad to say. The order about the erection of an altar, as well as the indication of its site, is described, 2 Sam. xxiv. 18, as brought directly by Gad. Here we are informed of the quarter whence the prophet got his commission. It is only in the later stages of Israel's history that we find angels employed in communicating the Divine will to the prophets. the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite. It appears that long after David had taken the fortress of Jebus and fixed his residence there, Jerusalem was not the exclusive property of any one tribe. Judah and Benjamin continued without doubt to inhabit it, in brotherly communion, and the Jebusite lived there, as before, along with his new masters. 20. Ornan turned back, and saw the angel. [The Septuagint has, *καὶ ἐπέστρέψεν Ὁρνά, καὶ εἶδε τὸν βασιλέα*, and Ornan turned back, and saw the king. This is the reading in 2 Sam. xxiv. 20.] Ornan was threshing wheat [כֹּשֶׁף, plural, grains of wheat; כֹּשֶׁף, was treading out wheat; Septuagint, ἦν ἀλοῶν πυρός, was bruising, crushing wheat]. In later times the Jews appear to have used threshing instruments (cf. Isa. xli. 15), and the verb [כֹּשֶׁף], was treading, may have been retained in common use, merely from the early custom of triturating by oxen (*Sir G. Wilkinson, in Rawlinson's 'Herodotus,'* ii., p. 22). If the census was entered upon in autumn, the beginning of the civil year, the nine and a half months it occupied would end at wheat harvest. The common way of threshing corn is by spreading it out on a high level area, and driving backwards and forwards upon it two oxen harnessed to a clumsy sledge with three rollers and some sharp spikes. The driver sits on his knees on the box, while another peasant is employed in drawing back the straw and separating it from the grain underneath. By this operation the chaff is very much chopped, and the grain threshed out. 23. I give thee . . . the threshing instruments for

wood—i. e., to burn the sacrifice of the oxen. Very little of the real import—the *haste*, and the *value* of the present offered—can be understood in this country. The offering was made for *instant* use. Ornan, hereby hoping to terminate the pestilence without a moment's delay, 'gave all'—oxen, the large threshing machine, and the wheat. 25. David gave . . . for the place six hundred shekels of gold. At first he bought only the cattle and the threshing instruments, for which he paid fifty shekels of silver (2 Sam. xxiv. 24); afterwards he purchased the whole property, mount Moriah, on which the future temple stood. Although gold is frequently mentioned in the early books of Scripture, it is only as jewels and ornaments. It was not used as a medium of trade or commerce. The purchase of Araunah's threshing-floor is the first transaction in which it is recorded that gold was used as money.—High in the centre of the mountain platform rises a remarkable rock, now covered by the dome of 'the Sakrah.' It is irregular in its form, and measures about 60 feet in one direction and 50 feet in the other. It is the natural surface of mount Moriah, and is thought by many to be the rock of the threshing-floor of Araunah, selected by David, and continued by Solomon and Zerubabel, as 'the unhewn stone' on which to build the altar (*Barlett's 'Walks about Jerusalem; Stanley*). 26. David built there an altar. He went in procession with his leading men from the royal palace, down mount Zion, and through the intervening city; and, having plenty of space on his own property, he was commanded, under peremptory direction, to go a considerable distance from his home, up mount Moriah, to erect an altar on premises which he had to buy. It was on or close to the spot where Abraham had offered up Isaac, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. 'I would remark, on this sole decided instance of a peace offering being made away from the sanctuary, that it is mentioned as extraordinary: the peculiar circum-

and ^rhe answered him from heaven by fire upon the altar of burnt offering.
27 And the LORD commanded the angel, and he put up his sword again into the sheath thereof.

28 At that time when David said that the LORD had answered him in the
29 threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite, then he sacrificed there. For ^sthe tabernacle of the LORD, which Moses made in the wilderness, and the altar of the burnt offering, *were* at that season in the high place at ^tGibeon.
30 But David could not go before it to enquire of God: for he ^uwas afraid
22 because of the sword of the angel of the LORD. THEN David said, "This *is* the house of the LORD God, and this *is* the altar of the burnt offering for Israel.

2 And David commanded to gather together ^bthe strangers that *were* in the land of Israel; and he set masons to hew wrought stones to build
3 the house of God. And David prepared iron in abundance for the nails for the doors of the gates, and for the joinings; and brass in abundance
4 without ^cweight; also cedar trees in abundance: for ^dthe Zidonians, and
5 they of Tyre, brought much cedar wood to David. And David said, ^eSolomon my son *is* young and tender, and the house *that is* to be builded for the LORD *must be* exceeding magnificent, of fame and of glory throughout all countries: I will *therefore* now make preparation for it. So David prepared abundantly before his death.

6 Then he called for Solomon his son, and charged him to build an house
7 for the LORD God of Israel. And David said to Solomon, My son, as for me, ^fit was in my mind to build an house ^gunto the name of the LORD
8 my God: but the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ^hThou hast shed blood abundantly, and hast made great wars: thou shalt not build an house unto my name, because thou hast shed much blood upon the earth
9 in my sight. Behold, ⁱa son shall be born to thee, who shall be a man of rest; and I will give him ^jrest from all his enemies round about: for his name shall be ^kSolomon, and I will give peace and quietness unto Israel
10 in his days. He ^lshall build an house for my name; and ^mhe shall be my son, and I *will be* his father; and I will establish the throne of his

B. C. 1077.

^r Lev. 9. 24.

2 Chr. 3. 1.

2 Chr. 7. 1.

^s ch. 16. 9.^t 1 Ki. 3. 4.^u Ps. 119. 150.

Heb. 12. 29,

29.

Rev. 1. 17.

CHAP. 23.

^a Deut. 12. 5.

2 Sam. 24.

18.

ch. 21. 18.

19, 26, 28.

2 Chr. 3. 1.

John 4. 20-

22.

^b 1 Ki. 9. 21.^c 1 Ki. 7. 47.^d 1 Ki. 5. 6.^e ch. 29. 1.^f 2 Sam. 7. 2.

1 Ki. 8. 17.

ch. 28. 2.

Acts 7. 46.

^g Deut. 12. 5.^h 1 Ki. 5. 3.

ch. 23. 3.

ⁱ ch. 23. 5.^j 1 Ki. 4. 25.

1 Ki. 5. 4.

^k That is,

Peaceable

and perfect.

^l 2 Sam. 7. 13.

1 Ki. 5. 5.

ch. 17. 12.

ch. 2^o. 6.^m Heb. 1. 5.

stances of the case, and the revealed will of God, occasioned a departure from the otherwise constant rule' ('Israel after the Flesh,' p. 148: see on 2 Sam. xxiv. 25). answered him from heaven by fire—(see Lev. ix. 24; 1 Ki. xviii. 21-23; 2 Ki. i. 12; 2 Chr. vii. 1.)

28. when David saw . . . he sacrificed there—or he continued to sacrifice there. Perceiving his sacrifice was acceptable, he proceeded to make additional offerings there, and seek favour by prayer and expiatory rites; for the dread of the menacing angel destroying Jerusalem while he was absent in the centre of worship at Gibeon, especially reverence for the Divine Being, led him to continue his adorations in that place which God (2 Chr. iii. 1) had hallowed by the tokens of His presence and gracious acceptance.

CHAP. XXII. 1-5.—DAVID PREPARES FOR BUILDING THE TEMPLE.

1. David said, This is the house. By the miraculous sign of fire from heaven, and perhaps other intimations, David understood it to be the will of God that the national place of worship should be fixed there, and he forthwith proceeded to make preparations for the erection of the temple on that spot.

2. David commanded to gather together the strangers—partly the descendants of the old Canaanites (2 Chr. viii. 7-10), from whom was exacted a tribute of bond-service, and partly war captives (2 Chr. ii. 7), reserved for the great work he contemplated.

6-19.—HE INSTRUCTS SOLOMON.

5. Then he called for Solomon . . . and charged him. The earnestness and solemnity of this address creates an impression that it was given a little before the old king's decease. He unfolded his great and long-cherished plan, enjoined the building of God's house as a sacred duty on him as his son and successor, and described the resources that were at command for carrying on the work. The vast amount of personal property he had accumulated, in the precious metals, must have been spoil taken from the people he had conquered and the cities he had sacked. 8. thou shalt not build an house unto my name, because thou hast shed much blood. An innate feeling of propriety dictates the purification of the worshipper from all defilement when about to engage in the solemn rites of religion. Above all, persons polluted with blood were prohibited even amongst the heathen, of which many instances are found in the works of classical writers, (see *Homer*, 'Iliad,' vi., 335; *Euripides*, 'Iphigenia in Tauris,' v., 380; *Virgil*, 'Æneid,' vi.) The same cause prevented the acceptance of the Jews in their sacred services (Isa. i. 15), and operated as a disqualification to David's building the temple. 9. Behold, a son shall be born to thee . . . 10. He shall build an house for my name. This Divine declaration, which pointed to David's posterity, can be understood only in reference to the erection of the material temple. David here refers the announcement primarily to Solomon, and Solomon

- 11 kingdom over Israel for ever. Now, my son, the ^m LORD be with thee; and prosper thou, and build the house of the LORD thy God, as he hath
- 12 said of thee. Only the LORD ⁿ give thee wisdom and understanding, and give thee charge concerning Israel, that thou mayest keep the law of
- 13 the LORD thy God. Then ^o shalt thou prosper, if thou takest heed to fulfil the statutes and judgments which the LORD charged Moses with concerning Israel: ^p be strong, and of good courage; dread not, nor be dismayed.
- 14 Now, behold, ² in my trouble I have prepared for the house of the LORD an hundred thousand talents of gold, and a thousand thousand talents of silver; and of brass and iron without weight; for it is in abundance: timber also and stone have I prepared; and thou mayest add thereto.
- 15 Moreover *there are* workmen with thee in abundance, hewers and ³ workers of stone and timber, and all manner of cunning men for every
- 16 manner of work. Of the gold, the silver, and the brass, and the iron, *there is* no number. Arise *therefore*, and be doing, and the LORD be with thee.
- 17 David also commanded all the princes of Israel to help Solomon his son, *saying*, *Is not the LORD* ^q your God with you? and ² hath he *not* given you rest on every side? for he hath given the inhabitants of the land into mine hand; and the land is subdued before the LORD, and before his people. Now ^r set your heart and your soul to seek the LORD your God: arise therefore, and build ye the sanctuary of the LORD God, to ^s bring the ark of the covenant and the LORD, and the holy vessels of God, into the house that is to be built to the name of the LORD.
- 23 SO when David was old and full of days, he made ^a Solomon his son king over Israel.
- 2 And he gathered together all the princes of Israel, with the priests and
- 3 the Levites. Now the Levites were numbered from the age of ^b thirty years and upward: and their number by their polls, man by man, was
- 4 thirty and eight thousand. Of which, twenty and four thousand *were* ¹ to set forward the work of the house of the LORD; and six thousand
- 5 *were* officers and judges: moreover four thousand *were* porters; and four thousand praised the LORD with the instruments ^a which I made, *said David*, to praise *therewith*.
- 6 And ^c David divided them into ² courses among the sons of Levi, *namely*, Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.

B. C. 1017.

^m Rom. 8. 31.ⁿ Deut. 4. 6.

1 Ki. 3. 9.

Ps 72. 1.

^o Josh. 1. 7.

1 Ki. 6. 12.

13

1 Ki. 9. 4, 5.

ch. 11. 9.

13.

ch. 28. 7.

1sa. 5. 10.

^p Deut. 31. 7.

ch. 28. 10.

² Or, in my

poverty.

³ That is,

ma-sons

and car-

penters.

^q Deut. 12. 9.

Josh. 12. 4.

2 Sam. 7. 1.

ch. 23. 2^s.^r 2 Chr. 50. 3.

1 Ki. 8. 6.

2 Chr. 5. 7.

2 Chr. 6. 11.

CHAP. 13.

^a 1 Ki. 1. 53.

ch. 2. 5.

ch. 29. 12-

25.

^b Num. 4. 3.

1 Or, to

oversee.

^c Deut. 16. 18.

ch. 26. 29.

2 Chr. 19. 8.

^d 1 Ki. 10. 12.

2 Chr. 29. 25.

Amos 6. 5.

^e Ex. 6. 16.

Num. 56. 57.

ch. 6. 1.

2 Chr. 8. 14.

Ezra 6. 13.

2 divisions.

applies it to himself, 1 Ki. v. 5; 2 Chr. vi. 7; and the Lord applies it also to Solomon, when He appeared to him (2 Chr. vii. 7, 18). 12. Keep the law of the Lord thy God. 13. Then shalt thou prosper, &c.—(cf. 2 Sam. viii. 12-17.)

CHAP. XXIII. 1.—DAVID MAKES SOLOMON KING.

1. when David was old . . . he made Solomon . . . king. This brief statement, which comprises the substance of 1 Ki. 1. 32-48, is made here solely to introduce an account of the preparations carried on by David during the latter years of his life for providing a national place of worship.

2-6.—NUMBER AND DISTRIBUTION OF THE LEVITES.

2. he gathered together all the princes of Israel. All important measures relating to the public interest were submitted for consideration to a general assembly of the representatives of the tribes, (ch. xiii. 1; xv. 25; xxii. 17; xxvi.) 3. the Levites were numbered . . . thirty and eight thousand—four times their number at the early census taken by Moses, (see on Num. iv. and xxvi.) It was in all likelihood this vast increase that

suggested and rendered expedient that classification, made in the last year of David's reign, which the present and three subsequent chapters describe, by their polls, man by man—women and children were not included. 4. twenty and four thousand were to set forward the work of the house of the Lord. They were not to preside over all the services of the temple. The Levites were subject to the priests, and they were superior to the Nethinims and other servants, who were not of the race of Levi. But they had certain departments of duty assigned, some of which are here specified. 5. praised the Lord with the instruments which I made. David seems to have been an inventor of many of the musical instruments used in the temple (Amos vi. 5).

6. David divided them into courses among the sons of Levi. These are enumerated according to their fathers' houses, but no more of these are mentioned here than the 24,000 who were engaged in the work connected with the Lord's house. The fathers' houses of those Levites corresponded with the classes into which they (*Josephus*, 'Antiquities') as well as the priests were divided (see on ch. xxiv. 20-31; xxvi. 20-28).

7 Of the Gershonites were Laadan and Shimei. The sons of Laadan; 9 the chief was Jehiel, and Zetham, and Joel, three. The sons of Shimei; Shelomith, and Haziel, and Haran, three. These were the chief of the 10 fathers of Laadan. And the sons of Shimei were Jahath, Zina, and 11 Jeush, and Beriah. These four were the sons of Shimei. And Jahath was the chief, and Zizah the second: but Jeush and Beriah had not many sons; therefore they were in one reckoning, according to their father's house.

12, The sons of Kohath; Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel, four. The 13 sons of Amram; Aaron and Moses: and Aaron was separated, that he should sanctify the most holy things, he and his sons for ever, to burn incense before the LORD, to minister unto him, and to bless in his name 14 for ever. Now concerning Moses the man of God, his sons were named 15 of the tribe of Levi. The sons of Moses were Gershom and Eliezer. Of 17 the sons of Gershom, Shebuel was the chief. And the sons of Eliezer were Rehabiah the chief. And Eliezer had none other sons; but the 18 sons of Rehabiah were very many. Of the sons of Izhar; Shelomith the 19 chief. Of the sons of Hebron; Jeriah the first, Amariah the second, 20 Jahaziel the third, and Jekameam the fourth. Of the sons of Uzziel; Micah the first, and Jesiah the second.

21 The sons of Merari; Mahli, and Mushi. The sons of Mahli; Eleazar 22 and Kish. And Eleazar died, and had no sons, but daughters: and their 23 brethren the sons of Kish took them. The sons of Mushi; Mahli, and Eder, and Jeremoth, three.

24 These were the sons of Levi after the house of their fathers; even the chief of the fathers, as they were counted by number of names by their polls, that did the work for the service of the house of the LORD, from the age of twenty years and upward. For David said, The LORD God of Israel hath given rest unto his people, that they may dwell in Jerusalem 26 for ever: and also unto the Levites: they shall no more carry the tabernacle, nor any vessels of it for the service thereof. For by the last words of David the Levites were numbered from twenty years old and above: 28 because their office was to wait on the sons of Aaron, for the service of the house of the LORD, in the courts, and in the chambers, and in the

B. C. 1015.
 did not multiply sons.
 Ex. 6. 18, ch. 6. 2.
 Ex. 28. 1. Heb. 5. 4.
 Ex. 30. 7.
 Lev. 10. 1, 2.
 Lev. 16. 12. Num. 16. 40.
 1 Sam. 2. 28.
 Deut. 21. 5.
 Num. 6. 23.
 Ex. 2. 22.
 Or, the first.
 were highly multiplied.
 Or, kinsmen.
 Gen. 13. 8.
 Num. 36. 6.
 ch. 24. 10.
 Num. 10. 17.
 Num. 1. 3.
 Num. 4. 3.
 Num. 8. 21.
 Ezra 3. 8.
 Or, and he dwelleth in Jerusalem, etc.
 Num. 4. 5.
 numbers.
 their station was at the hand of the sons of Aaron.
 Neh. 11. 21.

7-11.—SONS OF GERSHON.

7. The Gershonites. They had nine fathers' houses, six descended from Laadan and three from Shimei.

12-20.—OF KOHATH.

12. The sons of Kohath. He was the founder of nine Levitical fathers' houses. 13. Aaron was separated, that he should sanctify the most holy things—i. e., according to Hitzig, Wieseler, and others, to the altar of burnt offering (Exod. xxix. 37) לְקַדְּשׁוֹ קִדְּשׁוֹ קִדְּשׁוֹ, to sanctify him as a most holy person]. This we believe to be the true meaning. Aaron could not sanctify the vessels and furniture of the sanctuary, which, having been already dedicated to God, were already sanctified as far as they could be: neither can the word here denote 'the holy of holies,' 'the most holy place;' for it is difficult to perceive how Aaron should sanctify the innermost crypt and not the whole sacred edifice, which (Num. xviii. 10) is called "the most holy place." Besides, these words, when they signify the holy of holies, have always the article prefixed (see this subject fully discussed, *Hengstenberg*, 'Christology,' iii., pp. 120-123). he and his sons for ever—himself and his eldest sons as the high priests in succession, as well as all his male descendants as the priests; for the works which, it is specified, they were to do—viz.,

to burn incense (2 Chr. xxix. 11; Luke i. 9), and to minister in the temple, and to invoke the blessing of God on the people (Num. vi. 32; Deut. x. 8)—were common to all the priests. 14. concerning Moses. His sons were ranked with the Levites generally, but not introduced into the distinctive portion of the descendants of Levi, who were appointed to the special functions of the priesthood.

21-23.—OF MERARI.

21. The sons of Merari. They comprised six fathers' houses. Summing them together, Gershon founded nine fathers' houses, Kohath nine, and Merari six—total, twenty-four.

24-32.—OFFICE OF THE LEVITES.

24. These were the sons of Levi . . . that did the work . . . from . . . twenty years and upward. The enumeration of the Levites was made by David (v. 3) on the same rule as that followed by Moses (Num. iv. 3)—viz., from thirty years. But he saw afterwards that this rule might be beneficially relaxed, and that the enrolment of Levites for their proper duties might be made from twenty years of age. The ark and tabernacle being now stationary at Jerusalem, the labour of the Levites was greatly diminished, as they were no longer obliged to transport its heavy furniture from place to place. 28. their office was to wait on the sons of Aaron—i. e., the priests for the time being. 29.

purifying of all holy things, and the work of the service of the house of
 29 God; both for ²the showbread, and for ⁷the fine flour for meat offering,
 and for ⁸the unleavened cakes, and for *that which is baked in the* ¹⁰pan,
 30 and for that which is fried, and for all manner of ⁴measure and size; and
⁶to stand every morning to thank and praise the LORD, and likewise at
 31 even; and to offer all burnt sacrifices unto the LORD ⁹in the sabbaths, in
 the new moons, and on the ¹¹set feasts, by number, according to the order
 32 commanded unto them, continually before the LORD: and that they should
²keep the charge of the tabernacle of the congregation, and the charge of
 the holy *place*, and ³the charge of the sons of Aaron their brethren, in the
 service of the house of the LORD.

24 NOW *these are* the divisions of the sons of Aaron. ⁶The sons of
 2 Aaron; Nadab, and Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. But ^bNadab and
 Abihu died before their father, and had no children: therefore Eleazar
 3 and Ithamar executed the priest's office. And David distributed them,
 both Zadok of the sons of Eleazar, and Ahimelech of the sons of Ithamar,
 according to their offices in their service.

4 And there were more chief men found of the sons of Eleazar than of the
 sons of Ithamar; and *thus* were they divided. Among the sons of Eleazar
there were sixteen chief men of the house of *their* fathers, and eight among
 5 the sons of Ithamar, according to the house of their fathers. Thus were
 they divided ^cby lot, one sort with another; for the governors of the sanctu-
 ary, and governors of *the house* of God, were of the sons of Eleazar, and
 of the sons of Ithamar.

6 And Shemaiah the son of Nethaneel ^athe scribe, *one* of the Levites,
 wrote them before the king, and the princes, and Zadok the priest, and
 Ahimelech the son of Abiathar, and *before* the chief of the fathers of the
 priests and Levites: one ¹principal household being taken for Eleazar, and
one taken for Ithamar.

B C. 1015.

⁹ Ex. 25. 20.⁷ Lev. 6. 20.

ch. 9. 29.

⁶ Lev. 2. 4.¹⁰ Or, flat plate.⁶ Lev. 19. 35.

ch. 16. 37.

ch. 25. 1-7.

2 (hr. 21. 26-

23.

2 Chr. 31. 2.

¹¹ Num. 10. 10.

Ps. 81. 3.

Isa. 1. 13,

14.

¹² Lev. 23. 4.

Num. 28. 20.

² Num. 1. 53.³ Num. 3. 6.

1 Ki. 5. 4.

ch. 9. 27.

CHAP. 24.

⁹ Ex. 6. 23.

Lev. 10. 1.

Num. 3. 2.

Num. 26. 67.

^b Num. 3. 4.

Num. 26. 61.

^c Josh. 18. 10.

1 Ro. 16. 33.

1 Ro. 18. 18.

Acts 1. 26.

^a 1 Ki. 4. 3.

Neh. 8. 4.

¹ house of the father.

for all manner of measure and size—*i. e.*, to see that all things used in the Lord's house should be according to the standard of the sanctuary. 30. And to stand every morning, &c.—*i. e.*, to perform all the requisite functions of sacred officials. The number of 38,000 Levites, exclusive of priests, was doubtless more than sufficient for the ordinary service of the tabernacle. But this pious king thought that it would contribute to the glory of the Lord to employ as many officers in His divine service as possible. These first rules, however, which David instituted, were temporary, as very different arrangements were made after the ark had been deposited in the tabernacle of Zion.

CHAP. XXIV. 1-19.—DIVISIONS OF THE SONS OF AARON INTO FOUR AND TWENTY ORDERS.

1. Now these are the divisions of the sons of Aaron—(see on ch. xxiii. 6.) 2. Nadab and Abihu died before their father—*i. e.*, not in his presence, but during his lifetime (see marginal reference). therefore Eleazar and Ithamar executed the priest's office. In consequence of the death of his two eldest sons without issue, the descendants of Aaron were comprised in the families of Eleazar and Ithamar. Both of these sons discharged the priestly functions as assistants to their father. Eleazar succeeded him, and in his line the high priesthood continued until it was transferred to the family of Ithamar, in the person of Eli. 3. Zadok . . . and Ahimelech of the sons of Ithamar. This statement, taken in connection with v. 6, is not a little perplexing, since (2 Sam. xv. 24, 35; xx. 25) Abiathar is mentioned as the person conjoined, in David's time, with Zadok in the collegiate exercise of the high priesthood. Some think that the

words have been transposed, reading, Abiathar the son of Ahimelech. But there is no ground for regarding the text as faulty. The high priests of the line of Ithamar were the following:—Abiathar, his son Abiathar, his son Ahimelech. We frequently find the grandfather and grandson called by the same name (see list of high priests of the line of Eleazar, ch. v. 30-41). Hence the author of the Chronicles was acquainted with Ahimelech, son of Abiathar, who, for some reason, discharged the duties of high priest in David's reign, and during the lifetime of his father (for Abiathar was living in the time of Solomon, 1 Ki. ii. 27) (*Keil*).

4. there were more chief men found. The Hebrew may be translated, 'there were more men as to heads of the sons of Eleazar.' It is true, in point of fact, that by the census the number of individuals belonging to the family of Eleazar was found greater than in that of Ithamar. And this, of necessity, led to there being more fathers' houses, and consequently more chiefs or presidents of courses in the former. 5. Thus were they divided by lot. This method of allocation was adopted manifestly to remove all cause of jealousy as to precedence and the right of performing particular duties.

6. one principal household. The marginal reading is preferable, 'one house of the father.' The lot was cast in a deliberate and solemn manner, in presence of the king, the princes, the two high priests, and the chiefs of the priestly and Levitical families; the heads of the families belonging to Eleazar and Ithamar were alternately brought forward to draw, and the name of each individual, as called, registered by an attendant

7 Now the first lot came forth to Jehoiarib, the second to ^eJedaiah, the
 9 third to ^fHarim, the fourth to Seorim, the fifth to Malchijah, the sixth
 10 to Mijamin, the seventh to Hakkoz, the eighth ^gto Abijah, the ninth to
 12 Jeshuah, the tenth to Shecaniah, the eleventh to Eliashib, the twelfth to
 13 Jakim, the thirteenth to Huppah, the fourteenth to Jeshebeab, the fif-
 15 teenth to Bilgah, the sixteenth to Immer, the seventeenth to Hezir, the
 16 eighteenth to Aphses, the nineteenth to Pethahiah, the twentieth to
 17 Jehezkel, the one and twentieth to Jachin, the two and twentieth to
 18 Gamul, the three and twentieth to Delaiah, the four and twentieth to
 Maaziah.

19 These *were* the ^horderings of them in their service to come into the
 house of the LORD, according ⁱto their manner, under Aaron their father,
 as the LORD God of Israel had commanded him.

20 And the rest of the sons of Levi *were these*: Of the sons of Amram;
 21 ^jShubael: of the sons of Shubael; Jehdeiah. Concerning ^kRehabiah:
 22 of the sons of Rehabiah, the first *was* Isshiah. Of the Izharites; ^lShe-
 23 lomoth: of the sons of Shelomoth; Jahath. And the sons of ^mHebron;
 Jeriah *the first*, Amariah the second, Jahaziel the third, Jekameam the
 24 fourth. Of the sons of Uzziel; Michah: of the sons of Michah; Shamir.

25 The brother of Michah *was* Isshiah: of the sons of Isshiah; Zechariah.
 26 The ⁿsons of Merari *were* Mahli and Mushi: the sons of Jaaziah; Beno.
 27 The sons of Merari by Jaaziah; Beno, and Shoham, and Zaccur, and Ibri.

28 Of Mahli *came* Eleazar, ^owho had no sons. Concerning Kish: the son
 30 of Kish *was* Jerahmeel. The ^psons also of Mushi; Mahli, and Eder, and
 Jerimoth. These *were* the sons of the Levites after the house of their

31 fathers. These likewise cast lots over against their brethren the sons of
 Aaron in the presence of David the king, and Zadok, and Ahimelech,
 and the chief of the fathers of the priests and Levites, even the principal
 fathers over against their younger brethren.

25 MOREOVER David and the ^qcaptains of the host separated to the
 service of the sons of ^bAsaph, and of Heman, and of Jeduthun, who should
^cprophesy with harps, with psalteries, and with cymbals: and the number

2 of the workmen according to their service was: Of the sons of Asaph;
 Zaccur, and Joseph, and Nethaniah, and ¹Asarelah, the sons of Asaph,
 under the hands of Asaph, which prophesied ²according to the order of

3 the king. Of Jeduthun: the sons of Jeduthun; Gedaliah, and ^aZeri,
 and Jeshaiah, Hashabiah, and Mattithiah, ³six, under the hands of their
 father Jeduthun, who prophesied with a harp, to give thanks and to

4 praise the LORD. Of Heman: the sons of Heman; Bukkiah, Mattaniah,
^eUzziel, ^fShebuel, and Jerimoth, Hananiah, Hanani, Eliathah, Giddalti,

	B. C. 1015.
^o	Ezra 2. 34.
	Neh. 7. 59.
^f	Ezra 7. 21.
^g	Neh. 12. 4.
	17.
	Luke 1. 6.
^h	Num. 4. 49.
	ch. 9. 25.
	1 Cor. 11. 40.
ⁱ	2 Ki. 11. 5.
	ch. 9. 25.
	Luke 1. 8.
	23.
^j	ch. 23. 17.
	Shebuel.
^k	ch. 23. 17.
^l	ch. 23. 15.
	Shelomith.
^m	ch. 23. 19.
	ch. 26. 3.
ⁿ	Ex. 6. 19.
	Num. 3. 10.
	31.
^o	ch. 23. 21.
^p	ch. 23. 22.
^q	ch. 23. 23.

	CHA P. 25.
^a	ch. 13. 2.
	ch. 24. 6.
^b	ch. 6. 31.
^c	Ex. 15. 20.
¹	Otherwise called Jesharelah, ver. 11.
²	by the hands of the king: ver. 6.
^d	ver. 11. Izri.
³	With Shimei mentioned, ver. 17.
^e	ver. 1. Azareel.
^f	ver. 20. Shubael.

secretary. To accommodate the casting of the lots to the inequality of the numbers—there being sixteen fathers' houses of Eleazar and only eight of Ithamar—it was arranged that every house of Ithamar should reckon as two lots; or, what is the same thing, that every two houses of Eleazar should be followed by one of Ithamar. If, then, we suppose a commencement to have been made by Eleazar, the order would be as follows:—One and two, Eleazar; three, Ithamar; four and five, Eleazar; six, Ithamar; seven and eight, Eleazar; nine, Ithamar; and so forth (*Bertheau*). The lot determined also the order of the priests' service. That of the Levites was afterwards distributed by the same arrangement (*v.* 31).

CHAP. XXV. 1-7.—NUMBER AND OFFICE OF THE SINGERS.

1. David and the captains of the host—*i. e.*, the princes (ch. xxiii. 2; xxxiv. 6). It is probable that the king was attended on the occasion of arranging the singers by the same parties that

are mentioned as having assisted him in regulating the order of the priests and Levites. **who should prophesy with harps, &c.** [כִּנְרִים וְכִנְרִים, chanting, praising God with sacred songs (cf. 1 Sam. x. 5, 11; xix. 20; Luke i. 67); Septuagint, *τὸς ἀποφθεγγόμενους*, uttering sounds.] 2. **which prophesied**—*i. e.*, in this connection, played with instruments. This metaphorical application of the term "prophesy" most probably originated in the practice of the prophets, who endeavoured to rouse their prophetic spirit by the animating influence of music (see on 2 Ki. iii. 15). It is said that Asaph did this 'according to David's order,' because by royal appointment he officiated in the tabernacle on Zion (ch. xvi. 37-41), while other leaders of the sacred music were stationed at Gibeon. **according to the order of the king** [בְּיַד מַלְכֵנוּ]—by the hands of the king; *i. e.*, according to the king's order, under the personal superintendence of Asaph and his colleagues. 5.

- 5 and Romamti-ezer, Joshbekashah, Mallothi, Hothir, and Mahazioth: all these were the sons of Heman the king's ³seer in the ⁴words of God, to lift up the horn. And ^hGod gave to Heman fourteen sons and three daughters. All these were under the hands of their father for song in the house of the LORD, with cymbals, psalteries, and harps, for the service of the house of God, ⁵according to the king's order to Asaph, Jeduthun, and 7 Heman. So the number of them, with their brethren that were instructed in the ⁱsongs of the LORD, even all that were cunning, was two hundred fourscore and eight.
- 8 And they cast lots, ward against ward, as well the small as the great, 9 ^jthe teacher as the scholar. Now the first lot came forth for Asaph to Joseph: the second to Gedaliah, who with his brethren and sons were 10 twelve: the third to Zaccur, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve: 11 the fourth to ^kIzri, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve: the fifth 13 to Nathaniah, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve: the sixth to 14 Bukkiah, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve: the seventh to 15 Jesharelah, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve: the eighth to 16 Jeshaiiah, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve: the ninth to 17 Mattaniah, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve: the tenth to 18 Shimei, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve: the eleventh to 19 Azareel, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve: the twelfth to 20 Hashabiah, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve: the thirteenth to 21 Shubael, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve: the fourteenth to 22 Mattithiah, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve: the fifteenth to 23 Jeremoth, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve: the sixteenth to 24 Hananiah, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve: the seventeenth to 25 Joshbekashah, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve: the eighteenth 26 to Hanani, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve: the nineteenth to 27 Mallothi, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve: the twentieth to 28 Eliathah, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve: the one and 29 twentieth to Hothir, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve: the two and twentieth to Giddalti, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve: 30 the three and twentieth to Mahazioth, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, were 31 twelve: the ^lfour and twentieth to Romamti-ezer, *he*, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve.
- 26 CONCERNING the divisions of the porters: Of the ^aKorhites was 2 ^bMeshelemiah the son of Kore, of the sons ^cof Asaph. And the sons of

B. C. 1015.

¹ 1 Sam. 9. 9.
² 2 Sam. 21. 11.
 ch. 21. 9.
 ch. 26. 28.
 ch. 29. 29.
 Amos 7. 12.
⁴ Or, matters.
 1 Fet. 4. 11.
^a Gen. 25. 21.
 Gen. 39. 2.
 Gen. 33. 5.
 Gen. 45. 9.
 1 Sam. 1. 17.
 ch. 18. 5.
 Ps. 127. 3.
 1's 12^a. 3.
 Isa. 8. 18.
^b by the hands of the king.
ⁱ Ps. 130. 1.
 Eph. 5. 19.
 Col. 3. 16.
 Jas. 5. 13.
^j ch. 15. 22.
 2 Chr. 23. 13.
^k ver. 3.
 Zeri.
^l Rev. 4. 4.
 Rev. 5. 8.
 Rev. 11. 16.

CHAP. .6.
^a Num. 26. 9-11.
 ch. 9. 17.
 27.
 ch. 15. 18.
 23. 24.
 2 Chr. 23. 19.
^b ver. 14.
 Shelemiah.
^c ch. 6. 27.
 ch. 9. 19.
 Ebiasaph.

Heman the king's seer. The title of seer or prophet of David is also given to Gad (ch. xxi. 9), and to Jeduthun (2 Chr. xxix. 15), in the words (*margin*, matters) of God, to lift up the horn—*i. e.*, to blow loudly in the worship of God; or perhaps it means nothing more than that he presided over the wind instruments, as Jeduthun over the harp. Heman had been appointed at first to serve at Gibeon (ch. xvi. 41); but his destination seems to have been changed at a subsequent period. **God gave to Heman . . . sons and . . . daughters.** The daughters are mentioned solely because, from their musical taste and talents, they formed part of the choir (Ezra ii. 65; Neh. vii. 67; Ps. lxxviii. 25). **6. All these were under the hands of their father.** Asaph had four sons, Jeduthun six, and Heman fourteen, equal to twenty-four—making the musicians, with their brethren the singers, an amount of 288; for, like the priests and Levites, they were divided into twenty-four courses of twelve men each, equal to 288, who served a week in rotation; and these, half of whom officiated every week with a proportionate number of assistants, were skilful and experienced musicians, capable of leading and instructing the general musical

corps, which comprised no less than 4,000 (ch. xxiii. 5).

8-31.—THEIR DIVISION BY LOT INTO FOUR AND TWENTY ORDERS.

8. they cast lots, ward against ward. "Ward" is an old English word for division or company. The lot was cast to determine the precedence of the classes or divisions over which the musical leaders presided; and, in order to secure an impartial arrangement of their order, the master and his assistants, the teacher and his scholars, in each class or company, took part in this solemn casting of lots. In the first catalogue given in this chapter the courses are classed according to their employment as musicians; in the second, they are arranged in the order of their service.

CHAP. XXVI. 1-12.—DIVISIONS OF THE PORTERS.

1. Concerning the divisions of the porters. There were 4,000 (ch. xxiii. 6), all taken from the families of the Kohathites and Merarites (*v.* 14), divided into twenty-four courses—as the priests and musicians. Meshelemiah the son of Kore, of the sons of Asaph. Seven sons of Meshelemiah are mentioned, *v.* 2, whereas eighteen are given,

Meshelemiah were Zechariah the first-born, Jediael the second, Zebadiah the third, Jathmiel the fourth, Elam the fifth, Jehohanan the sixth, 4 Elioenai the seventh. Moreover the sons of Obed-edom were Shemaiah the first-born, Jehozabad the second, Joah the third, and Sacar the fourth, 5 and Nethaneel the fifth, Ammiel the sixth, Issachar the seventh, Peulthai 6 the eighth: for God blessed ¹him. Also unto Shemaiah his son were sons born, that ruled throughout the house of their father: for they were 7 mighty men of valour. The sons of Shemaiah; Othni, and Rephael, and Obed, Elzabad, whose brethren were strong men, Elihu, and Semachiah. 8 All these of the sons of Obed-edom: they, and their sons, and their brethren, able men for strength for the service, were threescore and two 9 of Obed-edom. And Meshelemiah had sons and brethren, strong men, 10 eighteen. Also ^aHosah, of the children of Merari, had sons; Simri the chief, (for *though* he was not the ^cfirst-born, yet his father made him the 11 chief;) Hilkiah the second, Tebaliah the third, Zechariah the fourth: all the sons and brethren of Hosah were thirteen. 12 Among these were the divisions of the porters, *even* among the chief men, *having* wards one against another, to minister in the house of the 13 Lord. And they cast lots, ²as well the small as the great, according to 14 the house of their fathers, for every gate. And the lot eastward fell to ³Shelemiah. Then for Zechariah his son, a wise counsellor, they cast 15 lots; and his lot came out northward. To Obed-edom southward; and 16 to his sons the house of ⁴Asuphim. To Shuphim and Hosah *the lot came forth* westward, with the gate Shallecheth, by the causeway of the going 17 ⁵up, ward against ward. Eastward were six Levites, northward four a 18 day, southward four a day, and toward Asuphim two *and* two. At 19 ⁵Parbar westward, four at the causeway, *and* two at Parbar. These are the divisions of the porters among the sons of Kore, and among the sons of Merari. 20 And of the Levites, Abijah was over ⁶the treasures of the house of God,

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¹ That is, Obed-edom, Gen. 33. 5. ch. 13. 14. Ps 127. 3. ^a ch. 16. 33. ⁶ Gen. 4. 7. Deut. 21. 17. ch. 5. 1. ² Or, as well for the small as for the great. ch. 21. 5. ch. 25. 8. Acts 10. 34. Gal. 3. 28. Col. 3. 11. ³ Meshelemiah, ver. 1. ⁴ Gatherings. ¹ 1 Ki. 10. 5. ch. 23. 8. ² Chr. 9. 4. Neh. 12. 24. ⁵ Or, out part. ² Ki. 23. 11. ⁶ Deut. 12. 6. 1 Ki. 7. 51. 1 Ki. 14. 26. 1 Ki. 15. 13. ch. 23. 12. ch. 21. 2-8. Mal. 3. 10.

v. 9; but in this latter number his relatives are included. 5. God blessed him—*i. e.*, Obed-edom. The occasion of the blessing was his faithful custody of the ark (2 Sam. vi. 11, 12), and the nature of the blessing (Ps. cxvii. 5) consisted in the great increase of progeny by which his house was distinguished: seventy-two descendants are reckoned. 6. mighty men of valour. The circumstance of physical strength is prominently noticed in this chapter, as the office of the porters required them not only to act as sentinels of the sacred edifice and its precious furniture, against attacks of plunderers, or popular insurrection,—to be, in fact, a military guard,—but, after the temple was built, to open and shut the gates, which were extraordinarily large and ponderous. 10. Simri the chief . . . though . . . not the first-born. Probably because the family entitled to the right of primogeniture had died out, or because there were none of the existing families which could claim that right.

12. Among these were the divisions of the porters, *even* among the chief men. These were charged with the duty of superintending the watches, being heads of the twenty-four courses of porters.

13-16.—THE GATES ASSIGNED BY LOT.

13. they cast lots. Their departments of duty, such as the gates they should attend to, were allotted in the same manner as those of the other Levitical bodies, and the names of the chiefs or captains are given, with the respective gates assigned them. 15. the house of Asuphim—or collections; probably a storehouse, where were kept the grain, wine, and other offerings for the sus-

tenance of the priests. 16. the gate Shallecheth—probably the rubbish gate, through which all the accumulated filth and sweepings of the temple and its courts were poured out. by the causeway of the going up—probably the ascending road which was cast up or raised from the deep valley between mount Zion and Moriah, for the royal egress to the place of worship (2 Chr. ix. 4). ward against ward. Some refer these words to Shuphim and Hosah, whose duty it was to watch both the western gate and the gate Shallecheth, which was opposite, while others take it as a general statement applicable to all the guards, and intended to intimate that they were posted at regular distances from each other, or that they all mounted and relieved guard at the same time in uniform order. 17. Eastward were six Levites—because the gate there was the most frequented. Four at the north gate; four at the south, at the storehouse which was adjoining the south, and which had two entrance-gates, one leading in a westerly direction to the city, and the other direct west, two porters each; at the Parbar, towards the west, there were six men posted, four at the causeway or ascent (v. 16), and two at Parbar, amounting to twenty-four in all, who were kept daily on guard. 18. Parbar—is, perhaps, the same as Parvar (suburbs, 2 Ki. xxiii. 11), and if so, this gate might be so called, as leading to the suburbs.

20-28.—LEVITES THAT HAD CHARGE OF THE TREASURES.

20. of the Levites, Abijah. The heading of this section is altogether strange as it stands, for it looks as if the sacred historian were going to commence a new subject different from the pre-

21 and over the treasures of the ⁶ dedicated things. *As concerning* the sons of ^h Laadan; the sons of the Gershonite Laadan, chief fathers, *even* of 22 Laadan the Gershonite, *were* ⁱ Jehieli. The sons of Jehieli; Zetham, and Joel his brother, *which were* over the treasures of the house of the LORD. 23 Of the ^j Amramites, and the Izharites, the Hebronites, and the Uzzielites: 24 and ^k Shebuel the son of Gershom, the son of Moses, *was* ruler of the 25 treasures. And his brethren by Eliezer; Rehabiah his son, and Feshaiah his son, and Joram his son, and Zichri his son, and ^l Shelomith his son. 26 Which Shelomith and his brethren *were* over all the treasures of the dedicated things, which David the king, and the chief fathers, the captains over thousands and hundreds, and the captains of the host, had 27 dedicated. ^m Out of the spoils won in battles did they dedicate to ⁿ maintain the house of the LORD. And all that Samuel ^o the seer, and Saul the son of Kish, and Abner the son of Ner, and Joab the son of Zeruiah, had dedicated; and whosoever had dedicated *any thing, it was* under the hand of Shelomith, and of his brethren. 29 Of the Izharites, Chenaniah and his sons *were* for the outward business 30 over Israel, for ^p officers and judges. And of the Hebronites, Hashabiah and his brethren, men of valour, a thousand and seven hundred, *were* ^q officers among them of Israel on this side Jordan westward, in all the 31 business of the LORD, and in the service of the king. Among the Hebronites *was* ^r Jeriah the chief, *even* among the Hebronites, according to the generations of his fathers. In the ^s fortieth year of the reign of David they were sought for, and there were found among them mighty men of 32 valour ^t at Jazer of Gilead. And his brethren, men of valour, *were* two thousand and seven hundred chief fathers, whom king David made rulers over the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh, for every matter pertaining to God, and ^u affairs of the king. 27 NOW the children of Israel after their number, *to wit*, the chief fathers and captains of thousands and hundreds, and their officers that served the king in any matter of the courses, which came in and went out month

B. C. 105.
⁶ holy things.
 2 Chr. 31. 11, 12.
^h ch. 6. 17.
 Libni.
ⁱ ch. 23. 8.
 ch. 29. 8.
 Jehiel.
^j Ex. 6. 18.
 Num. 3. 19.
^k ch. 23. 16.
^l ch. 23. 15.
^m Out of the battles and spoils.
 Num. 31. 50.
ⁿ 2 Ki. 12. 11.
 Neh. 10. 32.
^o 1 Sam. 9. 9.
^p Deut. 16. 18.
 Deut. 17. 9, 12.
 ch. 23. 4.
 2 Chr. 19. 8-11.
^q over the charge.
^r ch. 23. 19.
^s 2 Sam. 5. 4.
 1 Ki. 2. 11.
 ch. 23. 27.
^t Num. 32. 1, 3, 33.
 Josh. 21. 70.
 Isa. 16. 9.
 Jer. 48. 32.
^u thing.
 2 Chr. 19. 11.

ceding. Besides, "Ahijah," whose name occurs after the Levites, is not mentioned in the previous lists; it is totally unknown, and it is introduced abruptly, without further information; and lastly, Ahijah must have united, in his own person, those very offices of which the occupants are named in the verses that follow. The reading is incorrect. The Septuagint has this very suitable heading—"And their Levitical brethren over the treasures, &c." (*Bertheau*). The names of those who had charge of the treasure chambers at their respective wards are given, with a general description of the precious things committed to their trust. 24. Shebuel the son of Gershom, the son of Moses. It is impossible that the grandson of Moses could be a contemporary of David; "the son of Gershom" must mean his descendant. Those treasures were immense, consisting of the accumulated spoils of Israelitish victories, as well as of voluntary contributions made by David, the representatives of the people, and others who are specially mentioned—Saul, in his better days; and, without passing over the names of Abner and of Joab, who dedicated some of their war-won spoils, honourable notice is taken of Samuel, "the seer," who, besides the ordinary offerings and legal dues, made voluntary donations of his property to the service of God. Knowing the ardent and habitual piety of the man, we can estimate his liberality as the offering of his whole heart, and distinguish it from that of the others with whom he is here associated.

29-32.—OFFICERS AND JUDGES.

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29. officers and judges. The word rendered "officers" is the term which signifies scribes or secretaries, so that the Levitical class here described were magistrates, who, attended by their clerks, exercised judicial functions. There were 6,000 of them (ch. xxiii. 4), who probably acted, like their brethren, on the principle of rotation, and these were divided into three classes—one (v. 29) for the outward business over Israel; one (v. 30), consisting of 1,700, for the west of Jordan, "in all the business of the Lord, and in the service of the king;" and the third (vv. 31, 32), consisting of 2,700, were rulers "for every matter pertaining to God, and affairs of the king."

CHAP. XXVII. 1-15.—TWELVE CAPTAINS FOR EVERY SEVERAL MONTH.

1. captains of thousands and hundreds. The division of the people was the same for military as for civil purposes (cf. Exod. xviii. 21 with Num. xxxi. 14); at least, the rotation of 24,000 men appointed to attend David every month is described so as to indicate their being arranged by this old and familiar division (see *Graves*, ii., p. 15; *Lowman*, 'On the Government of the Hebrews,' p. 73). The legions of 24,000 were divided into regiments of 1,000, and these again into companies of 100 men, under the direction of their respective subalterns, there being, of course, twenty-four captains of thousands and 240 centurions. and their officers—the Shoterim, who, in the army, performed the duty of the commissariat, keeping the muster-roll, &c. came in and went out month by month. Here is an account of the standing military force

- by month throughout all the months of the year, of every course were twenty and four thousand.
- 2 Over the first course for the first month was ^aJashobeam the son of
- 3 Zabdiel: and in his course were twenty and four thousand. Of the children of ^bPerez was the chief of all the captains of the host for the first
- 4 month. And over the course of the second month was ^cDodai an Ahohite, and of his course was Mikloth also the ruler: in his course likewise were
- 5 twenty and four thousand. The third captain of the host for the third month was Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, a ¹chief priest: and in his course
- 6 were twenty and four thousand. This is that Benaiah, who was ^amighty among the thirty, and above the thirty: and in his course was Ammizabad
- 7 his son. The fourth captain for the fourth month was ^eAsahel the brother of Joab, and Zebadiah his son after him: and in his course were twenty
- 8 and four thousand. The fifth captain for the fifth month was Shamhuth
- 9 the Izrahite: and in his course were twenty and four thousand. The sixth captain for the sixth month was ^fIra the son of Ikkesh the Tekoite:
- 10 and in his course were twenty and four thousand. The seventh captain for the seventh month was ^gHelez the Pelonite, of the children of Ephraim:
- 11 and in his course were twenty and four thousand. The eighth captain for the eighth month was ^hSibbecai the Hushathite, of the Zarahites: and
- 12 in his course were twenty and four thousand. The ninth captain for the ninth month was ⁱAbiezer the Anetothite, of the Benjamites: and in his
- 13 course were twenty and four thousand. The tenth captain for the tenth month was ^jMaharai the Netophathite, of the Zarahites: and in his course
- 14 were twenty and four thousand. The eleventh captain for the eleventh month was ^kBenaiah the Pirathonite, of the children of Ephraim: and in
- 15 his course were twenty and four thousand. The twelfth captain for the twelfth month was ^lHeldai the Netophathite, ^mof Othniel: and in his course were twenty and four thousand.
- 16 Furthermore over the tribes of Israel: the ruler of the Reubenites was Eliezer the son of Zichri: of the Simeonites; Shephatiah the son of

B. C. 1015.

CHAP. 27.
^a 2 Sam. 23. 8
 ch. 11. 11
^b Gen. 38. 1, 9
 Pharez
 Num. 23. 20.
^c 2 Sam. 23. 9.
 Dodo.
 ch. 11. 13.
¹ Or principal officer.
 1 Ki. 4. 5.
^d 2 Sam. 23. 20, 22, 23.
 ch. 11. 22.
^e 2 Sam. 2. 15-23.
 2 Sam. 23. 24.
 ch. 11. 25.
^f ch. 11. 28.
^g ch. 11. 27.
^h 2 Sam. 21. 18.
 ch. 11. 23.
ⁱ 2 Sam. 23. 27.
 ch. 11. 24.
^j 2 Sam. 13. 28.
 ch. 11. 30.
^k 2 Sam. 23. 30.
 ch. 11. 31.
^l 2 Sam. 23. 29.
 ch. 11. 30.
 Heled.
^m Judg. 3. 9.
 ch. 4. 13

of Israel. A militia, formed, it would seem, at the beginning of David's reign (see on v. 7), was raised in the following order:—Twelve legions, corresponding to the number of tribes, were enlisted in the king's service. Each legion comprised a body of 24,000 men, whose term of service was a month in rotation, and who were stationed either at Jerusalem or in any other place where they might be required. There was thus always a force sufficient for the ordinary purposes of state, as well as for resisting sudden attacks or popular tumults; and when extraordinary emergencies demanded a larger force, the whole standing army could easily be called to arms, amounting to 288,000, or to 300,000, including the 12,000 officers that naturally attended on the twelve princes (v. 16-24). Such a military establishment would be burdensome neither to the country nor to the royal exchequer; for the expense of maintenance would be borne probably by the militiaman himself, or furnished out of the common fund of his tribe. On the expiry of the term, every soldier returned to the pursuits and duties of private life during the other eleven months of the year. Whether the same individuals were always enrolled cannot be determined. The probability is, that provided the requisite number was furnished, no stricter scrutiny would be made. The rotation system being established, each division knew its own month, as well as the name of the commander under whom it was to serve. These commanders are styled 'the chief fathers'—i. e., the hereditary heads of tribes, who, like chieftains of clans, possessed great power and influence.

2. Jashobeam the son of Zabdiel—(see on ch. xi. 11; 2 Sam. xxiii. 8.) Hachmoni was his father, Zabdiel probably one of his ancestors; or these might be different names of the same individual. In the rotation of the military courses the dignity of precedence, not of authority, was given to the hero. 4. the second month was Dodai—or Dodo. Here the text seems to require the supplement of "Eleazar the son of Dodo" (2 Sam. xxiii. 9). 7. Asahel. This officer having been slain at the very beginning of David's reign, his name was probably given to this division in honour of his memory, and his son was invested with the command. 11. Sibbecai the Hushathite [סִבְעַי הַחֻשָּׁתִּית]—(see ch. xi. 29; xx. 4; 2 Sam. xxiii. 27; also xxi. 18.) "The Hushathite" [חֻשָּׁתִּית]. Whether this epithet indicates the family or the nativity of the individual, it is impossible to say. Hushah (see on ch. iv. 4) was a place or city, and the family of Sibbecai is declared very explicitly to have been the Zarahite clan of Judah (see Num. xxvi. 20). [Septuagint, Σοβοχαὶ ὁ Οὐρασι; while in 2 Sam. xxiii. 27 this version calls him ὁ Αρωσειτης.]

16-24.—PRINCES OF THE TWELVE TRIBES.

16. over the tribes of Israel: the ruler. This is a list of the hereditary chiefs or rulers of tribes at the time of David's numbering the people. Gad and Asher are not included, for what reason is unknown. The tribe of Levi had a prince (v. 17), as well as the other tribes; and although it was ecclesiastically subject to the high priest, yet, in all civil matters, it had a chief or head, possessed of the same authority and power as in the other

- 17 Maachah: of the Levites; ¹⁸ Hashabiah the son of Kemuel: of the
 18 Aaronites; Zadok: of Judah; ¹⁹ Elihu, *one* of the brethren of David: of the
 19 Issachar; Omri the son of Michael: of Zebulun; Ishmaiah the son of
 20 Obadiah: of Naphtali; Jerimoth the son of Azriel: of the children of
 Ephraim; Hoshea the son of Azaziah: of the half tribe of Manasseh; Joel
 21 the son of Pedaiah: of the half *tribe* of Manasseh in Gilead; Iddo the son
 22 of Zechariah: of Benjamin; Jaasiel the son of Abner: of Dan; Azrael the
 son of Jeroham. These *were* the princes of the tribes of Israel.
 23 But David took not the number of them from twenty years old and
 under; because ² the LORD had said he would increase Israel like to the
 24 stars of the heavens. Joab the son of Zeruiah began to number, but he
 finished not, because ² there fell wrath for it against Israel; neither ² was
 the number put in the account of the Chronicles of king David.
 25 And over the king's treasures *was* Azmaveth the son of Adiel: and over
 the storehouses in the fields, in the cities, and in the villages, and in the
 26 castles, *was* Jehonathan the son of Uziah: and over them that did the
 work of the field for tillage of the ground *was* Ezer the son of Chelub:
 27 and over ⁷ the vineyards *was* Shimei the Ramathite: ³ over the increase of
 28 the vineyards for the wine cellars *was* Zabdi the Shiphmite: and over the
 olive trees and the sycamore trees that *were* in the low plains *was* Baal-
 29 banan the Gederite: and over the cellars of oil *was* Joash: and over the
 herds that fed in Sharon *was* Shitrai the Sharonite: and over the herds
 30 that *were* in the valleys *was* Shaphat the son of Adlai: over the camels
 also *was* Obil the Ishmaelite: and over the asses *was* Jehdeiah the
 31 Meronothite: and over the flocks *was* Jaziz the Hagerite. All these *were*
 the rulers of the substance which *was* king David's.
 32 Also Jonathan, David's ⁴ uncle, was a counsellor, a wise man, and a
 33 ⁵ scribe: and Jehiel the ⁶ son of Hachmoni *was* with the king's sons: and
⁸ Ahithophel *was* the king's counsellor: and ⁹ Hushai the Archite *was* the
 34 king's companion: and after Ahithophel *was* Jehoiada the son of Benaiah,
 and Abiathar: and the general of the king's army *was* Joab.
 28 AND David assembled all the princes of Israel, ¹⁰ the princes of the

B. C. 1015.

- ⁿ ch. 26. 30.
^o 1 Sam 10. 6.
 Eliab.
 1 Sam 17.
 13 28.
 Eliab.
^p Gen. 15. 5.
 Ex. 3. 13.
 Deut. 1. 10.
 Deut 10.22.
 Heb 11. 12.
^q 2 Sam. 21.
 1'.
 ch 21. 7.
² the
 number
 ascended.
^r Song 8. 11.
³ over that
 which was
 of the
 vineyards.
⁴ Or,
 nephew.
 2 Sam 13.3.
 2 Sam 21.
 21.
⁵ Or,
 secretary.
⁶ Or, Hach-
 monite.
 ch. 11. 11.
⁸ 2 Sam. 15.
 1'.
⁹ 2 Sam. 15.
 32, 37.
 CHAP. 28.
^a Josh. 21. 2.
 Josh 21. 1.
 ch. 21. 2.
 ch. 27. 16.

tribes, only his jurisdiction did not extend to the priests. 18. Elihu—probably the same as Eliab (1 Sam. xvi. 16) [Septuagint, Ἐλιᾶβ].

23. But David took not the number . . . from twenty years old and under. The meaning is, that the census which David ordered did not extend to all the Israelites; for to contemplate such an enumeration would have been to attempt an impossibility (Gen. xxviii. 14); and, besides, would have been a daring offence to God. The limitation to a certain age was what had probably quieted David's conscience as to the lawfulness of the measure, while its expediency was strongly pressed upon his mind by the army arrangements he had in view. 24. neither was the number put in the account of the Chronicles of king David—either because the undertaking was not completed, Levi and Benjamin not having been numbered (ch. xxi. 6), or the full details in the hands of the enumerating officers were not reported to David, and, consequently, not registered in the public archives. "The Chronicles" were the daily records or annals of the king's reign. No notice was taken of this census in the historical register, as, from the public calamity with which it was associated, it would have stood a painful record of the Divine judgment against the king and the nation.

25. over the king's treasures. Those treasures consisted of gold, silver, precious stones, cedar-wood, &c.; those which he had in Jerusalem, as distinguished from others without the city. the storehouses in the fields. Grain covered over

with layers of straw is frequently preserved in the fields under little earthen mounds, like our potato pits. 27. the vineyards. These seem to have been in the vine-growing districts of Judah, and were committed to two men of that quarter. wine cellars—stores: the wine is deposited in jars sunk in the court of the house. 28. olive . . . and . . . sycamore trees . . . in the low plains—i. e., the Shephelah, the rich low-lying ground between the Mediterranean and the mountains of Judah. 29. herds that fed in Sharon—a fertile plain between Casarea and Joppa. 30. camels. These were probably in the countries east of the Jordan, and hence an Ishmaelite and Nazarite were appointed to take charge of them. 31. rulers of the substance which was king David's. How and when the king acquired these demesnes and this variety of property—whether it was partly by conquests, or partly by confiscation, or by his own active cultivation of waste lands—is not said. It was probably in all these ways. The management of the king's private possessions was divided into twelve parts, like his public affairs, and the revenue derived from all these sources mentioned must have been very large.

33. Hushai the Archite was the king's companion [Septuagint, πρώτος φίλος].

CHAP. XXVIII. 1-8.—DAVID EXHORTS THE PEOPLE TO FEAR GOD.

1. David assembled all the princes of Israel—i. e., the representatives of the people, the leading men of the kingdom, who are enumerated in this

tribes, ^b and the captains of the companies that ministered to the king by course, and the captains over the thousands, and captains over the hundreds, and ^c the stewards over all the substance and ¹ possession of the king, ² and of his sons, with the ³ officers, and with the ⁴ mighty men, and with all the valiant men, unto Jerusalem.

2 Then David the king stood up upon his feet, and said, Hear me, ^e my brethren, and my people: *As for me, ^f I had in mine heart to build an house of rest for the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and for ^g the footstool of our God, and had made ready for the building: but God said*

3 *unto me, ^h Thou shalt not build an house for my name, because thou ^{hast} been a man of war, and hast shed ⁴ blood. Howbeit the LORD God of Israel ⁱ chose me before all the house of my father to be king over Israel for ever: for he hath chosen ^j Judah to be the ruler; and of the house of Judah ^k the house of my father; and ^l among the sons of my father he*

5 *liked me to make me king over all Israel: and ^m of all my sons, (for the LORD hath given me many sons,) ⁿ he hath chosen Solomon my son to sit*

6 *upon the throne of the kingdom of the LORD over Israel. And he said unto me, ^o Solomon thy son, he shall build my house and my courts: for I*

7 *have chosen him to be my son, and I will be his father. Moreover I will establish his kingdom for ever, ^p if he be ⁵ constant to do my command-*

8 *ments and my judgments, as at this day. Now therefore in the sight of all Israel the congregation of the LORD, and in the audience of our God, ^q keep and seek for all the commandments of the LORD your God; that ye may possess this good land, and leave it for an inheritance for your children after you for ever.*

9 And thou, Solomon my son, ^r know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with ^s a perfect heart, and with a willing mind; for ^t the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: ^u if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever. Take ^v heed now; for the LORD hath chosen thee to build an house for the sanctuary: be strong, and do it.

B. C. 1015.

^b ch. 27. 1.
^c ch. 27. 25.
¹ Or, cattle.
² Or, and his sons.
³ Or, eunuchs
^d ch. 11. 10.
^e Deut 17. 20.
^f 2 Sam 7. 2.
^g Ps. 132. 3.
^h Ps 59. 5.
ⁱ Ps. 132. 7.
^j 2 Sam. 7. 5.
^k 1 Ki 5. 3.
^l ch. 17. 4.
^m ch. 22. 8.
ⁿ bloods.
^o 1 Sam. 16. 7
^p Gen. 49. 8.
^q 1 Sam. 16. 1.
^r 1 Sam. 16. 12.
^s ch. 3. 1.
^t ch. 23. 1.
^u ch. 22. 9.
^v 2 Chr. 1. 9.
^w ch. 22. 13.
^x strong.
^y Deut 4. 1.
^z Ps 9. 10.
^{aa} Jer. 9. 24.
^{ab} Hos. 4. 1.
^{ac} John 17. 3.
^{ad} 2 Ki 20. 3.
^{ae} Ps 101. 2.
^{af} 1 Sam. 16. 7.
^{ag} 1 Ki 8. 59.
^{ah} ch. 19. 17.
^{ai} Ps. 7. 9.
^{aj} 2 Chr. 15. 2.
^{ak} ch. 22. 16.

verse according to their respective rank or degree of authority. princes of the tribes (ch. xxvii. 16-22). Those patriarchal chiefs are mentioned first, as being the highest in rank—a sort of hereditary noblesse. the captains of the companies—the twelve generals mentioned, ch. xxvii. 1-15. the stewards, &c. (ch. xxvii. 25-31). the officers—Hebrew, eunuchs, or attendants on the court (1 Sam. viii. 15; 1 Ki. xxii. 9; 2 Ki. xxii. 18); and besides Joab, the commander-in-chief of the army, the heroes who had no particular office, (ch. xi. 2; 2 Sam. xxiii.) This assembly, a very mixed and general one, as appears from the parties invited, was more numerous and entirely different from that mentioned, ch. xxiii. 2.

2. Hear me, my brethren. This was the style of address becoming a constitutional king of Israel (Deut. xvii. 20; 1 Sam. xxx. 23; 2 Sam. v. 1). I had in mine heart—I proposed or designed. to build an house of rest—a solid and permanent temple. for the footstool of our God. God seated between the cherubim, at the two extremities of the ark, might be said to be enthroned in His glory, and the coverlet of the ark to be His footstool, and had made ready for the building. The immense treasures which David had amassed, and the elaborate preparations he had made, would have been amply sufficient for the erection of the temple of which he presented the model to Solomon. 3. thou hast been a man of war, and hast shed blood. The Church, or spiritual state of the world, of which the temple at Jerusalem was

to be a type, would be presided over by One who was to be pre-eminently the Prince of Peace, and therefore would be represented not so fitly by David, whose mission had been a preparatory one of battle and conquest, as by his son, who should reign in unbroken peace. 5. he hath chosen Solomon. The spirit of David's statement is this:—It was not my ambition, my valour, or my merit, that led to the enthronement of myself and family; it was the grace of God which chose the tribe, the family, the person—myself in the first instance, and now Solomon, to whom, as the Lord's anointed, you are all bound to submit (Gen. xlix. 10). Like that of Christ, of whom he was a type, the appointment of Solomon to the kingdom, above all his brethren, was frequently pre-intimated (ch. xvii. 12; xxii. 9; 2 Sam. vii. 12-14; xii. 24, 25; 2 Ki. i. 13). 7. I will establish his kingdom . . . if he be constant. The same condition is set before Solomon by God, 1 Ki. iii. 14; ix. 4. 8. Now . . . in the sight of all Israel . . . keep, &c. This solemn and earnest exhortation to those present, and to all Israel through their representatives, to continue faithful in observing the divine law, as essential to their national prosperity and permanence, is similar to that of Moses, Deut. xxx. 15-20.

9-20.—HE ENCOURAGES SOLOMON TO BUILD THE TEMPLE.

9. And thou, Solomon my son. The royal speaker now turns to Solomon, and in a most impressive manner presses upon him the importance of sincere and practical piety. know thou.

- 11 Then David gave to Solomon his son the ^w pattern of the ^x porch, and of the houses thereof, and of the treasuries thereof, and of the upper chambers thereof, and of the inner parlours thereof, and of the place of
- 12 the mercyseat, and the pattern ^o of all that he had by the Spirit, of the courts of the house of the LORD, and of all the chambers round about, of
- 13 ^y the treasuries of the house of God, and of the treasuries of the dedicated things: also for the courses of the priests and the Levites, and for all the work of the service of the house of the LORD, and for all the vessels of
- 14 service in the house of the LORD. *He gave* of gold by weight for *things* of gold, for all instruments of all manner of service; *silver* also for all instruments of silver by weight, for all instruments of every kind of service: even the weight for the candlesticks of gold, and for their lamps of gold, by weight for every candlestick, and for the lamps thereof; and for the candlesticks of silver by weight, *both* for the candlestick, and *also*
- 16 for the lamps thereof, according to the use of every candlestick. And by weight *he gave* gold for the tables of ^z showbread, for every table; and
- 17 *likewise* silver for the tables of silver: also pure gold for the flesh-hooks, and the bowls, and the cups: and for the golden basins *he gave* gold by weight for every basin; and *likewise* silver by weight for every basin of silver: and for the altar of ^a incense refined gold by weight; and gold for the pattern of the chariot of the ^b cherubim, that spread out *their*
- 19 *wings*, and covered the ark of the covenant of the LORD. *All this, said David,* ^c the LORD made me understand in writing by *his* hand upon me, *even* all the works of this pattern.
- 20 And David said to Solomon his son, Be ^d strong and of good courage and do *it*: fear not, nor be dismayed; for the LORD God, *even* my God, *will be* with thee; ^e he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee, until thou hast
- 21 finished all the work for the service of the house of the LORD. And, behold, ^f the courses of the priests and the Levites, *even they shall be with thee* for all the service of the house of God: and *there shall be* with thee for all manner of workmanship ^g every willing skilful man, for any manner of service; also the princes and all the people *will be* wholly at thy commandment.
- 29 FURTHERMORE David the king said unto all the congregation, Solomon my son, whom alone God hath chosen, *is yet* young ^h and tender, and the work *is* great: for the palace *is* not for man, but for the LORD
- 2 God. Now I have prepared with all my might for the house of my God the gold for *things to be made* of gold, and the silver for *things* of silver,

B. C. 1015.

^w Ex. 25. 40.
Ex. 21. 30.
Ex. 39. 42,
43.

² Chr. 3. 3.
Eze. 43. 10,
11.

Heb. 8. 5.

^x 1 Ki. 6. 2.

^o of all that was with him.

^y ch. 26. 20.

^z Ex. 25. 23.

1 Ki. 7. 48.

2 Chr. 4. 8.

^a Ex. 30. 1.

10.

1 Ki. 7. 43.

2 Chr. 13. 9.

^b Ex. 25. 15.

1 Sam. 4. 4.

1 Ki. 6. 23.

Ps. 18. 10.

Ps. 68. 17.

Ps. 80. 1.

Ps. 99. 1.

Eze. 1. 15-

24.

Eze. 10. 2.

^c Ex. 25. 30.

Ex. 26. 30.

^d Deut. 31. 7.

Josh. 1. 6.

ch. 22. 13.

1 Cor. 16. 13.

^e Josh. 1. 5.

Heb. 13. 5.

^f ch. 21. 1.

ch. 25. 1.

ch. 26. 1.

^g Ex. 35. 23.

Ex. 36. 1.

CHAP. 29.

^h 1 Ki. 3. 7.

ch. 22. 5.

2 Chr. 13. 7.

Pro. 4. 3.

Jer. 1. 6, 7.

He did not mean head knowledge—for Solomon possessed that already—but that experimental acquaintance with God which is only to be obtained by loving and serving Him.

11. Then David gave to Solomon . . . the pattern. He now put into the hands of his son and successor the plan or model of the temple, with the elevations, measurements, apartments, and chief articles of furniture. 12. the pattern of all that he had by the Spirit—rather, with him in spirit; *i. e.*, was floating in his mind. 15. the candlesticks of silver. Solomon made them all of gold—in this, and in a few minor particulars, departing from the letter of his father's instructions, where he had the means of executing them in a more splendid style. There was only one candlestick and one table in the tabernacle, but ten in the temple. 18. the chariot of the cherubim. The expanded wings of the cherubim formed what was figuratively styled the throne of God; and as they were emblematical of rapid motion, the throne or seat was spoken of as a chariot (Ps. xviii. 10; xcix. 1). It is quite clear that in all these directions David was not guided by his own

taste, but solely by a regard to the express revelation of the Divine will. In a vision, or trance, the whole edifice, with its appurtenances, had been placed before his eyes so vividly and permanently that he had been able to take a sketch of them in the models delivered to Solomon.

20. Be strong and of good courage. The address begun v. 9 is resumed and concluded in the same strain. 21. behold, the courses of the priests and the Levites. They were most probably represented in this assembly, though they are not named. also the princes and all the people—*i. e.*, as well the skilful, expert, and zealous artizan, as the workman who needs to be directed in all his labours.

CHAP. XXIX. 1-9. — DAVID CAUSES THE PRINCES AND PEOPLE TO OFFER FOR THE HOUSE OF GOD.

1. Solomon . . . is yet young and tender. His father made this address before Solomon was endowed with the Divine gift of wisdom; and David's reference to his son's extreme youth, in connection with the great national undertaking he had been Divinely appointed to execute, was

and the brass for *things* of brass, the iron for *things* of iron, and wood for *things* of wood; ^bonyx stones, and *stones* to be set, glistening stones, and of divers colours, and all manner of precious stones, and marble stones in abundance. Moreover, because I have ^cset my affection to the house of my God, I have of mine ^down proper good, of gold and silver, *which* I have given to the house of my God, over and above all that I have prepared for the holy house, *even* three thousand talents of gold, of the gold of ^eOphir, and seven thousand talents of refined silver, to overlay the walls of the houses *withal*: the gold for *things* of gold, and the silver for *things* of silver, and for all manner of work to be made by the hands of artificers. And who *then* is willing ¹to consecrate his service this day unto the LORD?

Then ^fthe chief of the fathers and princes of the tribes of Israel, and the captains of thousands and of hundreds, with the ^grulers of the king's work, offered willingly, and gave for the service of the house of God of gold five thousand talents and ten thousand drams, and of silver ten thousand talents, and of brass eighteen thousand talents, and one hundred thousand talents of iron. And they with whom *precious* stones were found gave *them* to the treasure of the house of the LORD, by the hand of Jehiel ^hthe Gershonite. Then the people rejoiced, for that they offered willingly, because with perfect heart they ⁱoffered willingly to the LORD: and David the king also rejoiced with great joy.

Wherefore David blessed the LORD before all the congregation: and David said, Blessed ^jbe thou, LORD God of Israel our father, for ever and ever. Thine, ^kO LORD, *is* the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all *that is* in the heaven and in the earth *is* *thine*; *thine is* the kingdom, O LORD, and thou art exalted as head above all. Both ^lriches and honour *come* of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand *is* power and might; and in thine hand *it is* to make great, and to give strength unto all. Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name. But who *am* I, and what *is* my people, that we should ²be able to offer so willingly after this sort?

B. C. 1015.

o Gen. 2. 12.
 Ex. 28. 9.
 Ex. 39. 13.
 Job 28. 16.
 Isa 51. 11, 12.
 Rev. 21. 18.
 Ps. 26. 8.
 Ps. 27. 4.
 Ps. 84. 1.
 d ch. 21. 21.
 Fro. 3. 9.
 e 1 Ki. 9. 23.
 2 Chr. 8. 13.
 Job 22. 21.
 1 to fill his hand.
 f ch. 27. 1.
 g ch. 27. 25.
 h ch. 26. 21.
 i 1 Ki. 8. 61.
 2 Cor. 9. 7.
 j 1 Ki. 8. 15.
 2 Chr. 6. 4.
 Ps. 72. 18.
 Eze. 3. 12.
 k Dan. 4. 30, 31, 25.
 Matt. 6. 13.
 1 Tim. 1. 17.
 Rev. 6. 13.
 Deut. 8. 18.
 1 Sam. 2. 7, 8.
 Ps. 75. 6.
 Fro. 10. 22.
 Rom. 11. 36.
 Jas. 1. 17.
 2 retain, or obtain strength.

to apologize to this assembly of the estates, or rather, to assign the reason of his elaborate preparations for the work. 3. Moreover . . . I have of mine own proper good [מִיָּדִי]. Its primary meaning is a collection of valuables—such as precious metals or gems; and so here “proper good” is explained as consisting of gold and silver (cf. Eccl. ii. 8). In addition to the immense amount of gold and silver treasure which David had already bequeathed for various uses in the service of the temple, he now made an additional contribution destined to a specific purpose—that of overlaying the walls of the house. This voluntary gift was from the private fortune of the royal donor, and had been selected with the greatest care. The gold was “the gold of Ophir,” then esteemed the purest and finest in the world (Job xxii. 24; xxviii. 16; Isa. xiii. 12). The amount was 3,000 talents of gold and 7,000 talents of refined silver. 5. who then is willing to consecrate his service? [מִיָּדִי לְמַעַן יִשְׁבְּעוּ]—to fill his hand; i. e., make an offering (Exod. xxxii. 29; Lev. viii. 33; 1 Ki. xiii. 33). The meaning is, that whoever would contribute voluntarily, as he had done, would be offering a free-will offering unto the Lord. David, in asking free-will offerings for the temple, imitated the conduct of Moses in reference to the tabernacle (Exod. xxv. 1-8).

6. Then the chief of the fathers—or heads of the fathers (ch. xxiv. 31; xxvii. 1). princes of the tribes (ch. xxvii. 16-22). the rulers of the

king's work—those who had charge of the royal demesnes and other possessions (ch. xxvii. 25-31). offered willingly. Influenced by the persuasive address and example of the king, they acted according to their several abilities; and their united contributions amounted to the gross sum—of gold, 5,000 talents and 10,000 drams; and of silver, 10,000 talents, besides brass and iron. 7. drams—rather, *darics*, a Persian coin, with which the Jews, from the time of the captivity, became familiar, and which was afterwards extensively circulated in the countries of Western Asia. It is estimated as equal in value to 25s. of British currency. of brass eighteen thousand talents, and one hundred thousand talents of iron. In Scripture, iron is always referred to as an article of comparatively low value, and of greater abundance and cheaper than bronze (*Napier*). 8. And they with whom precious stones were found—rather, “whatever was found along with it of precious stones they gave” (*Bertheau*). These gifts were deposited in the hands of Jehiel, whose family were charged with the treasures of the house of the Lord (ch. xxvi. 21).

10-23.—HIS THANKSGIVING.

10. Wherefore David blessed the Lord. This is a beautiful thanksgiving prayer. Its piety is displayed in the fervour of devotional feeling—in the ascription of all worldly wealth and greatness to God as the giver, in tracing the general readiness in contributing to the influence of His grace, in praying for the continuance of this happy dis-

15 for all things *come* of thee, and ³of thine own have we given thee. For ^mwe *are* strangers before thee, and sojourners, as *were* all our fathers: our
 16 ⁿdays on the earth *are* as a shadow, and *there is none* ⁴abiding. O LORD our God, all this store that we have prepared to build thee an house for
 17 thine holy name *cometh* of thine hand, and *is* all thine own. I know also, my God, that thou ^otriest the heart, and ^phast pleasure in uprightness. As for me, in the uprightness of mine heart I have willingly offered all these things: and now have I seen with joy thy people, which are ⁵present
 18 here, to offer willingly unto thee. O LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, our fathers, keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts
 19 of the heart of thy people, and ⁶prepare their heart unto thee: and ^qgive unto Solomon my son a perfect heart, to keep thy commandments, thy testimonies, and thy statutes, and to do all *these things*, and to build the palace, *for* the which ^rI have made provision.

20 And David said to all the congregation, Now bless the LORD your God. And all the congregation blessed the LORD God of their fathers, and
 21 bowed down their heads, and worshipped the LORD, and the king. And they sacrificed sacrifices unto the LORD, and offered burnt offerings unto the LORD, on the morrow after that day, *even* a thousand bullocks, a thousand rams, *and* a thousand lambs, with their drink offerings, and
 22 sacrifices in abundance for all Israel; and did eat and drink before the LORD on that day with great gladness.

And they made Solomon the son of David king the second time, and anointed *him* unto the LORD to be the chief governor, and Zadok to be priest.

23 Then Solomon sat on the throne of the LORD as king instead of David
 24 his father, and prospered; and all Israel obeyed him. And all the princes, and the mighty men, and all the sons likewise of king David,
 25 ^rsubmitted themselves unto Solomon the king. And the LORD magnified Solomon exceedingly in the sight of all Israel, and bestowed ^supon him *such* royal majesty as had not been on any king before him in Israel.

B. C. 10:5.
³ of thine hand.
^m Gen. 47. 9.
 Ps. 39. 12.
 Heb. 11. 13.
¹ 1 Pet. 2. 11.
ⁿ Job 14. 2.
 Ps. 90. 9.
 Ps. 102. 11.
 Ps. 144. 4.
⁴ expectation.
^o Deut. 8. 2.
 1 Sam 16 7.
 ch. 23. 9.
 Jer. 17. 10.
 Heb. 4. 13.
² Ps. 11. 7.
^p Fro 11 20.
 John 1. 47.
⁵ (r found.
⁶ Or.
 stablish.
 Ps. 10. 17.
 Jer. 10. 23.
^q Ps. 72. 1.
^r ch. 22. 14.
⁷ gave the hand under Solomon.
 Gen. 24. 9.
 Gen. 47. 19.
 2 Chr. 10 8.
 Eze 17. 18.
¹ 1 Ki. 3. 13.
 2 Chr. 1. 12.
 Eccl. 2. 9.
 Dan. 5. 18.
 Heb. 2. 9.

position among the people, and in solemnly and earnestly commending the young king and his kingdom to the care and blessing of God. 16. all this store that we have prepared. We shall give in this table only the amount of gold and silver; and taking the talent of gold as worth £5,475 (the talent being 125 lbs. in weight), the value of the gold will be about 73s. per oz. The talent of silver is given at £342, 3s. 9d., or 4s. 4½d. per oz. The total amount of the contributions will be:—

Sum accumulated, and in the public treasury (ch. xxii. 41),	gold,	£547,500,000
	silver,	342,187,500
Contributed by David from his private resources,	gold,	16,425,000
	silver,	2,395,312
Contributed by the assembled rulers,	gold,	28,000,000
	silver,	3,421,875

£939,929,687

This amount so far exceeds not only every Oriental collection on record, but even the bounds of probability, that it is very generally allowed that either there is a corruption of the text in ch. xxii. 14, or that the reckoning of the historian was by the Babylonian, which was only a half, or the Syrian, which was only a fifth part of the Hebrew, talent. This would bring the Scripture account more into accordance with the statements of *Josephus*, as well as within the range of credibility.

20. worshipped the Lord, and the king. Though the external attitude might be the same, the sentiments of which it was expressive were very different in the two cases—of Divine worship in the one, of civil homage in the other. But the latter was recognized in a theocratic kingdom as

vicerent of Jehovah. 21. they sacrificed. He-catombs of burnt offerings are mentioned, cf. 2 Chr. xxix. 32; Ezra vi. 17. 22. And did eat and drink before the Lord—either in the immediate vicinity of the ark, or, perhaps, rather in a religious and devout spirit, as partaking of a sacrificial meal.

made Solomon . . . king the second time. In reference to the first time, which was done precipitately, on Adonijah's conspiracy, cf. 1 Ki. i. 35. This mention of a second anointing, in a historical book which does not record the first, and the description of the first, in another historical book which does not contain any allusion to the second, forms an undesigned coincidence which furnishes a strong confirmation of its truth. anointed . . . Zadok. This statement implies that his appointment met the popular approval. His elevation as sole high priest was on the disgrace of Abiathar, one of Adonijah's accomplices.

23. Solomon sat on the throne of the Lord. As king of Israel, he was the Lord's vicerent. When David was appointed successor to Saul, he was employed merely as Jehovah's deputy (2 Sam. v. 2). His commission runs in the style of that of an inferior officer. The people whom he was to rule were not David's; they were still God's. Even when the throne was made hereditary in the house of David, Jehovah exercised his right of election by preferring Solomon to all his brethren, so that when Solomon was anointed theocratic king in Israel, it was justly said of him, that he 'sat on the throne of the Lord' (*Jamieson's Sacred History*, i., p. 314). 24. submitted themselves [ἑἴβησαν]

- 26, Thus David the son of Jesse reigned over all Israel. And ^tthe time
 27 that he reigned over Israel *was* forty years; ^useven years reigned he in
 28 Hebron, and thirty and three *years* reigned he in Jerusalem. And he
^vdied in a good old age, full of days, riches, and honour: and Solomon
 his son reigned in his stead.
- 29 Now the acts of David the king, first and last, behold, they *are* written
 in the ^sbook of Samuel the seer, and in the book of Nathan the prophet,
 30 and in the book of Gad the seer, with all his reign and his might, ^wand
 the times that went over him, and over Israel, and over all the kingdoms
 of the countries.

B. C. 1015.
^t 2 Sam. 5. 4.
 1 Ki. 2. 11.
 ch. 3. 4.
^u 2 Sam. 5. 5.
 Gen. 15. 15.
^v Gen. 25. 8.
 Num. 23. 10.
 ch. 23. 1.
 Job 5. 26.
^s words, or,
 history.
^w Dan. 2. 21.

[RE]—put their hands under Solomon, according
 to the custom still practised in the East, of putting
 a hand under the king's extended hand, and kissing
 the back of it (2 Ki. x. 15).

26-30.—HIS REIGN AND DEATH.

510

26. Thus David . . . reigned—(see 1 Ki. ii. 11.)

29. Samuel the seer . . . Nathan the prophet,
 and . . . Gad the seer. The three words, Roeh,
 Nabi, and Chozeh, are here brought together and
 apparently contrasted (see on 1 Sam. ix. 9).

THE
SECOND BOOK OF THE CHRONICLES.

1 **A**ND ^a Solomon the son of David was strengthened in his kingdom,
2 and ^b the LORD his God *was* with him, and ^c magnified him exceed-
3 ingly. Then Solomon spake unto all Israel, to the ^d captains of thou-
4 sands and of hundreds, and to the judges, and to every governor in all
5 Israel, the chief of the fathers. So Solomon, and all the congregation
6 with him, went to the high place that *was* at ^e Gibeon; for there was the
7 tabernacle of the congregation of God, which Moses the servant of the
8 LORD had made in the wilderness. But ^f the ark of God had David
9 brought up from Kirjath-jearim to *the place which* David had prepared
10 for it: for he had pitched a tent for it at Jerusalem. Moreover ^g the
11 brasen altar, that ^h Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, had made,
12 he put before the tabernacle of the LORD; and Solomon and the congre-
13 gation sought unto it. And Solomon went up thither to the brasen altar
14 before the LORD, which *was* at the tabernacle of the congregation, and
15 offered ⁱ a thousand burnt offerings upon it.
16 In ^j that night did God appear unto Solomon, and said unto him, Ask
17 what I shall give thee. And Solomon said unto God, Thou hast showed
18 great mercy unto David my father, and hast made me ^k to reign in his
19 stead. Now, O LORD God, let thy promise unto David my father be
20 established: ^l for thou hast made me king over a people ^m like the dust of
21 the earth in multitude. Give ⁿ me now wisdom and knowledge, that I
22 may ^o go out and come in before this people: for who can judge this thy
23 people, *that is so great?*
24 And ^p God said to Solomon, Because this was in thine heart, and thou
25 hast not asked riches, wealth, or honour, nor the life of thine enemies,
26 neither yet hast asked long life; but hast asked wisdom and knowledge
27 for thyself, that thou mayest judge my people, over whom I have made
28 thee king: wisdom and knowledge *is* ^q granted unto thee; and I will give
29 thee riches, and wealth, and honour, such as ^r none of the kings have
30 had that *have been* before thee, neither shall there any after thee have
31 the like.
32 Then Solomon came *from his journey* to the high place that *was* at
33 Gibeon to Jerusalem, from before the tabernacle of the congregation, and
34 reigned over Israel.

R. C. 1015.

CHAP. 1.
^a 1 Ki 2. 46.
^b Gen 39. 2.
^c 1 Chr. 29. 25.
^d 1 Chr. 27. 1.
^e 1 Ki. 3. 4.
^f 2 Sam. 6. 2.
^g 1 Chr. 15. 1.
^h Ex. 27. 1.
ⁱ Ex. 38. 1.
^j Ex. 31. 2.
^k Cr, was there.
^l 1 Ki 3. 4.
^m 1 Ki. 3. 5.
ⁿ Pro. 3. 5.
^o Isa. 68. 9.
^p 1 Chr. 28. 5.
^q 1 Ki 3. 7.
^r 2 such as the dust of the earth.
^s 1 Ki. 3. 9.
^t Ps. 119. 34, 73.
^u Pro. 3. 13.
^v Jas 1. 5.
^w Num 27. 17.
^x Deut. 31. 2.
^y 1 Ki 3. 11.
^z Matt. 20. 21, 22.
^{aa} Matt. 6. 33.
^{ab} Mark 10. 9.
^{ac} Luke 18. 29, 30.
^{ad} Rom. 8. 3', 32.
^{ae} 1 Cor. 3. 22.
^{af} Eph. 3. 20.
^{ag} 1 Chr. 29. 25.
^{ah} ch. 9. 2. 5.
^{ai} Eccl. 2. 9.

CHAP. I. 1-6.—SOLEMN OFFERING OF SOLOMON AT GIBEON.

2. Then Solomon spake unto all Israel—viz., the heads, or leading officers, that are afterwards specified, were summoned to attend their sovereign in a solemn religious procession. The date of this occurrence was the second year of Solomon's reign, and the high place at Gibeon was chosen for the performance of the sacred rites, from the tabernacle and all the ancient furniture connected with the national worship being deposited there. Zadok was the officiating high priest (1 Chr. xvi. 39). It is true that the ark had been removed, and placed in a new tent which David had made for it at Jerusalem; but the brasen altar, "before the tabernacle of the Lord," on which the burnt offerings were appointed by the law to be made, was at Gibeon; and although David had been led by extraordinary events and tokens of the Divine presence to sacrifice on the threshing-floor

of Araunah, Solomon considered it his duty to present his offerings on the legally appointed spot "before the tabernacle," and on the time-honoured altar prepared by the skill of Bezaleel in the wilderness (Exod. xxxviii. 1). 6. offered a thousand burnt offerings. This holocaust he offered, of course, by the hands of the priests. The magnitude of the oblation became the rank of the offerer on this occasion of national solemnity.

7-13.—HIS CHOICE OF WISDOM IS BLESSED BY GOD.

7. In that night did God appear—(see on 1 Ki. iii. 5.)

11. thou hast not asked riches, wealth. [These words appear to be synonymous, yet they are different in signification, עושר denoting riches generally, and כסף, which is a word of later Hebrew, means precious stones, valuables, treasures, and money paid in tribute.]

- 14 And ¹Solomon gathered chariots and horsemen: and he had a thousand and four hundred chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen, which he placed in the chariot cities, and with the king at Jerusalem.
- 15 And ²the king ³made silver and gold at Jerusalem *as plenteous* as stones, and cedar trees made he as the sycamore trees that *are* in the vale for abundance. And ⁴Solomon had horses brought out of Egypt, and linen yarn: the king's merchants received the linen yarn at a price. And they fetched up, and brought forth out of Egypt a chariot for six hundred *shekels* of silver, and an horse for an hundred and fifty: and so brought they out *horses* for all the kings of the Hittites, and for the kings of Syria, ⁵by their means.
- 2 AND Solomon ^adetermined to build an house for the name of the LORD, and an house for his kingdom. And ^bSolomon told out threescore and ten thousand men to bear burdens, and fourscore thousand to hew in the mountain, and three thousand and six hundred to oversee them.

B. C. 1015.

¹ 1 Ki. 4. 26.
¹ 1 Ki. 10. 26.
 ch. 9. 25.
¹ 1 Ki. 10. 27.
 ch. 9. 27.
 Job 22. 21.
 Isa. (o 17).
³ gave.
⁴ the going forth of the horses which was Solomon's.
⁵ by their hands.

CHAP. 2.

^a 1 Ki. 5. 5.
^b 1 Ki. 5. 15.

14.—HIS STRENGTH AND WEALTH.

14. Solomon gathered chariots and horsemen.

His passion for horses was greater than that of any Israelitish monarch before or after him. His stud comprised 1,400 chariots and 12,000 horses. This was a prohibited indulgence, whether as an instrument of luxury or power. But it was not merely for his own use that he imported the horses of Egypt. The immense equestrian establishment he erected was not for show merely, but also for profit. The Egyptian breed of horses was highly valued; and being as fine as Arabians, but larger and more powerful, as clearly appears from the monuments, they were well fitted for being yoked in chariots. These were light but compact and solid vehicles, without springs. From the price stated (*v. 17*) as given for a chariot and a horse, it appears that the chariot cost four times the value of a horse. A horse brought 150 shekels, which, estimating the shekel at 2s. 3d., or 2s. 6d., amount to £17, 2s. or £18, 15s., while a chariot brought 600 shekels—equal to £93, 9s. or £75; and as an Egyptian chariot was usually drawn by two horses, a chariot and pair would cost £112 sterling. As the Syrians, who were fond of the Egyptian breed of horses, could import them into their own country only through Judea, Solomon early perceived the commercial advantages to be derived from this trade, and established a monopoly. His factors or agents purchased them in the markets or fairs of Egypt, and brought them to the "chariot cities"—the depots and stables he had erected on the frontiers of his kingdom, such as Beth-marcaboth, 'the house of chariots,' and Hazor-susah, 'the village of horses' (Josh. xix. 5; 1 Ki. x. 28).

15. the king made silver and gold at Jerusalem as plenteous as stones—in addition to the large amount of treasure collected and bequeathed to him by his father David. The great source of Solomon's immense wealth undoubtedly lay in his trading speculations. For, as a monarch, he possessed advantages and enjoyed facilities for entering into trade, infinitely superior to any of his subjects. His vessels traded to distant shores, and returned laden with the gold and the treasures of every land. The multiplication of gold and silver was prohibited to the theocratic king as well as that of horses (Deut. xvii. 16, 17). 16. and linen yarn [שֵׁטָם]—a collection, a gathering; nowhere is it used to signify "linen yarn." the king's merchants received the linen yarn at a price. It is strange to find these words in the midst of a context which is occupied before and

after with describing the importation, on a large scale, of horses and chariots from Egypt. The insertion of a clause so unconnected might create a suspicion that the text in this passage has been dislocated, did not the words admit of another interpretation more in accordance with the tenor of the narrative. [Taking the word שֵׁטָם as it stands in the present Hebrew text, Gesenius, followed by Keil, gives this meaning to the clause: 'And a company (or caravan) of the king's merchants (traders) brought a troop or string of horses from Egypt at a price.' The Vulgate, taking שֵׁטָם as a proper name, has, 'and horses were brought to Solomon from Koa' (a place unknown). Thenius, in his 'Commentary,' suggests a translation different from both of the preceding, and founded upon that of the Septuagint. The text of that version (*cf.* 1 Ki. x. 28) stands thus:—*καὶ ἡ ἔξοδος Σαλωμών τῶν ἵππῶν καὶ ἐξ Αἰγύπτου καὶ ἐκ Θεοκού ἔμποροι τοῦ βασιλέως, καὶ ἐλάμβανον ἐκ Θεοκού ἐν ἀλλάγματι.* How or whence did the LXX. obtain the reading, *ἐκ Θεοκού?* Thenius conjectures that the Hebrew manuscript from which they translated had שֵׁטָם, and that they considered the clause in question to signify that the king's trading agents brought horses in bands from Tekoa, having bought them at a price. The ancient route by which animals from the horse markets of Egypt were brought into Palestine was through Beersheba and by Tekoa. To the latter place, as an established depot, they were brought by the Egyptian jockeys, and there transferred to the care of Solomon's factors. Great weight must, in this instance, be attached to the views of the LXX., who, in rendering this passage, would undoubtedly be influenced by their knowledge of the mode in which this extensive traffic was carried on.] 17. brought . . . for all the kings of the Hittites. A branch of this powerful tribe, when expelled from Palestine, had settled north of Lebanon, where they acquired large possessions contiguous to the Syrians.

CHAP. II. 1, 2.—SOLOMON'S LABOURERS FOR BUILDING THE TEMPLE.

1. Solomon determined to build. The temple is the grand subject of this narrative, while the palace—here and in other parts of this book—is only incidentally noticed. The duty of building the temple was reserved for Solomon before his birth. As soon as he became king he addressed himself to the work, and the historian, in proceeding to give an account of the edifice, begins with relating the preliminary arrangements.

Manasseh, with all manner of instruments of war for the battle, an hundred and twenty thousand.

38 All these men of war, that could keep rank, came with a perfect heart to Hebron, to make David king over all Israel: and all the rest also of Israel were of one heart to make David king. And there they were with David three days, eating and drinking: for their brethren had prepared for them. Moreover they that were nigh them, *even* unto Issachar and Zebulun and Naphtali, brought bread on asses, and on camels, and on mules, and on oxen, and ²²meat, meal, cakes of figs, and bunches of raisins, and wine, and oil, and oxen, and sheep abundantly; for *there was* joy in Israel.

13 AND David “consulted with the captains of thousands and hundreds, 2 *and* with every leader. And David said unto all the congregation of Israel, *If it seem good unto you, and that it be of the LORD our God,* ¹let us send abroad unto our brethren every where, *that are* ^bleft in all the land of Israel, and with them *also* to the priests and Levites *which are* ²in 3 their cities *and* suburbs, that they may gather themselves unto us: and let us ³bring again the ark of our God to us: ‘for we enquired not at it 4 in the days of Saul. And all the congregation said that they would do so: for the thing was right in the eyes of all the people.

B. C. 1018.
²² Or, victual of meal.
 CHAP. 13.
^a 2 Sam. 5. 1.
² Sam. 6. 1.
 1 Ki. 8. 1.
 ch. 12. 14.
 20. 32.
 Ps. 132. 1-6.
 Pro. 15. 22.
¹ le: us break forth and send.
^b ch. 10. 7. Isa. 37. 4.
² in the cities of their suburbs.
³ bring about.
^c 1 Sam. 7. 1. 1 Sam. 14. 18.

Jordan . . . an hundred and twenty thousand. From a comparison of the whole list, it appears that the tribes beyond Jordan, over whom Ishbosheth reigned, sent the largest numbers of deputies. The relative numbers stand thus:—

Ephraim,.....	20,800	soldiers.
Manasseh (one half-tribe),.....	18,000	"
Zebulun,.....	50,000	"
Asher,.....	40,000	"
Naphtali,.....	37,000	"
Danites,.....	28,600	"
Reubenites, Gadites, and Manasseh (other half-tribe),.....	120,000	"

38. all the rest also of Israel were of one heart to make David king—*i. e.*, entertained a unanimous desire for his elevation. 39. there they were with David three days, eating and drinking. According to the statements made in the preceding verses, the number of armed warriors assembled in Hebron on this occasion amounted to 300,000. Supplies of provisions were abundantly furnished, not only by the people of the neighbourhood, but from distant parts of the country; for all wished the festivities to be on a scale of liberality and magnificence suitable to the auspicious occasion. 40. Moreover they that were nigh them . . . brought bread [בָּרֵךְ]. The original reading most probably was בָּרֵךְ, to them; so Septuagint, ἐφερον αυτοῖς]. Dropping and, which our translators have put in italics, the verse will stand thus: ‘They brought on asses, and on camels, and on mules, and on oxen, meat, meal, &c.’

CHAP. XIII. 1-8.—DAVID FETCHES THE ARK FROM KIRJATH-JEARIM.

1. David consulted with the captains of thousands and hundreds, &c. Gratitude for the high and splendid dignity to which he had been elevated would naturally, at this period, impart a fresh animation and impulse to the habitually fervent piety of David; but, at the same time, he was animated by other motives: he fully understood his position as ruler under the theocracy, and, on entering on his duties, was resolved to fulfil his mission as a constitutional king of Israel. Accordingly, his first act as a sovereign related to the interests of religion, and the ark being then the grand instrument and ornament of it, he takes

the opportunity of the official representatives of the nation being with him, to consult them about the propriety of establishing it in a more public and accessible locality. The assembly at which he spoke of this consisted of the [כֹּהֲנֵי] princes of thousands and hundreds (2 Sam. vi. 1; cf. Exod. xviii. 25). During the reign of the late king the ark had been left in culpable neglect, and the consequence was that the people had, to a great extent, been careless about the ordinances of Divine worship, or had contented themselves with offering sacrifices at Gibeon, without any thought of the ark, though it was the chief and most vital part of the tabernacle. The duty and advantages of this religious movement suggested by the king were apparent, and the proposal met with universal approval. 2. David said unto all the congregation of Israel [כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל]—*i. e.*, those who were thus convoked; the deliberative assembly. If it seem good unto you, and that it be of the Lord—*i. e.*, I shall conclude that this favourite measure of mine is agreeable to the mind of God, if it receive your hearty concurrence. let us send abroad unto our brethren every where. He wished to make it known throughout the country, in order that there might be a general assembly of the nation, and that preparations might be made on a scale and of a kind suitable to the inauguration of the august ceremonial. priests and Levites . . . in their cities and suburbs—(see on Num. xxxv.) The original terms, “let us send,” imply immediate execution. 3. let us bring again the ark of our God to us: for we enquired not at it in the days of Saul. This neglect, so unwonted in those early times, is spoken of as an unhappy sign of the religious degeneracy produced by the influence and example of the late king. [But כִּי־שָׁאַל may denote, according to the meaning of the verb, ‘we did not seek it in order to provide a proper place for it;’ and so the Septuagint renders it, οὐτις οὐκ ἐζητήσαν αὐτήν, because they sought it not.] Doubtless the publication of the royal edict would have been followed by the appointment of an early day for the contemplated solemnity, had it not been retarded by a sudden invasion of the Philistines, who were twice repulsed with great loss (2 Sam. v. 17), by the capture of Jerusalem, and the transference of the seat of government to that city.

5 So ^aDavid gathered all Israel together, from ^cShihor of Egypt even unto the entering of Hamath, to bring the ark of God from ^jKirjath-jearim. And David went up, and all Israel, to Baalah, ^gthat is, to Kirjath-jearim, which *belonged* to Judah, to bring up thence the ark of God the LORD, ^hthat dwelleth *between* the cherubim, whose name is called *on it*. And they ^ecarried the ark of God ⁱin a new cart out of the house of Abinadab: and Uzza and Ahio drave the cart. And ^jDavid and all Israel played before God with all *their* might, and with ^bsinging, and with harps, and with psalteries, and with timbrels, and with cymbals, and with trumpets. And when they came unto the threshing-floor of ^kChidon, Uzza put forth his hand to hold the ark; for the oxen ^estumbled. And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzza, and he smote him, ^fbecause he put his hand to the ark: and there he died ^mbefore God. And David was displeased, because the LORD had made a breach upon Uzza: wherefore that place is called ^pPerez-uzza to this day. And David was afraid of God that day, saying, How shall I bring the ark of God *home* to me? So David ^sbrought not the ark *home* to himself to the city of David, but carried it aside into the house of Obed-edom the Gittite. And ⁿthe ark of God remained with the family of Obed-edom in his house three months. And the LORD blessed ^othe house of Obed-edom, and all that he had.

14 NOW ^aHiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and timber of 2 cedars, with masous and carpenters, to build him an house. And David perceived that the LORD had confirmed him king over Israel; for his kingdom was lifted up on high, because of his people Israel.

3 And David took ^lmore wives at Jerusalem: and David begat more 4 sons and daughters. Now ^bthese *are* the names of *his* children which he had in Jerusalem; Shammua, and Shobab, Nathan, and Solomon, 5 and Ibhara, and Elishua, and Elpalet, and Nogah, and Nepheg, and 7 Japhia, and Elishama, and ²Beeliada, and Eliphalet.

8 And when the Philistines heard that David ^cwas anointed king over all Israel, all the Philistines went up to seek David: and David heard ^dof 9 *it*, and went out against them. And the Philistines came and spread 10 themselves in the valley of ³Rephaim. And David enquired of God, saying, Shall I go up against the Philistines? and wilt thou deliver

B. C. 1045.

^d 2 Sam. 6. 1.^e Josh. 13. 3.^f 1 Sam. 6. 21.^g 1 Sam. 7. 1.^h Josh. 15. 9.

60.

ⁱ Ex. 25. 22.

Num. 7. 89.

^j 1 Sam. 4. 4.^k made the

ark to ride.

^l Num. 4. 15.^m 2 Sam. 6. 5.

5 songs.

ⁿ 2 Sam. 6. 6.^o shook it.^p Num. 4. 15.

ch. 15. 13.

15.

^q Lev. 10. 2.^r 1 Th. 1.

The breach

of Uzza.

^s removed.^t 2 Sam. 6. 11.^u Gen. 30. 27.

ch. 26. 5.

Ps. 37. 22.

Pro. 10. 22.

CHAP. 14.

^a 2 Sam. 5. 11.

1 Ki. 5. 1.

8-12.

^b yet.

Deut. 17. 14.

17.

^c 2 Sam. 5. 14.

ch. 3. 5.

^d (r. Eliada,

2 Sam. 5. 16.

^e 2 Sam. 5. 17.

ch. 11. 3.

Ps. 2. 1-5.

^f Or, giants.

ch. 11. 15.

Finding, however, soon after, peace restored and his throne established, he resumed his preparations for removing the ark to the metropolis.

5. from Shihor of Egypt (Josh. xv. 4, 47; Num. xxxiv. 5; 1 Ki. viii. 65; 2 Ki. xxiv. 7; 2 Chr. vii. 8)—Wady el-Arish. This is taken by many writers for the Nile; but the Septuagint has ἀπὸ ὀρίων Ἀγύπτου; and the Syriac, 'from the river of Egypt.' A small brook flowing into the Mediteranean, near the modern el-Arish, which forms the southern boundary of Palestine. unto the entering of Hamath. The defile between the mountain ranges of Syria and the extreme limit of Palestine on the north. 6. David went up . . . to Baalah (see on 2 Sam. vi. 1-11)—for Baalah in the Hebrew text, the Vulgate has Collis *Cariathurim*. whose name is called on it—rather, 'who is worshipped there' (see on 2 Sam. vi. 2).

CHAP. XIV. 1-2.—HIRAM'S KINDNESS TO DAVID—DAVID'S FELICITY.

1. Now Hiram king of Tyre. The alliance with this neighbouring king, and the important advantages derived from it, were amongst the most fortunate circumstances in David's reign. The providence of God appeared concurrent with His promise, in smoothing the early course of his reign. Having conquered the Jebusites, and made Zion the royal residence, he had now, along

with internal prosperity, established an advantageous treaty with a neighbouring prince; and hence, in immediate connection with the mention of this friendly league, it is said, "David perceived that the Lord had confirmed him king over Israel." 2. his kingdom was lifted up on high, because of his people Israel. This is an important truth, that sovereigns are invested with royal honour and authority, not for their own sakes so much as for that of their people. But while it is true of all kings, it was especially applicable to the monarchs of Israel, and even David was made to know that all his glory and greatness were given only to fit him, as the minister of God, to execute the Divine purposes towards the chosen people.

3-7.—HIS WIVES.

3. David took more wives at Jerusalem—(see on 2 Sam. iii. 5.) His concubines are mentioned, ch. iii. 9; where also is given a list of his children (vv. 5-8), and those born in Jerusalem (2 Sam. v. 14-16). In that, however, the names of Eliphalet and Nogah do not occur, and Beeliada appears to be the same as Eliada.

8-17.—HIS VICTORIES OVER THE PHILISTINES.

8. all the Philistines went up to seek David. In the hope of accomplishing his ruin (for so the phrase is used, 1 Sam. xxiii. 15; xxiv. 2, 3), before

them into mine hand? And the LORD said unto him, Go up; for I will
 11 deliver them into thine hand. So they came up to Baal-perazim; and
 David smote them there. Then David said, God hath broken in upon
 mine enemies by mine hand like the breaking forth of waters: therefore
 12 they called the name of that place ⁴Baal-perazim. And when they had
 left their gods there, David gave a commandment, and they were burned
 with fire.
 13 And ^athe Philistines yet again spread themselves abroad in the valley.
 14 Therefore David enquired again of God; and God said unto him, Go not
 up after them; turn away from them, ^cand come upon them over against
 15 the mulberry trees. And it shall be, when thou shalt hear a sound of
 going in the tops of the mulberry trees, *that* then thou shalt go out to
 battle: for God is gone forth before thee, to smite the host of the Philis-
 16 tines. David therefore did as God commanded him: and they smote the
 host of the Philistines from ⁷Gibeon even to Gazer.
 17 And ⁹the fame of David went out into all lands; and the LORD
^bbrought the fear of him upon all nations.
 15 AND David made him houses in the city of David, and prepared ^aa
 2 place for the ark of God, and pitched for it a tent. Then David said,
¹None ought to carry the ^bark of God but the Levites: for them hath
 the LORD chosen to carry the ark of God, and to minister unto him for
 ever.
 3 And David ^cgathered all Israel together to Jerusalem, to bring up the
 4 ark of the LORD unto his place which he had prepared for it. And

B. C. 1017.
⁴ That is, Lord of breaches. Isa. 28. 21.
^d 2 Sam. 5. 22.
¹ 1 Ki. 20. 22.
[•] Josh. 8. 6, 7.
² Sam. 5. 23.
^f 2 Sam. 5. 25, Geba.
^o Josh. 6. 27.
² Chr. 26. 9.
³ Matt. 4. 24.
⁴ Matt. 14. 1.
^h Deut. 2. 25, Deut. 11. 25.
 CHAP. 15.
^a ch. 16. 1.
[•] Ps. 132. 2-5.
¹ It is not to carry the ark of God, but for the Levites.
^b Num. 4. 2. 15.
^{Deut} 10. 8.
³ Josh. 3. 3.
[•] 1 Ki. 8. 1, ch. 13. 5.

his throne was consolidated. Their hostility arose, both from a belief that his patriotism would lead him, ere long, to wipe out the national dishonour at Gilboa; and by fear, that in any invasion of their country, his thorough knowledge of their weak points would give him superior advantages. They resolved, therefore, to surprise and crush him ere he was fairly seated on his throne. 11. they came up to Baal-perazim; and David smote them there. In an engagement fought at mount Perazim (Isa. xxviii. 21), in the valley of Rephaim, a few miles west of Jerusalem, the Philistines were defeated and put to flight. 12. when they had left their gods—(see on 2 Sam. v. 21.)
 13. the Philistines yet again spread themselves. They renewed the campaign the next season, taking the same route. David, according to Divine directions, did not confront them. 14. Go not up after them. The text in 2 Sam. v. 23 more correctly has, "Go not up," turn away from them—i. e., by stealing round a Baca-grove, come upon their rear. for God is gone forth before thee. The sound of the going in the tops of the mulberry-trees—i. e., the rustling of the leaves by a strong breeze suddenly rising—was the sign by which David was divinely apprised of the precise moment for the attack. The impetuosity of his onset was like the gush of a pent-up torrent, which sweeps away all in its course; and in allusion to this incident the place got its name. 16. from Gibeon . . . to Gazer—Geba or Gibea (2 Sam. v. 25), now Jib'a, in the province of Judah. The line from this to Gazer was intersected by the roads which led from Judah to the cities of the Philistines; and to recover possession of it, therefore, as was effected by this decisive battle, was equivalent to setting free the whole mountains of Judah as far as their most westerly slope (Bertheau).
 17. And the fame of David went out into all lands [בְּכָל-הָאָרֶץ, into all the lands]. and the Lord brought the fear of him upon all nations

[בְּכָל-הָאָרֶץ, upon all the nations, i. e., around. So the Septuagint, ἐν πάσῃ τῇ γῆ, ἐπι πάντα τὰ ἔθνη.]
 CHAP. XV. 1-24.—DAVID BRINGS THE ARK FROM OBED-EDOM.
 1. David made him houses in the city of David. Through the liberality of his Tyrian ally (ch. xv. 1), David was enabled to erect not only a palace for himself, but to furnish suitable accommodation for his numerous family. Where polygamy prevails, each wife has a separate house, or suite of apartments, for herself and children. prepared a place for the ark of God, and pitched for it a tent—i. e., made an entirely new one upon the model of the former, the old tabernacle, which Moses had constructed in the wilderness, and which had hitherto served the purpose of a sacred covering, being to be left at Gibeon, in consequence either of the unwillingness of the inhabitants to part with such a venerable relic, or of there being no use for it in Jerusalem, where a more solid and sumptuous edifice was contemplated. If it appear surprising that David "made him houses" before he prepared this new tabernacle, it should be remembered that he had received no divine intimation respecting such a work. 2. Then David said. After the lapse of three months (ch. xiii. 14) the purpose of transporting the ark to Jerusalem was resumed. Time and reflection had led to a discovery of the cause of the painful catastrophe that marred the first attempt, and in preparing for the solemn procession that was now to usher the sacred symbol into its resting-place, David took special care that the carriage should be regulated in strict conformity to the law (Num. iv. 5, 15; vii. 9; x. 17). The rule was explicit and absolute that the Kohathite Levites were to bear it upon their shoulders; and yet David had strangely overlooked this when he ordered the ark to be put upon a cart (ch. xiii. 7).
 3. David gathered all Israel together. Some are of opinion that this was done on one of the

- 5 David assembled the children of Aaron, and the Levites: of the sons of ^aKohath; Uriel the chief, and his ²brethren an hundred and twenty: 6 of the sons of Merari; Asaiah the chief, and his brethren two hundred 7 and twenty: of the sons of Gershom; Joel the chief, and his brethren an 8 hundred and thirty: of the sons of ^cElizaphan; Shemaiah the chief, and 9 his brethren two hundred: of the sons of ^dHebron; Eliel the chief, and 10 his brethren fourscore: of the sons of Uzziel; Amminadab the chief, and his brethren an hundred and twelve.
- 11 And David called for Zadok and Abiathar the priests, and for the Levites, for Uriel, Asaiah, and Joel, Shemaiah, and Eliel, and Amminadab, and said unto them, Ye *are* the chief of the fathers of the Levites: ^esanctify yourselves, both ye and your brethren, that ye may bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel unto the place that I have prepared for it.
- 13 For ^fbecause ye *did it* not at the first, the ^gLORD our God made a breach upon us, for that we sought him not after the due order.
- 14 So the priests and the Levites sanctified themselves to bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel. And the children of the Levites bare the ark of God upon their shoulders with the staves thereon, as ^hMoses commanded according to the word of the LORD.
- 16 And David spake to the chief of the Levites to appoint their brethren to be the singers with ⁱinstruments of music, psalteries and harps and cymbals, sounding, by lifting up the voice with joy. So the Levites appointed ^jHeman the son of Joel; and of his brethren, ^kAsaph the son of Berechiah; and of the sons of Merari their brethren, ^lEthan the son of Kushaiah; and with them their brethren of the second degree, Zechariah, Ben, and Jaaziel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehiel, and Unni, Eliab, and Benaiah, and Maaseiah, and Mattithiah, and Elipheleh, and Mikneiah, and Obed-edom, and Jeiel, the porters. So the singers, Heman, 20 Asaph, and Ethan, were appointed to sound with cymbals of brass; and Zechariah, and ^mAziel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehiel, and Unni, and Eliab, and Maaseiah, and Benaiah, with psalteries on ⁿAlamoth; and Mattithiah, and Elipheleh, and Mikneiah, and Obed-edom, and Jeiel, and Azariah, with harps ^oon the Sheminith to excel.
- 22 And Chenaniah, chief of the Levites, ^pwas for ^qsong: he instructed

B. C 1011.

^d Ex. 6. 16,

18.

² Or.

kinsmen.

^e Ex. 6. 22.^f Ex. 6. 18.

Num. 26. 58.

^g Ex. 19. 10.

Lev. 0. 3.

² Chr 5. 11.² Chr 29. 5.

Eze 48. 11.

^h 2 Sam 6. 3.

ch. 13. 7.

ⁱ ch. 13. 10.

11.

^j Ex 25. 14.

Num 4. 15.

Num. 7. 9.

^k 1 s. 31. 2.

Ps. 68. 25.

Is. 150. 2-5.

^l ch. 6. 33.^m ch. 6. 39.ⁿ ch. 6. 41.³ Jaaziel.

ver 18.

⁴ That is

virginal.

or, treble.

1 s. 46.

title.

⁵ Or on the

eighth to

oversee.

Ps. 6. title.

⁶ Or, was

for the

carriage:

he in-

structed

about the

carriage

⁷ lifting up.

three great festivals; but at whatever time the ceremonial took place, it was of great importance to summon a general convocation of the people, many of whom, from the long-continued disorders of the kingdom, might have had little or no opportunity of knowing anything of the ark which had been allowed to remain so long in obscurity and neglect. 4. David assembled the children of Aaron, and the Levites. The children of Aaron were the two priests (v. 11), Zadok and Abiathar, heads of the two priestly houses of Eleazar and Ithamar, and colleagues in the high priesthood (2 Sam. xx. 25). The Levites were the chiefs of their father's house (v. 12), four belonging to the Kohathite branch, on whose shoulders the ark was to be borne—viz., Uriel, Shemaiah, descended from Elizaphan or Elzaphan (Exod. vi. 22), Hebron (Exod. vi. 18; ch. vi. 2), and Amminadab, from Uzziel (Exod. vi. 22).

12. sanctify yourselves. This special sanctification, which was required on all grave and important occasions, consisted in observing the strictest abstinence, as well as cleanliness, both in person and dress (see on Gen. xxxv. 2; Exod. xix. 10, 15), and in the neglect of these rules no step could have been taken (2 Chr. xxx. 3).

16. David spake . . . appoint . . . singers with instruments. These eminent Levites were instructed to train the musicians and singers

who were under them for the solemn procession. The performers were ranged in three choirs or bands, and the names of the principal leaders are given, vv. 17, 18, 21, with the instruments respectively used by each [קָלִים וְכִנּוֹרִים וְצִלְצִלִּים, psalteries, and harps, and cymbals. Josephus says that these instruments were made of electrum, a precious alloy of gold, of a pale yellow colour]. Ben, v. 18, is omitted in v. 20. Either it was used merely as a common noun, to intimate that Zechariah was the son of Jaaziel or Aziel, or Ben is the same as Azaziah. 20. on Alamoth [עַל-צִלְצִלִּים]—after the manner of virgins or girls; i. e., with the female voice (see Gesenius, sub voce [עֲרִיקָה]). Alamoth and Sheminith denote different parts of music; the former answering probably to our treble, or soprano, and the latter to the bass, or perhaps an octave below the treble. In short, Alamoth is supposed to mean with treble voices; Sheminith probably means with bass voices. 21. Mattithiah . . . with harps on the Sheminith to excel. Gesenius renders it, 'Mattithiah . . . played on harps in the octave' (i. e., deep tone, the bass) [עַל-צִלְצִלִּים], so as to lead the song; i. e., to regulate the singing—to act the part of a precentor.

22. Chenaniah, chief of the Levites. He was not of the six heads of the Levitical families,

- 23 about the song, because he was skilful. And Berechiah and Elkanah were door-keepers for the ark.
- 24 And Shebaniah, and Jehoshaphat, and Nethaneel, and Amasai, and Zechariah, and Benaiah, and Eliezer, the priests, °did blow with the trumpets before the ark of God: and Obed-edom and Jehiah were door-keepers for the ark.
- 25 So ^pDavid, and the elders of Israel, and the captains over thousands, went to bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of the house of
- 26 Obed-edom ^qwith joy. And it came to pass, when God helped the Levites that bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, that they ^roffered seven bullocks and seven rams. And David was clothed with a robe of fine linen, and all the Levites that bare the ark, and the singers, and Chenaniah the master of the ^ssong with the singers: David also had upon him an
- 28 ephod of linen. Thus ^sall Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of the LORD with shouting, and with sound of the cornet, and with trumpets, and with cymbals, making a noise with psalteries and harps.
- 29 And it came to pass, ^tas the ark of the covenant of the LORD came to the city of David, that Michal the daughter of Saul, looking out at a window, saw king David dancing and playing; and she ^udespised him in her heart.
- 16 SO ^athey brought the ark of God, and set it in the midst of the tent that David had pitched for it: and they offered burnt sacrifices and peace
- 2 offerings before God. And when David had made an end of offering the burnt offerings and the peace offerings, he blessed the people in the
- 3 name of the LORD. And he dealt to every one of Israel, both man and woman, to every one a loaf of bread, and a good piece of flesh, and a flagon of wine.
- 4 And he appointed *certain* of the Levites to minister before the ark of

B. C. 1012.

° Num. 10. 8.
ch. 16. 6.
2 (hr. 5. 12.
13.
Fs. 81. 3.
Joel 2. 15.
P 2 Sam. 6. 12,
13.
1 Ki. 8. 1.
Deut. 1. 15.
Deut. 12. 7,
18.
1 Sam. 7. 12.
1 Sam. 10.
19.
ch. 13. 11,
12.
Ezra 6. 16.
Mic. 5. 2.
r Num. 23. 1,
2, 4, 29.
Num 29. 32.
Job 42. 8.
Eze. 3. 23.
s Or.
carr'age.
° ch. 13. 8.
t 2 Sam. 6.
16.
u Ac's 2. 13.
CHAP. 16.
a 2 Sam. 6. 17-
19.
1 Ki. 8. 6.
2 Chr. 5. 7.

but a chief in consequence of his office, which required learning, without regard to birth or family. instructed about the song. He directed all these bands as to the proper time when each was to strike in or change their notes; or, as some render the passage, 'He led the burdens, for he was skilled'—i. e., in the custom which it was necessary to observe in the carriage of the holy things (*Bertheau*). 23. Berechiah and Elkanah were door-keepers—who marched immediately in front, while Obed-edom and Jeiel went in the rear, of the ark.

25. So David, and the elders . . . and the captains . . . went. The pious design of David in ordering all his principal ministers and officers to take part in this solemn work, and imparting so much pomp and imposing ceremony to the procession, was evidently to inspire the popular mind with a profound veneration for the ark, and to give the young, especially, salutary impressions of religion, which would be renewed by the remembrance that they had been witnesses of the august solemnity in which the king and the highest aristocracy of the land participated, vieing with all other classes to do honour to the God of Israel. 26. it came to pass, &c.—(see on 2 Sam. vi. 13-23.) they offered seven bullocks and seven rams. The Levites seem to have entered on this duty with fear and trembling; and finding that they might advance without any such indications of Divine wrath as Uzzah had experienced (ch. xiii. 10), they offered an ox and a fatted sheep immediately after starting (2 Sam. vi. 13), and seven bullocks and seven rams—a perfect sacrifice—at the close of the procession (ch. xvi. 1). It is probable that preparations had been made for the offering of similar sacrifices at regular intervals along the way. 27. a robe of fine linen. [יָרֵיב is rather

supposed in the later books to denote cotton. The Septuagint has Δαυὶδ περιεξώσμενος ἐν στολῇ βυσσίνῃ.] an ephod—a shoulder garment, a cincture or cape over his dress. It was worn by the priests, but was not so peculiar to them as to be forbidden to others (1 Sam. ii. 18; xxii. 18). 28. Thus all Israel brought up the ark . . . with shouting, and with sound of the cornet, &c. The Egyptians conducted their religious processions in the same style (*Wilkinson's* 'Ancient Egyptians,' ii., p. 279).

29. Michal . . . saw . . . David dancing and playing. His movements would be slow and measured, suitable to the grave and solemn character of the music. Though his royal robes were laid aside, he was attired like the other officials, showing a becoming humility in the immediate presence of God. The feelings manifested by Michal were only an ebullition of spleen from a proud and passionate woman.

CHAP. XVI. 1-6.—DAVID'S FESTIVAL SACRIFICE AND LIBERILITY TO THE PEOPLE.

2. he blessed the people in the name of the Lord. The king commended their zeal, supplicated the Divine blessing upon them, and ordered the remains of the thank offerings, which had been profusely sacrificed during the procession, to be distributed in certain proportions to every individual, that the ceremonial might terminate with appropriate festivities (Deut. xii. 7). 3. flagon of wine. The two latter words are a supplement by our translators, and the former is, in other versions, rendered not a "flagon," but a 'cake'—a confection, as the Septuagint renders it—made of flour and honey (see on 2 Sam. vi. 19).

4. he appointed certain of the Levites to minister. No sooner was the ark deposited in its tent than the Levites who were to officiate in

- the LORD, and to ^brecord, and to thank and praise the LORD God of Israel: Asaph the chief, and next to him Zechariah, Jeiel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehiel, and Mattithiah, and Eliab, and Benaiah, and Obededom: and Jeiel ¹with psalteries and with harps; but Asaph made a sound with cymbals; Benaiah also and Jahaziel the priests with trumpets continually before the ark of the covenant of God.
- 7 Then on that day David delivered first ^cthis psalm, to thank the LORD, into the hand of Asaph and his brethren.
- 8 Give ^dthanks unto the LORD, call upon his name, Make known his deeds among the people.
- 9 Sing ^eunto him, sing psalms unto him,—talk ye of all his wondrous works.
- 10 Glory ^fye in his holy name:
Let the heart of them rejoice that seek the LORD.
- 11 Seek ^gthe LORD and his strength,—seek his face continually.
- 12 Remember his ^hmarvellous works that he hath done,
His wonders, and the judgments of his mouth;
- 13 O ye seed of Israel his servant,—ye children of Jacob, his chosen ones.
- 14 He *is* the LORD our God;—his judgments *are* in all the earth.
- 15 Be ye mindful always of his covenant,
The word *which* he commanded to a thousand generations;
- 16 *Even of the* ⁱcovenant which he made with Abraham,
And of his oath unto Isaac;
- 17 And hath confirmed the same to Jacob for a law,
And to Israel *for* an everlasting covenant,
- 18 Saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan,
²The lot of your inheritance;
- 19 When ye were but ³few,—^jeven a few, and strangers in it.
- 20 And *when* they went from nation to nation,
And from *one* kingdom to another people,
- 21 He suffered no man to do them wrong;
Yea, ^khe reprov'd kings for their sakes,
- 22 *Saying*, ^l'Touch not mine anointed,—and do my prophets no harm.
- 23 Sing ^munto the LORD, all the earth;
Show forth from day to day his salvation.
- 24 Declare ⁿhis glory among the heathen;
His marvellous works among all nations.
- 25 For ^ogreat *is* the LORD, and greatly to be praised:
He also *is* to be feared above all gods.
- 26 For all the gods ^pof the people *are* idols:
But the LORD made the heavens.
- 27 Glory ^qand honour *are* in his presence;
Strength and gladness *are* in his place.

B. C. 1012.

^b Ps. 33.
Ps. 70.
title.

¹ with instruments of psalteries and harps.

^c 2 Sam. 22. 1.

^d Ps. 105. 1.
Ps. 115. 1.

^e Ps. 95. 1, 2.
Ps. 100. 1, 2.
Ps. 34. 3.

^f Isa. 45. 25.

^g Amos 5. 6, 14.

^h Ps. 103. 2.
Ps. 111. 2.

ⁱ Gen. 17. 2.
Gen. 22. 3.
Gen. 28. 13.
Gen. 35. 11.
Ex. 3. 15.
Neh. 9. 8.
Heb. 6. 13-18.

^j the cord.

^k men of number

^l Gen. 34. 33.
Acts 7. 5.
Heb. 11. 13

^m Gen. 12. 17.
Gen. 10. 3.
Ex. 7. 15-18.

ⁿ Ps. 105. 15.
1 John 2. 27.

^o Ps. 47. 1.
Ps. 96. 1.

^p Ps. 22. 27.
Isa. 12. 4.

^q Ps. 19. 6-5.
Isa. 40. 25, 26.

^r Lev. 19. 4.
Isa. 41. 9-20.
Jer. 10. 3.
Hab. 2. 18.
1 Cor. 8. 4.

^s Ps. 8. 1.
Acts 2. : 8.
Eph. 4. 10.

the choirs before it entered upon their duties—a select number of the musicians being chosen for the service from the list (ch. xv. 19-21) of those who had taken a prominent part in the recent procession. The same arrangement was to be observed in their duties, now that the ark was again stationary: Asaph, with his associates, composing the first or principal company, played with cymbals; Zechariah and his colleagues, with whom were conjoined Jeiel and Obed-edom, forming the second company, used harps and similar instruments. 5. Jeiel—is the same as Aziel, ch. xv. 20. 6. Benaiah also and Jahaziel. The name of the former is mentioned among the priests, ch. xv. 24, but not the latter. The office assigned to them was that of blowing the trumpets at regular intervals before the ark and in the tabernacle (cf. *Wilkinson's* 'Ancient Egyptians,' ii., pp. 271-273).

7.43.—HIS PSALM OF THANKSGIVING.

7. Then on that day David delivered first this psalm. Amongst the other preparations for this solemn inauguration, the royal bard had composed a special hymn for the occasion. Doubtless it had been previously in the hands of Asaph and his assistants, but it was now publicly committed to them as they entered for the first time on the performance of their sacred duties. It occupies the greater part of this chapter (vv. 8-36), and seems to have been compiled from other psalms of David previously known to the Israelites, as the whole of it will be found with very slight variations in Ps. xcvi.; cv. 1-15; cvi. 47, 48. In the form, however, in which it is given by the sacred historian, it seems to have been the first psalm given for use in the tabernacle service; and abounding, as it does, with the liveliest ascriptions of praise

- 28 Give unto the LORD, ye kindreds of the people,
Give unto the LORD glory and strength.
- 29 Give unto the LORD the glory *due* unto his name:
Bring an offering, and come before him;
Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.
- 30 Fear before him, all the earth:
The world also shall be stable, that it be not moved.
- 31 Let the ^rheavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice;
And let *men* say among the nations, 'The LORD reigneth.
- 32 Let ^t the sea roar, and the fulness thereof:
Let the fields rejoice, and all that *is* therein.
- 33 Then shall the trees of the wood sing out at the presence of the LORD,
Because he cometh to judge the earth.
- 34 O ^t give thanks unto the LORD; for *he is good* :
For his mercy *endureth* for ever.
- 35 And ^u say ye, Save us, O God of our salvation,
And gather us together, and deliver us from the heathen,
That we may give thanks to thy holy name,—*and* glory in thy praise.
- 36 Blessed ^v be the LORD God of Israel for ever and ever.
And all ^w the people said, Amen, and praised the LORD.
- 37 So he left there, before the ark of the covenant of the LORD, Asaph
and his brethren, to minister before the ark continually, as every day's
38 work required: and Obed-edom with their brethren, threescore and eight;
39 Obed-edom also the son of Jeduthun, and Hossah, *to be* porters: and
Zadok the priest, and his brethren the priests, ^x before the tabernacle of
40 the LORD, ^y in the high place that *was* at Gibeon, to offer burnt offerings
unto the LORD upon the altar of the burnt offering continually ^z morning
and evening, and *to do* according to all that is written in the law of the
41 LORD, which he commanded Israel; and with them Heman and Jeduthun,
and the rest that were chosen, who were expressed by name, to give
42 thanks to the LORD, ^{aa} because his mercy *endureth* for ever; and with
them Heman and Jeduthun, with trumpets and cymbals for those that
should make a sound, and with musical instruments of God. And the
43 sons of Jeduthun *were* ^{ab} porters. And ^{ac} all the people departed every
man to his house: and David returned to bless ^{ad} his house.
- 17 NOW ^{ae} it came to pass, as David sat in his house, that David said to
Nathan the prophet, Lo, ^{af} I dwell in an house of cedars, but the ark of

B. C. 1012.

^r Ps 19. 1.

Ps. 89. 5.

Isa 35. 10.

Luke 2. 13.

Rev. 11. 2.

^s Ps 96. 10.^t Ps 106. 1.

Ps. 107. 1.

Ps. 118. 1.

Ps. 136. 1.

^u Ps 103. 47.

48.

^v 1 Ki. 8. 15.

Ps. 72. 18.

19.

^w Deut 27. 15.

Neh. 8. 6.

^x ch. 21. 29.

2 (h. r. 1. 3.

^y 1 Ki. 3. 4.^z in the

morning.

and in the

evening.

Ex 29. 39.

Num. 28. 3.

^{aa} 2 Chr. 5. 13.

2 Chr. 7. 3.

Ezra 3. 11.

Neh. 9. 17.

Ps. 15. 10.

Ps. 33. 5.

Jer 32. 11.

Joel 2. 13.

Luke 6. 36.

Jas. . 11.

^{ab} for the

gate.

^{ac} 2 Sam 6. 19.

23.

^{ad} Gen. 18. 19.

Josh 24. 15.

CHAP. 17.

^{ae} 2 Sam 7. 1.

Dan. 4. 4.

29. 39.

^{af} Hag 1. 4.

Acts 7. 46.

to God for the revelation of His glorious character and the display of His marvellous works—containing, as it does, so many pointed allusions to the origin, privileges, and peculiar destiny of the chosen people—it was admirably calculated to animate the devout and call forth the gratitude of the assembled multitude.

36. all the people said, Amen.—(cf. Ps. lxxii. 19, 20; cvi. 48.) In the former the author of the doxology utters the amen himself, while in the latter the people are exhorted to say amen. This may arise from the fact that the latter psalm originally concluded with the injunction to say amen. But in this historical account of the festival, it was necessary to relate that the people obeyed this injunction on the occasion referred to, and therefore the words "let them praise" were altered into "and they praised" (*Bertheau*).

37. So he left there, &c. The sequel of the chapter describes the appointment of the sacred musicians and their respective duties. 38. Obed-edom with their brethren—Hossah, mentioned at the close of the verse, and a great number besides, (see on ch. xxvi.) to be porters—door-keepers. 39. And Zadok . . . before the tabernacle . . .

at Gibeon. While the officers above-mentioned, under the superintendence of Abiathar, were appointed to officiate in Jerusalem, whither the ark had been brought, Zadok and the priests subordinate to him were stationed at Gibeon, to perform the sacred service before the ancient tabernacle which still remained there. 40. continually morning and evening—as the law enjoined (Exod. xxix. 38; Num. xxviii. 3, 6). and to do according to all that is written in the law—(see Num. xxviii.) Thus, in the time of David, the worship was performed at two places, where the sacred things that had been transmitted from the age of Moses were preserved. Before the ark in Jerusalem, Asaph and his brethren officiated as singers, Obed-edom and Hossah served as door-keepers, Benaiah and Jahaziel blew the trumpets; while at the tabernacle and burnt offering in Gibeon, Heman and Jeduthun presided over the sacred music, the sons of Jeduthun were door-keepers, and Zadok, with his suite of attendant priests, offered the sacrifices.

CHAP. XVII. 1-10. — DAVID FORBIDDEN TO BUILD GOD AN HOUSE.

1. as David sat in his house. The details of

2 the covenant of the LORD *remaineth* under curtains. Then Nathan said unto David, Do all that *is* in thine heart; for God *is* with thee.
 3 And it came to pass the same night, that the word of God came
 4 to Nathan, saying, Go and tell David my servant, Thus saith the LORD,
 5 Thou shalt not build me an house to dwell in: for I have not dwelt in an house since the day that I brought up Israel unto this day; but ¹ have gone from ^c tent to tent, and from *one* tabernacle to *another*.
 6 Whersoever I have walked with all Israel, spake I a word to any of the judges of Israel, whom I commanded to feed my people, saying, Why
 7 have ye not built me an house of cedars? Now therefore thus shalt thou say unto my servant David, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, I took thee from the sheep-cote, *even* ² from following the sheep, that thou shouldst
 8 be ruler over my people Israel; and I have been with thee whithersoever thou hast walked, and have cut off all thine enemies from before thee, and have made thee a name like the name of the great men that *are* in
 9 the earth. Also I ^d will ordain a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, and they shall dwell in their place, and shall be moved no more; neither shall the children of wickedness waste them ^e any more, as
 10 at the beginning, and since the time that I commanded judges *to be* over my people Israel. Moreover I will subdue all thine enemies. Further-
 11 more I tell thee that the LORD will build thee an house. And it shall come to pass, when thy days be expired that thou must go *to be* with thy fathers, that I will raise up thy seed after thee, which shall be of thy
 12 sons; and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build me an house,
 13 and I will stablish his throne for ever. I ^f will be his father, and he shall be my son; and I will not take my mercy away from him, as I
 14 took *it* from *him* that was before thee: but ^g I will settle him in mine

B C. 1012.
 1 have been.
 c Ex 40. 2.
 2 Sam 6. 17.
 1 Ki 8. 4. 16.
 d from after.
 Jer. 31. 3. 12.
 Eze. 31. 13. 14.
 e 2 Chr. 15. 2. Isa 49. 17.
 f 2 Sam 7. 14. 15.
 ch. 22. 10. ch. 28. 6.
 Heb 1. 5.
 g Ps 2. 6. 18. 72. 17. Ps. 59. 33. 18. 110. 1. Isa 9. 7. Eze 37. 25. Dan. 2. 44. Dan. 7. 14-27.
 Alic 4. 1.
 Matt 21. 1-11.
 Luke 1. 32. 33.
 Heb. 1. 8. Heb. 3. 6.

this chapter were given in nearly similar terms, 2 Sam. vii. The date was toward the latter end of David's reign; for it is expressly said in the former book to have been at the cessation of all his wars. But as to narrate the preparations for the removal of the ark and the erection of the temple was the principal object of the historian, the exact chronology is not followed.

5. I . . . have gone from tent to tent, &c. The literal rendering is, 'I was walking in a tent and in a dwelling.' The evident intimation (as we may see from v. 6) was to lay stress upon the fact that God was a *Mithhallek* (a travelling God), and went from one place to another with His tent and His entire dwelling. The dwelling included not merely the tent, but the fore-courts, with the altar of burnt offerings, &c. (*Bertheaux*.)
 6. spake I a word to any of the judges. In 2 Sam. vii. 7 it is "any of the tribes" of Israel. Both are included. But the judges, 'who were commanded to feed the people,' form the more suitable antithesis to David. Why have ye not built me an house of cedars?—i.e., a solid and magnificent temple.
 7. Thus saith the Lord . . . I took thee from the sheep-cote [קִרְיַת הַצֹּאן]. The flocks of nomad people are commonly kept in the open country, without being put within folds. In other circumstances they are driven into uncovered enclosures raised in various parts of their pastoral range. These are the 'sheep-cotes'—a rude structure of mud walls, generally in the form of a round tower of rude construction, high-walled, but open at the top, in which sheep are often inclosed at night to protect them from wild beasts. The meaning is, I elevated you to the throne from a humble condition solely by an act of Divine grace, and not from any antecedent merits of your own (see on 1 Sam. xvi. 11), and enabled you to acquire renown equal or superior to any other

monarch. Your reign will be ever afterwards regarded as the best and brightest era in the history of Israel, for it will secure to the nation a settled inheritance of prosperity and peace, without any of the oppressions or disorders that afflicted them in early times.
 9. at the beginning, 10. And since the time that I commanded judges—i.e., including the whole period from Joshua to Saul. I tell thee that the Lord will build thee an house. This was the language of Nathan himself, who was specially directed to assure David, not only of personal blessing and prosperity, but of a continuous line of royal descendants. [צִוִּיתִיךָ, "I tell thee." The Septuagint, combining these two words, have one word, ἰσχυρῶ, which they render by καὶ αὐξήσω δέ, 'and I will increase thee.' The sense is good, and in full accordance with the tenor of the Divine promise. But to found upon a clause thus acquired an argument that the LXX. had a Hebrew text before them superior to our present one will appear unwarranted, when it is considered that these words are translated one way in Samuel and another way here. The Septuagint contains an additional error in this passage; for in that version the words (v. 4), וְבָנִיתִי לְךָ בֵּיתִי, "that the Lord will build thee an house," are rendered, οὐκ οἶκον οἰκοδομήσεις αὐτῷ, 'that thou wilt build an house to him.']
 11. I will raise up thy seed (2 Sam. vii. 12). 13. I will not take my mercy away from him, as I took it. My procedure in dealing with him will be different from my disposal of Saul. Should his misconduct call for personal chastisement, I shall spare his family. If I see it necessary to withdraw my favour and help for a time, it will be a corrective discipline, only to reform and restore, not to destroy. On this passage some have founded an argument for

- house and in my kingdom for ever; and his throne shall be established for evermore.
- 15 According to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David.
- 16 And ^hDavid the king came and sat before the LORD, and said, 'Who am I, O LORD God, and what is mine house, that thou hast brought me hitherto? And yet this was a small thing in thine eyes, O God; for thou hast also spoken of thy servant's house for a great while to come, and hast regarded me according to the estate of a man of high degree, O LORD God. What can David *speak* more to thee for the honour of thy servant?'
- 17 for ^jthou knowest thy servant. O LORD, for thy servant's sake, and according ^kto thine own heart, hast thou done all this greatness, in making known all *these* ³great things. O LORD, *there is* ^lnone like thee, neither *is there any* God besides thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears. And what one nation in the earth *is* like thy people Israel, whom God went to redeem *to be* his own people, to make thee a name of greatness and terribleness, by driving out nations from before thy people, whom thou hast redeemed out of Egypt? For thy people Israel didst thou make thine own people for ever; and thou, LORD, becamest their God. Therefore now, LORD, let the thing that thou hast spoken concerning thy servant, and concerning his house, be established for ever, and do as thou hast said. Let it even be established, that ^mthy name may be magnified for ever, saying, The LORD of hosts *is* the God of Israel, *even* a God to Israel; and *let* the house of David thy servant *be* established before thee. For thou, O my God, ⁴hast told thy servant that thou wilt build him an house: therefore thy servant hath found *in his heart* to pray before thee. And now, LORD, thou art God, and hast ⁿpromised this goodness unto thy servant: Now therefore ⁵let it please thee to bless the house of thy servant, that it may be before thee for ever: for ^othou blessest, O LORD, and *it shall be* blessed for ever.
- 18 NOW after this ^ait came to pass, that David smote the Philistines, and subdued them, and took Gath and her towns out of the hand of the Philistines.
- 2 And he ^bsmote Moab; and the Moabites became David's servants, and brought gifts.
- 3 And David smote ¹Hadarezer king of Zobah unto Hamath, as he ^cwent

B. C. 10 2.
^h 2 Sam 7. 18.
2 Ki 1 ^a . 11.
ⁱ Gen. 52. 10.
Job 7. 17
^j Ps 139. 1.
John 21. 17.
Rev. 2 2 ^t .
^k Matt 11. 26.
Fph 1. 11.
³ great- nesses.
^l Ex 15. 11.
Deut 3 4.
Deut. 3. 23.
Ps 76 8.
^m 2 Chr 6. 33.
Ps 21. 13.
Ps. 72. 19.
Matt 6. 9.
John 12 23.
John 17. 1.
Phil. 2. 11.
1 Pt. 4. 11.
⁴ hast re- vealed the ear of thy servant.
ⁿ Ex. 34 6.
Heb. 6 18.
Tit. 1. 2
⁵ Or, it hath pleased thee
^o Gen. 27. 33.
Ps 72. 1 ^t .
Rom. 1 29.
CHAP. 18.
^a 2 Sam. 8. 1.
^b Num. 4. 17.
1 Cr. Hadad- ezer,
2 Sam. 8. 3.
^c Gen 15 18.
Deut 11. 21.
Ps 10.
title.

Solomon's repentance and return to God. 14. I will settle him in mine house—over my people Israel, and in my kingdom. God here asserts His right of supreme sovereignty in Israel. David and Solomon, with their successors, were only the viceregents whom He nominated or, in His providence, permitted. His throne shall be established for evermore. The posterity of David inherited the throne in a long succession, but not always. In such a connection as this, the phrase, "for evermore," is employed in a restricted sense (see on Lam. iii. 31). We naturally expect the prophet to revert to David before concluding, after having spoken (v. 12) of the building of Solomon's temple. The promise that his house should be blessed was intended as a compensation for the disappointment of his wish to build the temple; and hence this assurance is appropriately repeated at the conclusion of the prophet's address (*Bertheau*).

15. According to all . . . this vision. The revelation of the Divine will was made to the prophet in a dream.

16. David the king . . . sat before the Lord, and said—(see on 2 Sam. vii. 18-29.)

CHAP. XVIII. 1, 2.—DAVID SUBDUES THE PHILISTINES AND MOABITES.

1. David . . . took Gath and her towns. The full extent of David's conquests in the Philistine territory is here distinctly stated; whereas in the parallel passage, 2 Sam. viii. 1, it is only described in a general way. Gath was the "Methegammah," or 'arm-bridle,' as it is there called, either from its supremacy, as the capital, over the other Philistine towns, or because, in the capture of that important place and its dependencies, he obtained the complete control of his restless neighbours.

2. he smote Moab. The terrible severities by which David's conquest of that people was marked, and the probable reason of their being subjected to such a dreadful retribution, are narrated, 2 Sam. viii. 2. The Moabites . . . brought gifts—i. e., became tributary to Israel.

3-13.—SMITES HADAREZER AND THE SYRIANS.

3. Hadarezer—or Hadadezer (2 Sam. viii. 3), which was probably the original form of the name, was derived from Hadad, a Syrian deity. It seems to have become the official and hereditary title of the rulers of that kingdom. Zobah. Its situation is determined by the words "unto," or 'towards,' "Hamath," a little to the north-east of Damascus, and is supposed by some to be the

- 4 to establish his dominion by the river Euphrates. And David took from him a thousand chariots, and ^aseven thousand horsemen, and twenty thousand footmen: David also houghed all the chariot *horses*, but reserved of them an hundred chariots.
- 5 And when the Syrians of ²Damascus came to help Hadarezer king of
- 6 Zobah, David slew of the Syrians two and twenty thousand men. Then David put *garrisons* in Syria-damascus; and the Syrians became David's servants, and brought gifts. Thus the LORD preserved ^eDavid whithersoever he went. And David took the shields of gold that were on the
- 8 servants of Hadarezer, and brought them to Jerusalem. Likewise from ³Tibbath, and from Chun, cities of Hadarezer, brought David very much brass, wherewith ^fSolomon made the brasen sea, and the pillars, and the vessels of brass.
- 9 Now when ^gTou king of Hamath heard how David had smitten all the
- 10 host of Hadarezer king of Zobah, he sent ^hHadoram his son to king David, ⁴to enquire of his welfare, and ⁵to congratulate him, because he had fought against Hadarezer, and smitten him; (for Hadarezer ⁶had war with Tou;) and *with him* all manner of vessels of gold and silver and
- 11 brass. Them also king David dedicated unto the LORD, with the silver and the gold that he brought from all *these* nations; from Edom, and from Moab, and from the children of Ammon, and from the Philistines, and from Amalek.
- 12 Moreover ⁷Abishai the son of Zeruiah slew of the Edomites in the
- 13 valley of Salt eighteen ⁴thousand. And ⁷he put garrisons in Edom; and all the Edomites became David's servants.
- Thus the LORD preserved David whithersoever he went.
- 14 So David reigned over all Israel, and executed judgment and justice
- 15 among all his people. And Joab the son of Zeruiah *was* over the host;
- 16 and Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud, ⁸recorder; and Zadok the son of Ahitub, and ⁹Abimelech the son of Abiathar, *were* the priests; and
- 17 ¹⁰Shavsha *was* scribe; and ²Benaiah the son of Jehoiada *was* over the

B C 1049.

^a 2 Sam. 8. 4, seven hundred.

² Darneseck.

³ Ps. 91. 14.

⁴ Called in the book of Samuel, Bethah and Berolhai.

^f 1 Ki 7. 15.

² Chr. 4. 12.

^g 2 Sam. 8. 9, Toi.

^h 2 Sam 8. 10, Joram.

Ps. 121. 2.

⁴ Or, to salute.

⁵ to bless.

⁶ was the man of wars.

⁷ Abshai.

ⁱ 2 Sam 7. 3.

^j Gen. 27. 29. Num. 24. 18.

⁸ Or, remembrancer.

⁹ Called, Abimelech,

2 Sam 8. 17.

¹⁰ Called, Serub,

2^a am. 8. 17, and Shisha,

1 Ki 4. 3

^k 2 Sam. 8. 18.

same place as in earlier times was called Hobah (Gen. xiv. 15). Previous to the rise of Damascus, Zobah was the capital of the kingdom which held supremacy among the petty states of Syria, as he went to establish his dominion by the river Euphrates. Some refer this to David, who was seeking to extend his possessions in one direction towards a point bordering on the Euphrates, in accordance with the promise, Gen. xv. 18; Num. xxiv. 17. But others are of opinion that, as David's name is mentioned, v. 4, this reference is most applicable to Hadarezer. 4. David took from him a thousand chariots—(see on 2 Sam. viii. 3-14.) In that passage David is said to have taken 700 horsemen, whereas here it is said that he took 7,000. This great discrepancy in the text of the two narratives seems to have originated with a transcriber in confounding the two Hebrew letters which indicate the numbers, and in neglecting to mark or observe the points over one of them. We have no means of ascertaining whether 700 or 7,000 be the more correct. Probably the former should be adopted (*Davidson's* 'Hermeneutics'), but reserved of them an hundred chariots—probably to grace a triumphal procession on his return to Jerusalem, and after using them in that way, to destroy them like the rest.

8. from Tibbath, and from Chun. These places are called Bethah and Berolhai, 2 Sam. viii. 8. Perhaps the one might be the Jewish, the other the Syrian name of these towns. Neither their situation nor the connection between them is known. The Arabic version makes them to be Emca (now

Hems) and Baalbeck, both of which agree very well with the relative position of Zobah.

9. Tou—or Toi, whose dominions border on those of Hadarezer (see on 2 Sam. viii. 9-12; 1 Ki. xi. 15).

12. Moreover Abishai the son of Zeruiah slew of the Edomites in the valley of Salt eighteen thousand. The conduct of the Edomites having provoked a war, David sent an army into their country, subdued it, and made it a tributary province of his kingdom (cf. 2 Sam. viii. 13). 'At the southern extremity of the Dead Sea is a marshy flat, called by the Arabs el-Ghor, probably the place where David defeated the Edomites, and which in Scripture is called "the valley of Salt." This plain in winter is often overflowed. Afterwards, when the rains cease, the waters recede, and a salt, bituminous, slimy morass remains behind, which, seen from afar, from the glittering of the particles of salt, has the appearance of a sheet of water, but on a nearer approach reveals its true character' (*Van de Velde*, ii., pp. 119, 120).

13. he put garrisons in Edom; and all the Edomites became David's servants. This annexation of Edom enlarged the border of Israel on the south-east to the Red Sea, conformably to the Divine promise (Exod. xxiii. 31), and gave him command of its ports.

16. Abimelech—elsewhere Ahimelech (cf. ch. xxiv. 6; see on 1 Sam. xiv. 3; xxii. 20; 2 Sam. viii. 17) [Septuagint, Ἀχιμελεχ. So also the Vulgate, as well as the Syriac and Arabic versions]. Drusius remarks that there were two Abimelechs—one the grandson of Ahitub,

B C. 10 0

¹¹ at the hand of the king. ch. 23. 28.

CHAP. 19.
^a Judg 10. 7-9.

Judg. 1. 12-28.

1 Sam. 11. 1, 2.

1 Sam. 12. 12.

2 Sam. 10. 1.

¹ In thine eyes doth David, etc.

^b Josh. 6. 21, 26.

Judg 16. 23. 1 Ki 16. 31.

² to sink.

^c 1 Sam 11. 47.

2 Sam. 8. 2.

2 Sa n. 10. 6.

1 Ki. 11. 23. ch. 17. 5, 9.

^d Num. 21. 30. Josh 13. 9.

Isa 15. 2.

^e : Sam 11. 1. ³ the face of the b ttle was.

Cherethites and the Pelethites; and the sons of David were chief ¹¹ about the king.

19 NOW ^a it came to pass after this, that Nahash the king of the children of Ammon died, and his son reigned in his stead. And David said, I will show kindness unto Hanun the son of Nahash, because his father showed kindness to me. And David sent messengers to comfort him concerning his father. So the servants of David came into the land of the children of Ammon to Hanun, to comfort him. But the princes of the children of Ammon said to Hanun, ¹ Thinkest thou that David doth honour thy father, that he hath sent comforters unto thee? are not his servants come unto thee for to search, and to overthrow, and to spy out the land? Wherefore Hanun took David's servants, and shaved them, and cut off their garments in the midst hard by their buttocks, and sent them away. Then there went *certain*, and told David how the men were served: and he sent to meet them: for the men were greatly ashamed. And the king said, Tarry at Jericho ^b until your beards be grown, and then return.

6 And when the children of Ammon saw that they had made themselves ² odious to David, Hanun and the children of Ammon sent a thousand talents of silver to hire them chariots and horsemen out of Mesopotamia, and out of Syria-maachah, ^c and out of Zobah. So they hired thirty and two thousand chariots, and the king of Maachah and his people; who came and pitched before ^d Medeba. And the children of Ammon gathered themselves together from their cities, and came to battle.

8 And when David heard *of it*, he sent Joab, and all the host of the 9 mighty men. And the children of Ammon came out, and put the battle in array before the gate of ^e the city: and the kings that were come were by themselves in the field. Now when Joab saw that ³ the battle was set

and the other the son of Abiathar. 17. the Cherethites and the Pelethites—who formed the royal body-guard. The Cherethites were most probably those brave men who all along accompanied David while among the Philistines, and from that people derived their name (1 Sam. xxx. 14; Ezek. xxv. 16; Zeph. xii. 5), as well as their skill in archery; while the Pelethites were those who joined him at Ziklag, took their name from Pelet, the chief man in the company (ch. xii. 3), and, being Benjamites, were expert in the use of the sling.

CHAP. XIX. 1-5.—DAVID'S MESSENGERS, SENT TO COMFORT HANUN, ARE DISGRACEFULLY TREATED.

1. after this. This phrase seems to indicate that the incident now to be related took place immediately, or soon after the wars described in the preceding chapter. But the chronological order is loosely observed, and the only just inference that can be drawn from the use of this phrase is, that some further account is to be given of the wars against the Syrians. Nahash the king of the children of Ammon died. There had subsisted a very friendly relation between David and him, begun during the exile of the former, and cemented, doubtless, by their common hostility to Saul. 3. are not his servants come unto thee for to search?—i. e., thy capital, Rabbah (2 Sam. x. 3). 4. shaved them—not completely, but only the half of their face. This disrespect to the beard, and indecent exposure of their persons by their clothes being cut off from the girdle downwards, was the grossest indignity to which Jews, in common with all Orientals, could be subjected. No wonder that the men were ashamed to appear in public—that the king recommended

them to remain in seclusion on the border till the mark of their disgrace had disappeared—and then they might, with propriety, return to the court.

6-15.—JOAB AND ABISHAI OVERCOME THE AMMONITES.

6. when the children of Ammon saw that they . . . odious to David. One universal feeling of indignation was roused throughout Israel, and all classes supported the king in his determination to avenge this unprovoked insult on the Hebrew nation. Hanun . . . sent a thousand talents of silver—a sum equal to £342,100; to procure the services of foreign mercenaries. chariots and horsemen out of Mesopotamia . . . Syria-maachah, and . . . Zobah. The Mesopotamian troops did not arrive during this campaign (v. 16). Syria-maachah lay on the north of the possessions of the trans-Jordanic Israelites, near Gilead. "Zobah" (see on ch. xviii. 3). 7. they hired thirty and two thousand chariots [2377 chariots]—but also riders, or cavalry, accustomed to fight either on horseback or in chariots, and occasionally on foot; and accepting this as the true rendering, the number of hired auxiliaries mentioned in this passage agrees exactly with the statement in 2 Sam. x. 6 (see Davidson's 'Hermeneutics,' p. 552). 20,000 from Zobah, 12,000 from Tob, equal to 32,000, and 1,000 with the king of Maachah.

8. David . . . sent Joab, and all the host of the mighty men. The whole forces of Israel, including the great military orders, were engaged in this war. 9. children of Ammon . . . put the battle in array before the gate of the city—i. e., outside the walls of Medebah, a frontier town on the Arnon. the kings that were come were by themselves in the field. The Israelitish

against him before and behind, he chose out of all the ⁴choice of Israel, and put *them* in array against the Syrians. And the rest of the people he delivered unto the hand of ⁵Abishai his brother, and they set *themselves* in array against the children of Ammon. And he said, If the Syrians be too strong for me, then thou shalt help me: but if the children of Ammon be too strong for thee, then I will help thee. Be of good courage, and let us behave ourselves valiantly for our people, and for the cities of our God: and let the LORD do *that which is good* in his sight.

14 So Joab and the people that *were* with him drew nigh before the 15 Syrians unto the battle; and they ⁷fled before him. And when the children of Ammon saw that the Syrians were fled, they likewise fled before Abishai his brother, and entered into the city. Then Joab came to Jerusalem.

16 And when the Syrians saw that they were put to the worse before Israel, they sent messengers, and drew forth the Syrians that *were* beyond the ⁶river: and ⁹Shophach the captain of the host of Hadarezer went before them. And it was told David; and he gathered all Israel, and passed over Jordan, and came upon them, and set *the battle* in array against them. So when David had put the battle in array against the 18 Syrians, they fought with him. But the Syrians ⁸fled before Israel; and David slew of the Syrians seven thousand *men which fought in chariots*, and forty thousand footmen, and killed Shophach the captain of the host.

19 And when the servants of Hadarezer saw that they were put to the worse before Israel, they made peace with David, and became his servants: neither would the Syrians help the children of Ammon any more.

20 AND ^ait came to pass, that ¹after the year was expired, at the time that kings go out *to battle*, Joab led forth the power of the army, and wasted the country of the children of Ammon, and came and besieged Rabbah. But David tarried at Jerusalem. And ^bJoab smote Rabbah, and destroyed 2 it. And David ^ctook the crown of their king from off his head, and found it ²to weigh a talent of gold, and *there were* precious stones in it; and it was set upon David's head: and he brought also exceeding much 3 spoil out of the city. And he brought out the people that *were* in it, and ³cut *them* with saws, and with harrows of iron, and with axes. Even so

B. C. 10 7.

⁴ Or, young men.⁵ Abshal, ch. 18. 12.⁷ Lev 23; 7, 8.

Num 14. 9.

Deut 23 7.

Deut 32 70.

Josh 10. 10.

11.

Josh. 22. 9.

1 Ki. 20. 13.

14. 19-21.

⁶ That is,

Euphrates.

⁹ 2 Sam. 10.

16.

Shobach.

^a Ps. 33. 16.

Pro. 21. 31.

CHAP. 20.

^a 2 Sam 11. 1.

1 Ki. 10. 22.

¹ at the

return of

the year.

^b 2 Sam 12.

25.

Jer. 49 2.

Eze. 21. 20.

Eze. 25. 5.

^c 2 Sam. 12.

30, 31.

² the weight

of.

³ Or, made

them

sawers of

stone.

diggers of

iron, and

cutters

wood.

army being thus beset by the Ammonites in front, and by the Syrian auxiliaries behind, Joab resolved to attack the latter—the more numerous and formidable host—while he directed his brother Abishai, with a suitable detachment, to attack the Ammonites. Joab's address before the engagement displays the faith and piety that became a commander of the Hebrew people. The mercenaries being defeated, the courage of the Ammonites failed, so that, taking flight, they entrenched themselves within the fortified walls.

16-19.—SHOPHACH SLAIN BY DAVID.

16. And when the Syrians saw that they were put to the worse—(see on 2 Sam. x. 15-19.) 18. seven thousand men—(cf. 2 Sam. x. 18, which has seven hundred chariots.) Either the text in one of the books is corrupt (*Keil, Davidson*), or the accounts must be combined, giving this result: 7,000 horsemen, 700 chariots, and 40,000 footmen (*Kennicott, Howbigant, Calmet*).

CHAP. XX. 1-3.—RABBAH BESIEGED BY JOAB, SPOILED BY DAVID, AND THE PEOPLE TORTURED.

1. at the time that kings go out to battle—in spring, the usual season, in ancient times, for entering on a campaign; *i. e.*, a year subsequent to the Syrian war. Joab led forth the power . . . and wasted the country . . . of Ammon. The former campaign had been disastrous, owing chiefly to the hired auxiliaries of the Ammonites;

and as it was necessary, as well as just, that they should be severely chastised for their wanton outrage on the Hebrew ambassadors, Joab ravaged their country, invested their capital, Rabbah, and having, after a protracted siege, taken one part of it, the lower town or 'city of waters,' insulated by the winding course of the Jabbok, he, knowing that the fort called 'the royal city' would soon fall, invited the king to come in person, and have the honour of storming it. The knowledge of this fact (mentioned 2 Sam. xii. 26) enables us to reconcile the two statements, "David tarried at Jerusalem" (v. 1), and "David and all the people returned to Jerusalem" (v. 3). 2. crown of their king . . . weigh a talent of gold—equal to 125 lbs. Some think that *Malcom*, rendered in our version "their king," should be taken as a proper name, Milcom, or Molech, the Ammonite idol, which, of course, might bear a heavy weight. But, like many other state crowns of Eastern kings, the crown got at Rabbah was not worn on the head, but suspended by chains of gold above the throne. precious stones—Hebrew, a stone, or cluster of precious stones, which was set on David's head. 3. cut them with saws, &c. The Hebrew word, "cut them," is, with the difference of the final letter, the same as that rendered "put them," in the parallel passage of Samuel; and many consider that putting them to saws, axes, &c., means nothing more than that

dealt David with all the cities of the children of Ammon. And David and all the people returned to Jerusalem.

4 And it came to pass after this, that there ⁴arose war at ⁵Gezer with the Philistines; at which time Sibbechai the Hushathite slew ⁶Sippai, *that was* of the children of ⁷the giant: and they were subdued.

5 And there was war again with the Philistines; and Elhanan the son of ⁸Jair slew Lahimi the brother of Goliath the Gittite, whose spear's staff *was* like a weaver's beam.

6 And yet again there was war at Gath, where was ⁹a man of *great* stature, whose fingers and toes *were* four and twenty, six *on each hand*,

7 and six *on each foot*: and he also was ¹⁰the son of the giant. But when he ¹¹defied Israel, Jonathan the son of ¹²Shimea, David's brother, slew him. These were born unto the giant in Gath; and they fell by the hand of David, and by the hand of his servants.

21 AND ^aSatan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel. And David said to Joab, and to the rulers of the people, Go, number Israel from Beer-sheba even to Dan; ^band bring the number of

3 them to me, that I may know *it*. And Joab answered, The LORD make his people an hundred times so many more as they *be*: but, my lord the king, *are* they not all my lord's servants? why then doth my lord require

4 this thing? why will he be a cause of trespass to Israel? Nevertheless the ^cking's word prevailed against Joab: wherefore Joab departed, and

5 went throughout all Israel, and came to Jerusalem. And Joab gave the sum of the number of the people unto David. And all *they* of Israel were a thousand thousand and an hundred thousand men that drew sword; and Judah *was* four hundred threescore and ten thousand men that drew

6 sword. But ^dLevi and Benjamin counted he not among them: for the king's word was abominable to Joab.

B. C. 1418.

⁴ stood, or, continued.
⁵ Or, Gob.
⁶ Or, Saph.
⁷ Or, Rapha, 2 Sam. 21. 15.
⁸ Jaure-oregim, 2 Sam. 21. 10.
⁹ a man of measure.
¹⁰ born to the giant, or, Rapha.
¹¹ Or, re-approched.
¹² Called Shamhah, 1 Sam. 16. 9.

CHAP. 21.
^a 2 Sam. 21. 1.
^b 1 Ki. 22. 20-22.
^c Job 1. 6.
^d Zech. 3. 1.
^e Matt. 4. 3.
^f ch. 27. 21.
^g Fro. 29. 5.
^h Eccl. 8. 4.
ⁱ Acts 1. 19.
^j Num. 1. 47-49.
^k ch. 27. 24.

David condemned the inhabitants of Rabbah to hard and penal servitude.

4-8.—THREE OVERTHROWS OF THE PHILISTINES, AND THREE GIANTS SLAIN.

4. war at Gezer—or Gob (see on 2 Sam. xxi. 18-22).

CHAP. XXI. 1-13.—DAVID SINS IN NUMBERING THE PEOPLE.

1. Satan stood up against Israel. God, by withdrawing His grace at this time from David, permitted the Tempter to prevail over him; and as the result of this successful temptation was the entail of a heavy calamity as a punishment from God upon the people, it might be said that "Satan stood up against Israel." "Satan" has not hitherto been used in the sacred history as a name for the devil. For the true meaning of the term, see on 2 Sam. xxiv. 1. number Israel. In the act of taking the census of a people there is not only no evil, but much utility. But numbering Israel—that people who were to become as the stars for multitude—implying a distrust of the Divine promise, was a sin; and though it had been done with impunity in the time of Moses, at that enumeration each of the people had contributed 'half a shekel towards the building of the tabernacle,' that there might be no plague among them when he numbered them (Exod. xxx. 12). Hence the numbering of that people was in itself regarded as an undertaking by which the anger of God could be easily aroused; but when the arrangements were made by Moses for the taking of the census, God was not angry, because the people were numbered for the express purpose of the tax for the sanctuary, and the money which was thus collected, "the atonement money" (Exod. xxx. 16), appeased Him. Everything depended, therefore, upon the design of the census

(Bertheau). The sin of David numbering the people consisted in its being either to gratify his pride, to ascertain the number of warriors he could muster for some meditated plan of conquest, or, perhaps, more likely still, to institute a regular and permanent system of taxation, which he deemed necessary to provide an adequate establishment for the monarchy, but which was regarded as a tyrannical and oppressive exaction—an innovation on the liberty of the people—a departure from ancient usage unbecoming a king of Israel. 3. why will he be a cause of trespass to Israel?—or bring an occasion of punishment on Israel. In Hebrew the word sin is often used synonymously with the punishment of sin. In the course of Providence the people frequently suffer for the misconduct of their rulers. 5. Joab gave the sum. It amounted to 1,100,000 men in Israel capable of bearing arms, inclusive of the 300,000 military (ch. xxvii.), which, being already enlisted in the royal service, were not reckoned, 2 Sam. xxiv. 9, and to 470,000 men in Judah, omitting 30,000 which formed an army of observation stationed on the Philistine frontier (2 Sam. vi. 1). The Syriac version gives the same number in this passage as is stated in the parallel one, 2 Sam. xxiv. 9. So large a population at this early period, considering the limited extent of the country, and comparing it with the earlier census (Num. xxvi.), is a striking proof of the fulfilment of the promise, Gen. xv. 5. 6. Levi and Benjamin counted he not. If this census was ordered with a view to the imposition of taxes, this alone would account for Levi, who were not warriors (v. 5), not being numbered (see on Num. i. 47-55). The population of Benjamin had been taken (see on ch. vii. 6-11), and the register preserved in the archives of that

- 7 And ¹God was displeased with this thing; therefore he smote Israel.
 8 And David said unto God, 'I have sinned greatly, because I have done this thing: but ²now, I beseech thee, do away the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very foolishly.
 9, And the LORD spake unto Gad, David's ³seer, saying, Go and tell David, 10 saying, Thus saith the LORD, I ⁴offer thee three *things*: choose thee one 11 of them, that I may do *it* unto thee. So Gad came to David, and said 12 unto him, Thus saith the LORD, ⁵Choose thee either ⁶three years' famine; or three months to be destroyed before thy foes, while that the sword of thine enemies overtaketh *thee*; or else three days the sword of the LORD, even the pestilence, in the land, and the angel of the LORD destroying throughout all the coasts of Israel. Now therefore advise thyself what 13 word I shall bring again to him that sent me. And David said unto Gad, I am in a great strait: let me fall now into the hand of the LORD; for very ⁷great *are* his mercies: but let me not fall into the hand of man.
 14 So the LORD sent pestilence upon Israel: and there fell of Israel seventy 15 thousand men. And God sent an ⁸angel unto Jerusalem to destroy it: and as he was destroying, the LORD beheld, and ⁹he repented him of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed, It is enough, stay now thine hand. And the angel of the LORD stood by the threshing-floor of ¹⁰Ornan the Jebusite. And David lifted up his eyes, ¹¹and saw the angel of the LORD stand between the earth and the heaven, having a drawn sword in his hand stretched out over Jerusalem: then David and the elders of 17 *Israel, who were* clothed in sackcloth, fell upon their faces. And David

B C. 1-17.

1 And it was evil in the eyes of the LORD concerning this thing.
 2 Sam. 24. 10.
 Job 42. 2, 3.
 3 2 Sam. 12. 13.
 4 1 Sam. 9. 9.
 5 stretch out.
 6 Take to thee.
 7 2 Sam. 24. 13.
 8 Or, mary, Lam 3. 22.
 9 2 Sam. 24. 15.
 Jer. 7. 12. Jer. 21:9, 13.
 10 Gen. 6. 6. Judg. 2. 14.
 11 Araunab, 2 Sam. 24. 18.
 12 Chr. 3. 1.

tribe. This, however, was taken on another occasion, and by other agency than that of Joab. The non-numbering of these two tribes might have originated in the special and gracious providence of God, partly because Levi was devoted to His service, and Benjamin had become the least of all the tribes (Judg. xxi.); and partly because God foresaw that they would remain faithful to the house of David in the division of the tribes, and therefore would not have them diminished. From the course followed in this survey (see on 2 Sam. xxiv. 4-8), it would appear that Judah and Benjamin were the last tribes that were to be visited, and that, after the census in Judah had been finished, Joab, before entering on that of Benjamin, had to return to Jerusalem, where the king, now sensible of his great error, gave orders to stop all further proceedings in the business. Not only the remonstrance of Joab at the first, but his slow progress in the survey (2 Sam. xxiv. 8), showed the strong repugnance, and even horror, of the old general at this unconstitutional measure.

9. the Lord spake unto Gad, David's seer. Although David was himself endowed with a prophetic gift, yet, in matters relating to himself or his kingdom, he was in the habit of consulting the Lord through the medium of the priests, and when he failed to do so, a prophet was sent on extraordinary occasions to admonish or chastise him. Gad, a private friend, was occasionally employed as the bearer of these prophetic messages. 11. Choose thee, &c. To the three evils these correspond in beautiful agreement: three years, three months, three days (*Bertheau*). (See on 2 Sam. xxiv. 13.) 13. let me fall now into the hand of the Lord. . . let me not fall into the hand of man. Experience had taught him that human passion and vengeance had no bounds, whereas our wise and gracious Father in heaven knows the kind, and regulates the extent, of chastisement which every one needs.

14. So the Lord . . . 15. sent an angel unto

Jerusalem to destroy it. The infliction only of the pestilence is here noticed, without any account of its duration or its ravages, while a minute description is given of the visible appearance and menacing attitude of the destroying angel. (As to the reality of this angelic appearance, and the insuperable objections to the opinion that the "angel" was only a bold figure or poetical description of the pestilence, see on 2 Sam. xxiv.) stood by the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite. Ornan was probably his Hebrew or Jewish, Araunah his Jebusite or Canaanitish, name. Whether he was the old king of Jebus, as that title is given to him, 2 Sam. xxiv. 23, or not, he had been converted to the worship of the true God, and was possessed both of property and influence. 16. David lifted up his eyes, and saw the angel . . . stand between the earth and the heaven. This vision was exhibited to David, that he might have time to offer up prayers for the city, which was going to have the infliction of the plague. So that the hovering of the angel was to show that there was room to pray for mercy, just as God was going to deal out the punishment. It was not as yet fallen on the land, nor yet had done any execution. "When God's wrath is to be executed, the earthly and visible ministers of His judgments, and the unseen armies of heaven, are evermore leagued together. The natural eye sees only those; the spiritual eye beholds the other also behind. It is ever at such moments as it was with Israel of old. The multitude, to whom the purged spiritual eye was wanting, beheld only the outward calamity—the wasting pestilence; but "David lifted up his eyes, and saw the angel of the Lord stand between the earth and the heaven, having a drawn sword in his hand" (*Trench*, 'On the Parables,' p. 223). David and the elders . . . clothed in sackcloth, fell upon their faces. They appeared in the garb, and assumed the attitude, of humble penitents, confessing their sins and deprecating the wrath of God.

said unto God, *Is it* ⁴not I *that* commanded the people to be numbered? even I it is that have sinned, and done evil indeed; but *as for* ^mthese sheep, what have they done? Let ⁿthine hand, I pray thee, O LORD my God, be on me, and on ^omy father's house; but not on thy people, that they should be plagued.

18 Then the angel of the LORD commanded Gad to say to David, that David should go up, and set up an altar unto the LORD in the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite. And David went up at the saying of Gad, and saw the angel; and his four sons with him hid themselves. Now Ornan was threshing wheat. And as David came to Ornan, Ornan looked, and saw David, and went out of the threshing-floor, and bowed himself to David with *his* face to the ground. Then David said to Ornan, ⁷Grant me the place of *this* threshing-floor, that I may build an altar therein unto the LORD: thou shalt grant it me for the full price; that the plague may be ^pstayed from the people. And Ornan said unto David, Take *it* to thee, and let my lord the king do *that which is* good in his eyes: lo, I give *thee* the oxen *also* for burnt offerings, and the threshing instruments for wood, and the wheat for the meat offering; I give it all. And king David said to Ornan, Nay; but I will verily buy it for the full price: for I will not take *that which is* thine for the LORD, nor offer burnt offerings without cost. So ²David gave to Ornan for the place six hundred shekels of gold by weight. And David built there an altar unto the LORD, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings, and called upon the LORD;

B. C. 107.
¹ 2 Sam 4. 17.
 Is 51. 4.
 Eze. 16. 63.
^m 1 Ki 22. 17.
 Ps. 44. 11.
ⁿ Gen 41. 33.
 Ex. 32. 32,
 33.
 John 10. 11,
 12.
 Rom 9. 3
 1 John 3. 16.
^o Ex. 20. 5.
 Isa 39. 7. 8.
^p Or, When Ornan turned back and saw the angel, then he and his four sons with him hid themselves.
⁷ Give.
² Num 16. '8.
 Num. 25. 8.
² 2 Sam 21.
 21.

18.30.—HE BUILDS AN ALTAR.

18. the angel of the Lord commanded Gad to say. The order about the erection of an altar, as well as the indication of its site, is described, 2 Sam. xxiv. 18, as brought directly by Gad. Here we are informed of the quarter whence the prophet got his commission. It is only in the later stages of Israel's history that we find angels employed in communicating the Divine will to the prophets. the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite. It appears that long after David had taken the fortress of Jebus and fixed his residence there, Jerusalem was not the exclusive property of anyone tribe. Judah and Benjamin continued without doubt to inhabit it, in brotherly communion, and the Jebusite lived there, as before, along with his new masters. 20. Ornan turned back, and saw the angel. [The Septuagint has, *καὶ ἐπέστρέψεν Ὀρνά, καὶ εἶδε τὸν βασιλέα, and Ornan turned back, and saw the king.* This is the reading in 2 Sam. xxiv. 20.] Ornan was threshing wheat [שָׂרָה, plural, grains of wheat; שָׂרָה, was treading out wheat; Septuagint, ἦν ἄλοῶν πυρός, was bruising, crushing wheat]. In later times the Jews appear to have used threshing instruments (cf. Isa. xli. 15), and the verb [שָׂרָה], was treading, may have been retained in common use, merely from the early custom of triturating by oxen (*Sir G. Wilkinson, in Rawlinson's 'Herodotus,' ii., p. 22.* If the census was entered upon in autumn, the beginning of the civil year, the nine and a half months it occupied would end at wheat harvest. The common way of threshing corn is by spreading it out on a high level area, and driving backwards and forwards upon it two oxen harnessed to a clumsy sledge with three rollers and some sharp spikes. The driver sits on his knees on the box, while another peasant is employed in drawing back the straw and separating it from the grain underneath. By this operation the chaff is very much chopped, and the grain threshed out. 23. I give thee . . . the threshing instruments for

wood—i. e., to burn the sacrifice of the oxen. Very little of the real import—the *haste*, and the *value* of the present offered—can be understood in this country. The offering was made for *instant* use. Ornan, hereby hoping to terminate the pestilence without a moment's delay, 'gave all'—oxen, the large threshing machine, and the wheat. 25. David gave . . . for the place six hundred shekels of gold. At first he bought only the cattle and the threshing instruments, for which he paid fifty shekels of silver (2 Sam. xxiv. 24); afterwards he purchased the whole property, mount Moriah, on which the future temple stood. Although gold is frequently mentioned in the early books of Scripture, it is only as jewels and ornaments. It was not used as a medium of trade or commerce. The purchase of Araunah's threshing-floor is the first transaction in which it is recorded that gold was used as money.—High in the centre of the mountain platform rises a remarkable rock, now covered by the dome of 'the Sakrah.' It is irregular in its form, and measures about 60 feet in one direction and 50 feet in the other. It is the natural surface of mount Moriah, and is thought by many to be the rock of the threshing-floor of Araunah, selected by David, and continued by Solomon and Zerubabel, as 'the unhewn stone' on which to build the altar (*Bartlett's 'Walks about Jerusalem; Stanley).* 26. David built there an altar. He went in procession with his leading men from the royal palace, down mount Zion, and through the intervening city; and, having plenty of space on his own property, he was commanded, under peremptory direction, to go a considerable distance from his home, up mount Moriah, to erect an altar on premises which he had to buy. It was on or close to the spot where Abraham had offered up Isaac, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. 'I would remark, on this sole decided instance of a peace offering being made away from the sanctuary, that it is mentioned as extraordinary: the peculiar circum-

and ^r he answered him from heaven by fire upon the altar of burnt offering.

27 And the LORD commanded the angel, and he put up his sword again into the sheath thereof.

28 At that time when David saw that the LORD had answered him in the

29 threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite, then he sacrificed there. For ^t the tabernacle of the LORD, which Moses made in the wilderness, and the altar of the burnt offering, *were* at that season in the high place at ^u Gibeon.

30 But David could not go before it to enquire of God: for he ^v was afraid

22 because of the sword of the angel of the LORD. THEN David said, "This *is* the house of the LORD God, and this *is* the altar of the burnt offering for Israel.

2 And David commanded to gather together ^b the strangers that *were* in the land of Israel; and he set masons to hew wrought stones to build

3 the house of God. And David prepared iron in abundance for the nails for the doors of the gates, and for the joinings; and brass in abundance

4 without ^c weight; also cedar trees in abundance: for ^d the Zidonians, and

5 they of Tyre, brought much cedar wood to David. And David said, ^e Solomon my son *is* young and tender, and the house *that is* to be builded for the LORD *must be* exceeding magnifical, of fame and of glory throughout all countries: I will *therefore* now make preparation for it. So David prepared abundantly before his death.

6 Then he called for Solomon his son, and charged him to build an house

7 for the LORD God of Israel. And David said to Solomon, My son, as for me, ^f it was in my mind to build an house ^g unto the name of the LORD

8 my God: but the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ^h Thou hast shed blood abundantly, and hast made great wars: thou shalt not build an house unto my name, because thou hast shed much blood upon the earth

9 in my sight. Behold, ⁱ a son shall be born to thee, who shall be a man of rest; and I will give him ^j rest from all his enemies round about: for his name shall be ^k Solomon, and I will give peace and quietness unto Israel

10 in his days. He ^l shall build an house for my name; and ^m he shall be my son, and I *will be* his father; and I will establish the throne of his

B. C. 10. 7.

^r Lev. 9. 24.

2 Chr. 3. 1.

2 Chr. 7. 1.

^c ch. 16 : 0.

^t 1 Ki. 3. 4.

^u Fs 119. 150.

Heb. 12. 22, 29.

Rev. 1. 17.

CHAP. 22.

Deut. 12. 5.

2 Sam. 24. 18.

ch. 21. 18, 19, 26, 28.

2 Chr 3. 1.

John 4. 20-22.

^b 1 Ki. 9. 21.

^c 1 Ki. 7. 47.

^d 1 Ki. 5. 6.

^e ch 29. 1.

^f 2 Sam 7. 2.

1 Ki. 8. 17.

ch. 23. 2.

Acts 7. 40.

^g Deut. 12. 5.

^h 1 Ki. 5. 3.

ch. 23. 3.

ⁱ ch. 23. 5.

^j 1 Ki. 4. 25.

1 Ki. 5. 4.

^k That is, Peaceable and perfect.

^l 2 Sam. 7. 13.

1 Ki. 5. 5.

ch. 17. 12.

ch. 23. 6.

^m Heb 1. 5.

stances of the case, and the revealed will of God, occasioned a departure from the otherwise constant rule (^t 'Israel after the Flesh,' p. 148; see on 2 Sam. xxiv. 25). answered him from heaven by fire—(see Lev. ix. 24; 1 Ki. xviii. 21-23; 2 Ki. i. 12; 2 Chr. vii. 1.)

28. when David saw . . . he sacrificed there— or he continued to sacrifice there. Perceiving his sacrifice was acceptable, he proceeded to make additional offerings there, and seek favour by prayer and expiatory rites; for the dread of the menacing angel destroying Jerusalem while he was absent in the centre of worship at Gibeon, especially reverence for the Divine Being, led him to continue his adorations in that place which God (2 Chr. iii. 1) had hallowed by the tokens of His presence and gracious acceptance.

CHAP. XXII. 1-5. — DAVID PREPARES FOR BUILDING THE TEMPLE.

1. David said, This is the house. By the miraculous sign of fire from heaven, and perhaps other intimations, David understood it to be the will of God that the national place of worship should be fixed there, and he forthwith proceeded to make preparations for the erection of the temple on that spot.

2. David commanded to gather together the strangers—partly the descendants of the old Canaanites (2 Chr. viii. 7-10), from whom was exacted a tribute of bond-service, and partly war captives (2 Chr. ii. 7), reserved for the great work he contemplated.

6-19.—HE INSTRUCTS SOLOMON.

6. Then he called for Solomon . . . and charged him. The earnestness and solemnity of this address creates an impression that it was given a little before the old king's decease. He unfolded his great and long-cherished plan, enjoined the building of God's house as a sacred duty on him as his son and successor, and described the resources that were at command for carrying on the work. The vast amount of personal property he had accumulated, in the precious metals, must have been spoil taken from the people he had conquered and the cities he had sacked. 8. thou shalt not build an house unto my name, because thou hast shed much blood. An innate feeling of propriety dictates the purification of the worshipper from all defilement when about to engage in the solemn rites of religion. Above all, persons polluted with blood were prohibited even amongst the heathen, of which many instances are found in the works of classical writers, (see *Homæ*, 'Iliad,' vi., 335; *Euripides*, 'Iphigenia in Tauris,' v., 380; *Virgil*, 'Æneid,' vi.) The same cause prevented the acceptance of the Jews in their sacred services (Isa. i. 15), and operated as a disqualification to David's building the temple. 9. Behold, a son shall be born to thee . . . 10. He shall build an house for my name. This Divine declaration, which pointed to David's posterity, can be understood only in reference to the erection of the material temple. David here refers the announcement primarily to Solomon, and Solomon

11 which *are* in Judah and in Benjamin fenced cities. And he fortified the strong holds, and put captains in them, and store of victual, and of oil and wine. And in every several city *he put* shields and spears, and made them exceeding strong, having Judah and Benjamin on his side.

12 And the priests and the Levites that *were* in all Israel ¹resorted to him out of all their coasts. For the Levites left ²their suburbs, and their possession, and came to Judah and Jerusalem: for ³Jeroboam and his sons had cast them off from executing the priest's office unto the LORD: and ⁴he ordained him priests for the high places, and for ⁵the devils, and ⁶for the calves which he had made. And ⁷after them out of all the tribes of Israel such as set their hearts to seek the LORD God of Israel came to Jerusalem, to sacrifice unto the LORD God of their fathers. So they ⁸strengthened the kingdom of Judah, and made Rehoboam the son of Solomon strong, three years: for ⁹three years they walked in the way of David and Solomon.

18 And Rehoboam took him Mahalath the daughter of Jerimoth the son of David to wife, and Abihail the daughter of Eliab the son of Jesse; 19, which bare him children; Jeush, and Shamariah, and Zaham. And after 20 her he took ¹⁰Maachah the daughter of Absalom; which bare him Abijah, 21 and Attai, and Ziza, and Shelomith. And Rehoboam loved Maachah the daughter of Absalom above all his wives and his concubines: (for he took eighteen wives, and threescore concubines; and begat twenty and eight 22 sons, and threescore daughters.) And Rehoboam ¹¹made Abijah the son of Maachah the chief, *to be ruler* among his brethren: for *he thought* to

B. C. 975.
 1 presented himself to him.
 2 Num. 35. 2.
 Josh. 21. 20-42.
 3 1 Chr. 6. 66.
 4 ch. 13. 9.
 5 1 Ki. 14. 9.
 6 Hos. 13. 2.
 7 Lev. 17. 7.
 8 1 Cor. 10. 20.
 9 1 Ki. 12. 23.
 10 ch. 15. 9.
 ch. 30 11.
 Ps. 69. :2.
 11 ch. 12. 1.
 12 Hos. 6. 4.
 13 Matt. 13. 14.
 14 1 Ki. 15. 2.
 See ch. 13. 2. where she is called Michaiah the daughter of Uriel.
 15 Deut. 21. 15-17.

11. store of victual, and of oil and wine. Odoriferous oil and sweet wine were used by the ancient Jews as much as by the modern Arabs and Orientals generally (cf. Ps. civ. 15; 'Odyssey,' ii., 339). In the crippled state of his kingdom, he seems to have been afraid lest it might be made the prey of some powerful neighbours.

13. the priests and the Levites . . . resorted to him out of all their coasts. This was an accession of moral power, for the maintenance of the true religion is the best support and safeguard of any nation; and as it was peculiarly the grand source of the strength and prosperity of the Hebrew monarchy, the great numbers of good and pious people who sought an asylum within the territories of Judah contributed greatly to consolidate the throne of Rehoboam. The cause of so extensive an emigration from the kingdom of Israel was the deep and daring policy of Jeroboam, who set himself to break the national unity by entirely abolishing, within his dominions, the religious institutions of Judaism. He dreaded an eventual re-union of the tribes, if the people continued to repair thrice a year to worship in Jerusalem, as they were obliged by law to do; and accordingly, on pretence that the distance of that city was too great for multitudes of his subjects, he fixed upon two more convenient places, where he established a new mode of worshipping God under gross and prohibited symbols. The priests and Levites, refusing to take part in the idolatrous ceremonies, were ejected from their livings; and along with them a large body of the people who faithfully adhered to the instituted worship of God, offended and shocked by the impious innovations, departed from the kingdom. 15. he ordained him priests. The persons he appointed to the priesthood were low and worthless creatures (see on 1 Ki. xii. 31; xiii. 33); any were consecrated who brought a bullock and seven rams (Exod. xxix. 37; ch. xiii. 9). Thus Jeroboam transferred not only the kingdom from the house of David, but the priesthood from the house of

Aaron, for the high places. Those favourite places of religious worship were encouraged throughout the country. for the devils—a term sometimes used for idols in general (Lev. xvii. 7), but here applied distinctively to [עֲבֹדֵי] (cf. Lev. iv. 24; xvi. 9; Isa. xiii. 21; xxxiv. 14) the goat-deities, which were probably worshipped chiefly in the northern parts of his kingdom, where the heathen Canaanites still abounded. and for the calves [עֲבֹדֵי]—figures of the ox-gods Apis and Mnevis, with which Jeroboam's residence in Egypt had familiarized him (see on 1 Ki. xii. 26-33); or the expression may be considered, as Hengstenberg takes it ('Pentateuch,' i., p. 201), equivalent to 'the calves he had made, which are devils'—i. e., of the same quality with the former adoration of the goat in the wilderness, which Moses stigmatizes as whoredom—a heinous transgression. 17. they strengthened the kingdom of Judah. The innovating measures of Jeroboam were not introduced all at once. But as they were developed, the secession of the most excellent of his subjects began, and continuing to increase for three years, lowered the tone of religion in his kingdom, while it proportionally quickened its life and extended its influence in that of Judah.

18-23.—HIS WIVES AND CHILDREN.

18. Rehoboam took him Mahalath. The names of her father and mother are given. Jerimoth, the father, must have been the son of one of David's concubines (1 Chr. iii. 9). Abihail was, of course, his cousin, previous to their marriage. 20. after her he took Maachah the daughter—i. e., grand-daughter (2 Sam. xiv. 27) of Absalom, Tamar being, according to Josephus, her mother (cf. 2 Sam. xviii. 18). 21. he took eighteen wives, and threescore concubines. This royal harem, though far inferior to his father's, was equally in violation of the law, which forbade a king to "multiply wives unto himself." 22. made Abijah . . . chief . . . ruler

23 make him king. And he dealt wisely, and dispersed of all his children throughout all the countries of Judah and Benjamin, unto every fenced city: and he gave them victual in abundance. And he desired ²many wives.

12 ^aAND ^ait came to pass, when Rehoboam had established the kingdom, and had strengthened himself, ^bhe forsook the law of the LORD, and all Israel with him.

2 And ^cit came to pass, *that*, in the fifth year of king Rehoboam, Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem, because they had transgressed

3 against the LORD, with twelve hundred chariots, and threescore thousand horsemen: and the people *were* without number that came with him out

4 of Egypt; ^dthe Lubims, the Sukkiims, and the Ethiopians. And he took the fenced cities which *pertained* to Judah, and came to Jerusalem.

5 Then came ^eShemaiah the prophet to Rehoboam, and *to* the princes of Judah, that were gathered together to Jerusalem because of Shishak, and said unto them, Thus saith the LORD, ^fYe have forsaken me, and there-

6 fore have I also left you in the hand of Shishak. Whereupon the princes of Israel and the king ^ghumbled themselves; and they said, ^hThe LORD *is* righteous.

7 And when the LORD saw that they humbled themselves, ⁱthe word of the LORD came to Shemaiah, saying, They have humbled themselves; *therefore* I will not destroy them, but I will grant them ^jsome deliverance; and my wrath shall not be poured out upon Jerusalem by the hand

B C. 974.

² a multitude of wives.

Deut. 7 17.

1 Ki 11. 3.

CHAP. 12.

^a ch. 11. 17.

^b Deut 7. 10-12.

Deut. 8. 10-14.

1 Ki 14. 22.

^c 1 Ki. 11. 24, 25.

^d ch. 16. 8.

^e ch. 11. 2.

^f Deut. 23. 25.

ch. 15. 2.

^g Ex 10. 3.

Lev. 23. 40-42.

ch. 31. 27.

Ps. 78. 31.

Jas. 4. 10.

^h Ex. 9 27.

ⁱ 1 Ki. 11. 23, 29.

^j Or, a little while.

among his brethren. This preference seems to have been given to Abijah solely from the king's doating fondness for his mother, and through her influence over him. It is plainly implied that Abijah was not the eldest of the family; and in destining a younger son for the kingdom, without a Divine warrant, as in Solomon's case, Rehoboam acted in violation of the law (Deut. xxi. 15). 23. he dealt wisely—*i.e.*, with deep and calculating policy (Exod. i. 10). and dispersed of all his children . . . unto every fenced city. The circumstance of twenty-eight sons of the king being made governors of fortresses would, in our quarter of the world, produce jealousy and dissatisfaction. But Eastern monarchs ensure peace and tranquility to their kingdom by bestowing government offices on their sons and grandsons. They obtain an independent provision, and being kept apart, are not likely to cabal in their father's lifetime. Rehoboam acted thus: and his sagacity will appear still greater if the wives he desired for them belonged to the cities where each son was located. These connections would bind them more closely to their respective places. In the modern countries of the East, particularly Persia and Turkey, younger princes were, till very lately, shut up in the harem during their father's lifetime; and to prevent competition, were blinded or killed when their brother ascended the throne. In the former country the old practice of dispersing them through the country, like Rehoboam, has been again revived.

CHAP. XII. 1-12. — REHOBAM, FORSAKING GOD, IS PUNISHED BY SHISHAK.

1. when Rehoboam . . . had strengthened himself—(see on ch. xi. 17.) During the first three years of his reign his royal influence was exerted in the encouragement of the true religion, but the faithful observance of the Divine law was not permanent even in Judah. Security and ease led to religious decline, which, in the fourth year, ended in open apostasy. The example of the court was speedily followed by his subjects, for 'all Israel was with him'—*i.e.*, the people in his own kingdom. The very next year—*viz.*, the fifth

of his reign—punishment was inflicted by the invasion of Shishak.

2. Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem. He was the first king of the twenty-second, or Bubastic dynasty, which, after the fall of Thebes from the proud position of capital of Egypt, 990 B.C., succeeded to the sovereignty of the whole country. What was the immediate cause of this invasion? Whether it was in resentment for some provocation from the king of Judah, or in pursuance of ambitious views of conquest, is not said. But the invading army was a vast horde, for Shishak brought along with his native Egyptians an immense number of foreign auxiliaries. 3. the Lubims—the Libyans of north-eastern Africa. the Sukkiims. Some think these were the Scenite Arabs, dwellers in tents, but others maintain more justly that these were Arab-Troglodytes, who inhabited the caverns of a mountain range on the western coast of the Red Sea. the Ethiopians—from the regions south of Egypt. By the overwhelming force of numbers they took the fortresses of Judah which had been recently put in a state of defence, and marched to lay siege to the capital. While Shishak and his army were before Jerusalem, the prophet Shemaiah addressed Rehoboam and the princes, tracing this calamity to the national apostasy, and threatening them with utter destruction, in consequence of having forsaken God (v. 6).

6. the princes of Israel—(cf. v. 5, "the princes of Judah.")

7. when the Lord saw that they humbled themselves. Their repentance and contrition were followed by the best effects; for Shemaiah was commissioned to announce that the plial of Divine judgment would not be fully poured out on them—that the entire overthrow of the kingdom of Judah would not take place at that time, nor through the agency of Shishak; and yet, although it should enjoy a respite from total subversion, it should become a tributary province of Egypt, in order that the people might learn how much lighter and better is the service of God than that of idolatrous foreign despots.

- 8 of Shishak. Nevertheless ^j they shall be his servants; that they may know ^k my service, and the service of the kingdoms of the countries.
- 9 So ^l Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem, and took away the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house; he took all: he carried away also the shields of gold which Solomon had ^m made. Instead of which king Rehoboam made shields of brass, and committed *them* ⁿ to the hands of the chief of the guard, that kept the entrance of the king's house. And when the king entered into the house of the LORD, the guard came and fetched them, and brought them again into the guard-chamber. And when he humbled himself, the wrath of the LORD turned from him, that he would not destroy *him* altogether: ² and also in Judah things went well.
- 13 So king Rehoboam strengthened himself in Jerusalem, and reigned: for ^o Rehoboam was one and forty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, ² the city which the LORD had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, to put his name there. And his mother's name was Naamah an Ammonitess. And he did evil, because he ³ prepared not his heart to seek the LORD.
- 15 Now the acts of Rehoboam, first and last, are they not written in the ⁴ book of Shemaiah the prophet, ² and of Iddo the seer concerning genealogies? ⁷ And there were wars between Rehoboam and Jeroboam continually. And Rehoboam slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David: and ⁵ Abijah his son reigned in his stead.
- 13 NOW ² in the eighteenth year of king Jeroboam began Abijah to reign over Judah. He reigned three years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also was ⁶ Michaiah the daughter of Uriel of Gibeah.
- 3 And there was war between Abijah and Jeroboam. And Abijah ¹ set the battle in array with an army of valiant men of war, even four hundred

B. C. 971.

^j Isa 26. 13.
^k Deut. 28. 47, 48.
^l 1 Ki. 14. 25, 26.
^m 1 Ki. 10. 16, 17.
ⁿ ch. 9. 15.
^o 2 Sam. 8. 18.
² 2 Sam. 23. 23.
² Cr. and yet there w. re good things.
³ Gen. 18. 24.
⁴ 1 Ki. 14. 13. ch 19. 3.
⁵ 1 Ki. 14. 21.
⁶ ch. 6. 6.
⁷ Or, fixed.
⁸ Matt. 7. 7. Acts. 9. 11.
⁹ words.
¹⁰ ch. 9. 29.
¹¹ ch. 13. 22.
¹² 1 Ki. 14. 30.
¹³ 1 Ki. 14. 33. Abijah.

CHAP. 13.
^a 1 Ki. 15. 1.
^b ch 11. 29.
^c bound together.

9. So Shishak . . . came up against Jerusalem. After the parenthetical clause (vv. 5-8) describing the feelings and state of the beleaguered court, the historian resumes his narrative of the attack upon Jerusalem, and the consequent pillage both of the temple and the palace. he took all—i. e., everything valuable he found. The cost of the targets and shields has been estimated at about £230,000 (*Napier's 'Ancient Workers in Metal,'* p. 114.) the shields of gold—made by Solomon, were kept in the house of the forest of Lebanon (ch. ix. 16). They seem to have been borne, like maces, by the owners or guard of the palace, when they attended the king to the temple or on other public processions. Those splendid insignia having been plundered by the Egyptian conqueror, others were made of inferior metal, and kept in the guard-room of the palace, to be ready for use, as, notwithstanding the tarnished glory of the court, the old state etiquette was kept up on public and solemn occasions. An account of this conquest of Judah, with the name of 'king of Judah' in the cartouche of the principal captive, according to the interpreters, is carved and written in hieroglyphics on the walls of the temple of Karnak, where it may be seen at the present day, by the side of the records of the great Rameses' conquests (see 'Egyptian Court at Sydenham Palace,' p. 62). This sculpture is about 2,700 years old, and is of peculiar interest, as a striking testimony from Egypt to the truth of Scripture history. 12. when he humbled himself, the wrath of the LORD turned from him. The promise contained in v. 7 was verified. Divine Providence preserved the kingdom in existence, as reformation was made in the court, while true religion and piety were diffused throughout the land.

13-16.—HIS REIGN AND DEATH.

13. Rehoboam strengthened himself . . . and reigned. The Egyptian invasion had been a mere predatory expedition, not extending beyond the limits of Judah, and probably, ere long, repelled by the invaded. Rehoboam's government acquired new life and vigour by the general revival of true religion, and his reign continued many years after the departure of Shishak. But "he prepared not his heart to seek the Lord"—i. e., he did not adhere firmly to the good course of reformation he had begun. 14. And he did evil—for through the unhappy influence of his mother, a heathen foreigner, he had received in his youth a strong bias towards idolatry (see on 1 Ki. xiv. 21-24).

CHAP. XIII. 1-20. — ABIAH, SUCCEEDING, MAKES WAR AGAINST JEROBOAM, AND OVERCOMES HIM.

2. His mother's name also was Michaiah the daughter of Uriel of Gibeah. The same as Maachah (see on 1 Ki. xv. 2). She was "the daughter"—i. e., grand-daughter—of Absalom (1 Ki. xv. 2; cf. 2 Sam. xiv.), mother of Abijah, and "mother"—i. e., grandmother (1 Ki. xv. 10, marg.)—of Asa. "Of Gibeah" probably implies that Uriel was connected with the house of Saul. there was war between Abijah and Jeroboam. The occasion of this war is not recorded (see 1 Ki. xv. 6, 7); but it may be inferred from the tenor of Abijah's address, that it arose from Jeroboam's design to wrest from his youthful neighbour the full dominion of the whole country. No prophet now forbade a war with Israel (ch. xi. 23), for Jeroboam had forfeited all claim to protection.

3. Abijah set the battle in array—i. e., took the field and opened the campaign. with . . . four hundred thousand chosen men: Jeroboam

thousand chosen men: Jeroboam also set the battle in array against him with eight hundred thousand chosen men, *being* mighty men of valour.

4 And Abijah stood up upon mount Zemaraim, ^cwhich is in mount
5 Ephraim, and said, Hear me, thou Jeroboam, and all Israel; ought ye not to know that the LORD God of Israel ^dgave the kingdom over Israel to
6 David for ever, *even* to him and to his sons by a ²covenant of salt? Yet Jeroboam the son of Nebat, the servant of Solomon the son of David, is
7 risen up, and hath ^erebelled against his lord. And there are gathered unto him ^fvain men, the childreu of Belial, and have strengthened themselves against Rehoboam the son of Solomon, when Rehoboam was young
8 and tender-hearted, and could not withstand them. And now ye think to withstand the kingdom of the LORD in the hand of the sons of David; and ye *be* a great multitude, and *there are* with you golden calves, which
9 Jeroboam ^gmade you for gods. Have ^hye not cast out the priests of the LORD, the sons of Aaron, and the Levites, and have made you priests after the manner of the nations of *other* lands? ⁱso that whosoever cometh ⁵to consecrate himself with a young bullock and seven rams, *the same*
10 may be a priest of *them that are* no gods. But as for us, the LORD *is* our God, and we have not forsaken him; and the priests, which minister unto the LORD, *are* the sons of Aaron, and the Levites *wait* upon *their* business:
11 and ^jthey burn unto the LORD every morning and every evening burnt sacrifices and sweet incense: the ^kshowbread also *set they in order* upon the pure table; and the candlestick of gold with the lamps thereof, ^lto burn every evening: for we keep the charge of the LORD our God; but ye
12 have forsaken him. And, behold, ^mGod himself *is* with us for *our* captain, ⁿand his priests with sounding trumpets to cry alarm against you. O children of Israel, ^ofight ye not against the LORD God of your fathers; for ye shall not prosper.

13 But Jeroboam caused an ambushment to come about behind them: so
14 they were before Judah, and the ambushment *was* behind them. And when Judah looked back, behold, the battle *was* before and behind: and they cried unto the LORD, and the priests sounded with the trumpets.
15 Then the men of Judah gave a shout: and as the men of Judah shouted, it came to pass, that God ^psmote Jeroboam and all Israel before Abijah

B. C. 957.
^a Gen. 10. 15.
 Josh. 18. 22.
^d Judg 11. 21-24.
 1 Sam. 16. 1-12.
 2 Sam 7. 12, 13, 16.
² That is, A perpetual covenant of friendship.
 Num. 13. 19.
^e 1 Ki. 11. 26.
 1 Ki 12. 10.
^f Judg. 9. 4.
 Ps. 26. 4.
 Fro. 12. 11.
 Acts 17. 5.
 Tit. 1. 10.
^g 1 Ki. 12. 23.
 1 Ki. 14. 9.
 ch. 11. 15.
 Hos. 8. 6.
^h ch. 11. 14, 15.
ⁱ Ex. 29. 35,
³ to fill his hand.
 Ex. 29. 1.
 Lev. 8. 2.
^j ch. 2. 4.
^k Lev 21. 7.
^l Ex. 27. 2,
^o 21.
 Lev. 21. 2, 3.
^m Deut. 20. 4.
 Josh. 5. 14.
 Ps. 20. 7.
ⁿ Num. 10. 8.
^o Acts 5. 33.
^p ch. 14. 12.

... with eight hundred thousand. These are doubtless large numbers, considering the smallness of the two kingdoms. It must be borne in mind, however, that Oriental armies are mere mobs—vast numbers accompanying the camp in hope of plunder; so that the gross numbers described as going upon the Asiatic expedition are often far from denoting the exact number of fighting men. But in accounting for the large number of soldiers enlisted in the respective armies of Abijah and Jeroboam, there is no need of resorting to this mode of explanation; for we know by the census of David the immense amount of the population that was capable of bearing arms (2 Chr. xxi. 5: cf. ch. xiv. 8; xvii. 14).

4. Abijah stood up upon mount Zemaraim. He had entered the enemy's territory, and was encamped on an eminence near Beth-el (Josh. xviii. 22). Jeroboam's army lay at the foot of the hill, and as a pitched battle was expected, Abijah, according to the singular usage of ancient times, harangued the enemy. The speakers in such circumstances, while always extolling their own merits, poured out torrents of invective and virulent abuse upon the adversary. So did Abijah. He dwelt on the divine right of the house of David to the throne of Israel—established by פְּרִיטָה זָלָה "a covenant of salt" (see on Num. xviii. 10), i. e., a covenant inviolable, indissoluble; and sink-

ing all reference to the heaven-condemned offences of Solomon and the divine appointment of Jeroboam, as well as the Divine sanction of the separation, he upbraided Jeroboam as a usurper, and his subjects as rebels, who took advantage of the youth and inexperience of Rehoboam. Then contrasting the religious state of the two kingdoms, he drew a black picture of the impious innovations and gross idolatry introduced by Jeroboam, with his expulsion and impoverishment (ch. xi. 14) of the Levites; dwelt with reasonable pride on the pure and regular observance of the ancient institutions of Moses in his own dominions; and concluded with this emphatic appeal:—"O children of Israel, fight ye not against Jehovah, the God of your fathers, for ye shall not prosper."

13. But Jeroboam caused an ambushment. The oration of Abijah, however animating an effect it might have produced on his own troops, was unheeded by the party to whom it was addressed; for while he was wasting time in useless words, Jeroboam had ordered a detachment of his men to move quietly round the base of the hill, so that when Abijah stopped speaking, he and his followers found themselves surprised in the rear, while the main body of the Israelitish forces remained in front. A panic might have ensued had not the leaders "cried unto the Lord," and the priests "sounded with the trumpets"—the pledges

16 and Judah. And the children of Israel fled before Judah: and God delivered them into their hand. And Abijah and his people slew them with a great slaughter: so there fell down slain of Israel five hundred thousand chosen men.

18 Thus the children of Israel were brought under at that time, and the children of Judah prevailed, because they relied upon the LORD God of their fathers. And Abijah pursued after Jeroboam, and took cities from him; Beth-el with the towns thereof, and Jeshanah with the towns thereof, and Ephraim with the towns thereof. Neither did Jeroboam recover strength again in the days of Abijah: and the LORD struck him, and he died.

21 But Abijah waxed mighty, and married fourteen wives, and begat twenty and two sons, and sixteen daughters.

22 And the rest of the acts of Abijah, and his ways, and his sayings, are written in the story of the prophet Iddo. SO Abijah slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David;

And Asa his son reigned in his stead. In his days the land was quiet ten years.

2 And Asa did that which was good and right in the eyes of the LORD his God: for he took away the altars of the strange gods, and the high places, and brake down the images, and cut down the groves; and commanded Judah to seek the LORD God of their fathers, and to do the law and the commandment. Also he took away out of all the cities of Judah the high places and the images: and the kingdom was quiet before him.

6 And he built fenced cities in Judah: for the land had rest, and he had no war in those years; because the LORD had given him rest. Therefore he said unto Judah, Let us build these cities, and make about them walls and towers, gates and bars, while the land is yet before us; because we have sought the LORD our God, we have sought him, and he hath

8 given us rest on every side. So they built and prospered. And Asa had an army of men that bare targets and spears, out of Judah three hundred thousand; and out of Benjamin, that bare shields and drew bows, two hundred and fourscore thousand: all these were mighty men of valour.

of victory (Num. x. 9; xxxi. 6); and, reassured by the well-known signal, the men of Judah responded with a war-shout, which, echoed by the whole army, was followed by an impetuous rush against the foe. The shock was resistless. The ranks of the Israelites were broken, for "God smote Jeroboam and all Israel." They took to flight, and the merciless slaughter that ensued can be accounted for only by tracing it to the rancorous passions enkindled by a civil war.

19. Abijah pursued after Jeroboam. This sanguinary action widened the breach between the people of the two kingdoms. Abijah abandoned his original design of attempting the subjugation of the ten tribes, contenting himself with the recovery of a few border towns, which, though lying within Judah or Benjamin, had been alienated to the new or northern kingdom. Amongst these was Beth-el, which, with its sacred associations, he might be strongly desirous to wrest from profanation. 20. Neither did Jeroboam recover strength. The disastrous action at Zemaraim, which caused the loss of the entire flower and chivalry of his army, broke his spirits and crippled his power. The Lord struck him, and he died—i. e., Jeroboam. He lived, indeed, two years after the death of Abijah (1 Ki. xiv. 20; xv. 9). But he had been threatened with great calamities upon himself and his house; and it is apparently to the execution of these threatenings,

which issued in his death, an anticipatory reference is here made.

CHAP. XIV. 1-5.—ASA DESTROYS IDOLATRY.

1. In his days the land was quiet ten years. This long interval of peace was the continued effect of the great battle of Zemaraim (cf. 1 Ki. xv. 11-14).

2. Asa did that which was good and right—(cf. 1 Ki. xv. 14.) Still, his character and life were not free from faults (ch. xiv. 7, 10, 12). 3. brake down the images—of Baal (see on ch. xxxiv. 4; Lev. xxvi. 30). cut down the groves—rather, Asherim. 5. he took away out of all the cities of Judah the high places and the images. All public objects and relics of idolatry in Jerusalem and other cities through his kingdom were destroyed; but those high places where God was worshipped under the figure of an ox, as at Beth-el, were suffered to remain (1 Ki. xv. 14): so far the reformation was incomplete.

6-8.—HAVING PEACE, HE STRENGTHENS HIS KINGDOM WITH FORTS AND ARMIES.

6. he built fenced cities in Judah—(see on 1 Ki. xv. 22.) 7. while the land is yet before us—i. e., while we have free and undisputed progress everywhere; no foe is near; but, as this happy time of peace may not last always, and the kingdom is but small and weak, let us prepare suitable defences in case of need. He had also an army of 580,000 men. Judah furnished the heavy

B. C. 457.

⁴ humbled, Judg. 8. 28.

⁴ 2 Ki. 18. 5.

1 Chr 5. 20.

ch. 16. 8. 9.

ch. 20. 20.

Ps. 22. 5.

Ps 145. 5.

Dan. 3. 23.

Nah. 1. 7.

Eph. 1. 12.

⁷ Josh 15. 9.

ch. 15. 8.

John 11. 54.

⁸ 1 Sam. 25.

33

1 Sam. 20.

10.

Eze. 21. 16.

Acts 12. 23.

⁶ 1 Ki. 14. 10.

Ps. 18. 37.

35.

⁵ Or, commentary

^u ch. 9. 29.

ch. 12. 15.

CHAP. 14.

^a 2 Ki. 13. 8.

1 Chr 3. 10.

Matt. 1. 7.

8.

^b Lev. 26. 30.

1 Ki. 15. 14.

ch. 15. 17.

^c Ex. 34. 13.

ch. 34. 4.

Deut. 7. 5.

25.

¹ statues.

^d 1 Ki. 11. 7.

2 sun

images.

9 And 'there came out against them Zerah the Ethiopian with an host of a thousand thousand, and three hundred chariots; and came unto
 10 ^JMareshah. Then Asa went out against him, and they set the battle in
 11 array in the valley of Zephathah at Mareshah. And Asa ^gcried unto the LORD his God, and said, LORD, *it is* ^bnothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power: help us, O LORD our God; for we rest on thee, and ⁱin thy name we go against this multitude. O
 12 LORD, thou *art* our God; let not ³man prevail against thee. So the LORD ^jsmote the Ethiopians before Asa, and before Judah; and the Ethiopians
 13 fled. And Asa and the people that *were* with him pursued them unto ^kGerar: and the Ethiopians were overthrown, that they could not recover themselves; for they were ⁴destroyed before the LORD, and before his
 14 host; and they carried away very much spoil. And they smote all the cities round about Gerar; for ^tthe fear of the LORD came upon them: and they spoiled all the cities; for there was exceeding much spoil in
 15 them. They smote also the tents of cattle, and carried away sheep and camels in abundance, and returned to Jerusalem.

15, AND ^athe Spirit of God came upon Azariah the son of Oded: and he
 2 went out to ¹meet Asa, and said unto him, Hear ye me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin; ^bThe LORD *is* with you, while ye be with him; and ^cif ye seek him, he will be found of you; but ^dif ye forsake him, he will
 3 forsake you. Now ^efor a long season Israel *hath been* without the true
 4 God, and without ^fa teaching priest, and without law. But ^gwhen they in their trouble did turn unto the LORD God of Israel, and sought him,

B. C. 941.
 ch. 10. 8.
 Josh. 15. 44.
 Mic 1. 15.
 Ex. 11. 10.
 ch. 13. 14.
 Ps. 22. 5.
 1 Sam. 14. 6.
 1 Sam. 17. 45.
 Pro. 18. 10.
 Nah. 1. 7.
 Or, mortal man.
 ch. 13. 15.
 Gen. 10. 19.
 Gen. 20. 1.
 broken.
 Ps. 46. 1-11.
 Gen. 35. 5.
 CHAP. 15.
 Num. 21. 2.
 ch. 20. 14.
 before
 Asa.
 Jas. 4. 8.
 1 Chr. 28. 9.
 ch. 24. 20.
 Hos. 3. 4.
 Lev. 10. 11.
 Deut. 4. 29.

armed soldiers, and Benjamin the archers. This large number does not mean a body of professional soldiers, such as compose European armies, but all capable of bearing arms, and liable to be called into service.

9-15.—HE OVERCOMES ZERAH, AND SPOILS THE ETHIOPIANS.

9. there came out against them Zerah the Ethiopian. Zerah (*Ewald*, 'Geschichte,' iii., p. 184; also *Wilson's* 'Lands of the Bible,' i., p. 91) is identified with Osorkon I., successor of Shishak. *Wilkinson* (*Rawlinson's* 'Herodotus,' ii., p. 378) throws a doubt on this, and maintains that Zerah was an Asiatic or Arabian, not an African Cushite. The probability is, that Zerah must have been chief of the Cushites, or Ethiopians of Arabia, as they were evidently a nomad horde who had a settlement of tents and cattle in the neighbourhood of Gerar. This also is the testimony of *Josephus* (cf. *Ezek.* xxix. 10; *Hab.* iii. 7, with 1 Chr. iv. 39; also *Winer*, 'Realwörterbuch'), a thousand thousand, and three hundred chariots. 'Twenty camels employed to carry couriers upon them might have procured that number of men to meet in a short time. As Zerah was the aggressor, he had time to choose when he would summon these men, and attack the enemy. Every one of these Cushite shepherds, carrying with them their own provisions of flour and water, as is their invariable custom, might have fought with Asa without eating a loaf of Zerah's bread or drinking a pint of his water' (*Bruce's* 'Travels'). 10. set the battle in array. . . at Mareshah—one of the towns which Rehoboam fortified (ch. xi. 8), near a great southern pass in the low country of Judah (*Josh.* xv. 44). The engagement between the armies took place in a plain near that town, called "the valley of Zephathah," supposed to be the broadway coming down Beit Jibrin towards Tell-es-Safreh (*Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' ii., p. 422). 11. Asa cried unto the Lord his God. Strong in the confidence that the power of God was able to give the victory equally with few as with

many, the pious king marched with a comparatively small force to encounter the formidable host of marauders at his southern frontier. [אֱלֹהֵינוּ יִשְׁמָרְנוּ, let not mortal man prevail against thee.]

Committing his cause to God, he engaged in the conflict, completely routed the enemy, and succeeded in obtaining, as the reward of his victory, a rich booty in treasure and cattle from the Gerar camp of this pastoral horde which they attacked and plundered. 15. and carried away sheep and camels in abundance. 'Driving away the cattle and sheep of a conquered people, and accounting them amongst the principal spoil, has ever been the custom of Eastern nations, who have not altogether renounced a nomadic life, and whose chief wealth consequently consisted in these animals' ('Nineveh and Babylon,' p. 633).

CHAP. XV. 1-15.—JUDAH MAKES A SOLEMN COVENANT WITH GOD.

1. Azariah the son of Oded. This prophet, who is mentioned nowhere else, appears at this stage of the sacred story in the discharge of an interesting mission. He went to meet Asa as he was returning from his victorious pursuit of the Ethiopians, and the congratulatory address here recorded was publicly made to the king in presence of his army. 2. The Lord is with you, while ye be with him. You have had, in your recent signal success, a remarkable proof that God's blessing is upon you; your victory has been the reward of your faith and piety. If you steadfastly adhere to the cause of God, you may expect a continuance of His favour; but if you abandon it, you will soon reap the bitter fruits of apostasy. 3. Now for a long season Israel hath been, &c. Some think that Azariah was referring to the sad and disastrous condition to which superstition and idolatry had brought the neighbouring kingdom of Israel. His words should rather be taken in a wider sense, for it seems manifest that the prophet had his eye upon many periods in the national history, when the people were in the state described—a state of

5 he was found of them. And ^hin those times *there was no peace to him that went out, nor to him that came in, but great vexations were upon*
 6 *all the inhabitants of the countries. And ⁱnation was ²destroyed of*
 7 *7 nation, and city of city: for God did vex them with all adversity. Be ye strong therefore, and let not your hands be weak: for your work shall be ^jrewarded.*
 8 And when Asa heard these words, and the prophecy of Oded the prophet, he took courage, and put away the ³abominable idols out of all the land of Judah and Benjamin, and out of the cities ^kwhich he had taken from mount Ephraim, and renewed the altar of the LORD that was
 9 before the porch of the LORD. And he gathered all Judah and Benjamin, and ^lthe strangers with them out of Ephraim and Manasseh, and out of Simeon: for they fell to him out of Israel in abundance, when they saw
 10 that the LORD his God was with him. So they gathered themselves together at Jerusalem in the third month, in the fifteenth year of the
 11 reign of Asa. And ^mthey offered unto the LORD ⁴the same time, of the spoil *which they had brought, seven hundred oxen and seven thousand*
 12 *sheep. And they ⁿentered into a covenant to seek the LORD God of their*
 13 *fathers with all their heart, and with all their soul; that ^owhosoever would not seek the LORD God of Israel ²should be put to death, whether*
 14 *small or great, whether man or woman. And they swore unto the LORD with a loud voice, and with shouting, and with trumpets, and with*
 15 *cornets. And all Judah rejoiced at the oath: for they had sworn with all their heart, and sought him with their whole desire; and he was found of them: and the LORD gave them rest round about.*

B. C. 941.
^h Judg. 5. 6.
ⁱ Matt. 24. 7.
² beaten in pieces.
^j Ps. 68. 11, Matt. 5. 12, 43.
 Luke 6. 35.
 1 Cor. 3. 8-14.
 Col. 3. 24.
³ abominations.
^k ch. 13. 19, ch. 11. 16, ch. 50. 1-11, 25.
^m 1 Chr. 26. 26.
 ch. 14. 15.
⁴ in that day.
ⁿ 2 Ki. 23. 3, ch. 13. 16, ch. 29. 10, ch. 31. 31, Neh. 9. 5, 8, Neh. 10. 29, Jer. 1. 5.
^o Ex. 22. 20, Deut. 13. 5, 9, 15.
² Deut. 13. 5.

spiritual destitution and ignorance—and exhibited its natural result as wide-spread anarchy, mutual dissension among the tribes, and general suffering (Judg. ix. 23; xii. 4; xx. 21; 2 Chr. xiii. 17). These calamities God permitted to befall them as the punishment of their apostasy. Azariah's object in these remarks was to establish the truth of his counsel (v. 2), and threatening in case of neglecting it, by describing the uniform course of the Divine procedure towards Israel, as shown in all periods of their history; and then, after this appeal to national experience, he concluded with an earnest exhortation to the king to prosecute the work of reformation so well begun. 7. *Be ye strong.* Great resolution and indomitable energy would be required to persevere in the face of the opposition your reforming measures will encounter. *your work shall be rewarded*—i. e., what you do in the cause and for the glory of God will assuredly be followed by the happiest results both to yourself and your subjects.

8. *when Asa heard . . . the prophecy of Oded the prophet.* The insertion of these words, "of Oded the prophet," is generally regarded as a corruption of the text. "The sole remedy is to erase them. They are, probably, the remains of a note, which crept in from the margin into the text" (*Bertheau*). *he took courage.* Animated by the reasonable and pious address of Azariah, Asa became a more zealous reformer than ever, employing all his royal authority and influence to extirpate every vestige of idolatry from the land. *and out of the cities which he had taken from mount Ephraim.* He may have acquired cities of Ephraim, the conquest of which is not recorded (ch. xvii. 2); but it has been commonly supposed that the reference is to cities which his father Abijah had taken in that quarter (ch. xiii. 19). *renewed the altar of the Lord . . . before the porch*—i. e., the altar of burnt offering. As this was done on or about the fifteenth year of the reign of this pious king, the renewal must have consisted in

some splendid repairs or embellishments, which made it look like a new dedication, or in a reconstruction of a temporary altar, like that of Solomon (ch. vii. 7), for extraordinary sacrifices to be offered on an approaching occasion. 9. *he gathered all Judah and Benjamin.* Not satisfied with these minor measures of purification and improvement, Asa meditated a grand scheme, which was, to pledge his whole kingdom to complete the work of reformation, and with this view waited for a general assembly of the people, and the strangers with them out of Ephraim and Manasseh. The population of Asa's kingdom had been vastly increased by the continued influx of strangers, who, prompted by motives either of interest or of piety, sought in his dominions that security and freedom which they could not enjoy amid the complicated troubles which distracted Israel. *and out of Simeon.* Although a portion of that tribe, located within the territory of Judah, were already subjects of the southern kingdom, the general body of the Simeonites had joined in forming the northern kingdom of Israel. But many of them now returned of their own accord. 10. *the third month*—when was held the feast of Pentecost, which, on this occasion, was celebrated at Jerusalem by an extraordinary sacrifice of 700 oxen and 7,000 sheep, the spoil of the Ethiopians being offered; and the assembled worshippers entered with great and holy enthusiasm into a national covenant [בְּרִית], into the covenant—phraseology borrowed from the Pentateuch, "to seek the Lord God of their fathers with all their heart, and with all their soul;" and, at the same time, to execute with rigour the laws which made idolatry punishable with death (Exod. xxii. 20; Deut. xvii. 2-5; xxix. 12-21; Heb. x. 28). It is evident that there had been a covenant already in existence,—the purport of which, as described, Exod. xx. xiv.; Deut. xxix. is here substantially repeated. The people testified unbounded satisfaction with this important religious movement;

- 16 And also concerning Maachah the ⁵mother of Asa the king, he removed her from *being* queen, because she had made an ⁶idol in a grove: and Asa cut down her idol, and stamped it, and burnt it at the brook Kidron.
- 17 But ²the high places were not taken away out of Israel: nevertheless the heart of Asa was perfect all his days. And he brought into the house of God the things that his father had dedicated, and that he himself had dedicated, silver, and gold, and vessels. And there was no *more* war unto the five and thirtieth year of the reign of Asa.
- 16 IN the ¹six and thirtieth year of the reign of Asa, ^aBaasha king of Israel came up against Judah, and built Ramah, ^bto the intent that he might let none go out or come in to Asa king of Judah. Then Asa brought out silver and gold out of the treasures of the house of the LORD and of the king's house, and sent to Ben-hadad king of Syria, that dwelt at ²Damascus, saying, *There is* a league between me and thee, as *there was* between my father and thy father: behold, I have sent thee silver and gold; go, break thy league with Baasha king of Israel, that he may depart from me. And Ben-hadad hearkened unto king Asa, and sent the captains of ³his armies against the cities of Israel; and they smote Ijon, and Dan, and Abel-maim, and all the store cities of Naphtali.
- 5 And it came to pass, when Baasha heard it, that he left off building of Ramah, and let his work cease. Then Asa the king took all Judah; and they carried away the stones of Ramah, and the timber thereof, wherewith Baasha was a-building; and he built therewith Geba and Mizpah.
- 7 And at that time ^cHanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah, and said unto him, ^aBecause thou hast relied on the king of Syria, and not relied on the LORD thy God, therefore is the host of the king of Syria escaped out of thine hand. Were not ^ethe Ethiopians and ^fthe Lubims ⁴a huge host, with very many chariots and horsemen? yet, because thou didst rely on the LORD, he delivered them into thine hand. For ^gthe eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, ⁵to show himself strong in the behalf of *them* whose heart *is* perfect toward him. Herein ^hthou hast done foolishly: therefore from henceforth ⁱthou shalt have wars.

B. C. 941.

⁵ That is, grand-mother.
¹ 1 Ki. 15. 2.
⁶ horror.
² Deut. 12. 7.
¹ Ki. 3. 2-1.
 ch. 14. 3, 5.

CHAP. 16.
¹ That is, from the rending of the ten tribes from Judah, over which Asa was now king.
^a 1 Ki. 15. 17.
^b ch. 15. 9.
² Darneseek.
³ which were his.
^c 1 Ki. 16. 1.
^d Isa. 31. 1.
^e ch. 14. 9.
^f ch. 12. 3.
⁴ in abundance.
^g Job 34. 21.
 Fro. 5. 21.
 Iro. 15. 3.
 Jer. 16. 17.
 Jer. 32. 19.
 Zech. 4. 10.
⁶ Or, strongly to hold with them, etc.
^h 1 Sam. 13. 13.
ⁱ 1 Ki. 15. 32.

and its moral influence was seen in the promotion of piety, order, and tranquillity throughout the land.

18. the things that his father had dedicated—probably part of the booty obtained by his signal victory over Jeroboam, but which, though dedicated, had hitherto been unrepresented. and that he himself had dedicated—of the booty taken from the Ethiopians. Both of these were now deposited in the temple as votive offerings to Him whose right hand and holy arm had given them the victory.

CHAP. XVI. 1-14.—ASA, BY A LEAGUE WITH THE SYRIANS, DIVERTS BAASHA FROM BUILDING RAMAH.

1. In the six and thirtieth year of the reign of Asa, Baasha . . . came up. Baasha had died several years before this date (1 Ki. xv. 33), and the best Biblical critics are agreed in considering this date to be calculated from the separation of the kingdoms, and coincident with the sixteenth year of Asa's reign. This mode of reckoning was, in all likelihood, generally followed in the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel, the public annals of the time (v. 11)—the source from which the inspired historian drew his account. built Ramah—*i. e.*, fortified it. The blessing of God, which manifestly rested at this time on the kingdom of Judah, the signal victory of Asa, the freedom and purity of religious worship, and the fame of the late national covenant, were regarded with great

interest throughout Israel, and attracted a constantly-increasing number of emigrants to Judah. Baasha, alarmed at this movement, determined to stem the tide; and as the high road to and from Jerusalem passed by Ramah, he made that frontier town—about six miles north of Asa's capital—a military station, where the vigilance of his sentinels would effectually prevent all passage across the boundary of the kingdom (see on 1 Ki. xv. 16-22; also Jer. xli. 9). 4. Ben-hadad . . . sent the captains of his armies . . . and they smote . . . Abel-maim—'the meadow of waters,' supposed to have been situated on the marshy plain near the uppermost lake of the Jordan. The other two towns were also in the northern district of Palestine. These unexpected hostilities of his Syrian ally interrupted Baasha's fortifications at Ramah, and his death, happening soon after, prevented his resuming them.

7. Hanani the seer came to Asa . . . and said. His object was to show the king his error in forming his recent league with Ben-hadad. The prophet represented the appropriation of the temple treasures to purchase the services of the Syrian mercenaries as indicating a distrust in God, most blameable with the king's experience, and headed, that in consequence of this want of faith, Asa had lost the opportunity of gaining a victory over the united forces of Baasha and Ben-hadad, more splendid than that obtained over the Ethiopians—a victory which, by destroying their armies,

- 10 Then Asa was wroth with the seer, and put ^j him in a prison house; for *he was* in a rage with him because of this *thing*. And Asa ⁶ oppressed some of the people the same time.
- 11 And, behold, the acts of Asa, first and last, lo, they *are* written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel.
- 12 And Asa in the thirty and ninth year of his reign was ^k diseased in his feet, until his disease *was* exceeding *great*: yet in his disease he
- 13 ^l sought not to the LORD, but to the physicians. And Asa slept with his
- 14 fathers, and died in the one and fortieth year of his reign. And they buried him in his own sepulchres, which he had ⁷ made for himself in the city of David, and laid him in the bed which was filled ^m with sweet odours and divers kinds of *spices* prepared by the apothecaries' art; and they made ⁿ a very great burning for him.
- 17 AND Jehoshaphat his son reigned in his stead, and strengthened himself against Israel. And he ^o placed forces in all the fenced cities of Judah, and set garrisons in the land of Judah, and in the cities of Ephraim, which ^b Asa his father had taken. And the LORD was ^c with Jehoshaphat, because he walked in the first ways ¹ of his father David, and
- 4 sought not unto Baalim; but sought to the LORD God of his father, and ^q walked in his commandments, and not after ^e the doings of Israel.
- 5 Therefore the LORD established the kingdom in his hand; and all Judah ² brought to Jehoshaphat presents; ^r and he had riches and honour in

B. C. 941.
^j ch. 15. 26.
 Jer. 20. 2.
 Matt 14. 3.
^k crushed.
^l Deut 28. 22.
^m Jer 17 5.
ⁿ 7 digged.
^o Ge 1. 50. 2.
 Mark 16. 1.
 John 19. 39.
^p ch 21. 19.
 Jer. 31. 5.

CHAP. 17.
^a ch. 11. 11.
^b ch. 15. 8.
^c Rom. 8. 31.
^d 1 Cr. of his father, and of David.
^e Luke 1. 6.
^f 1 Ki 12. 23.
^g 2 gave
 1 Sam. 10. 27.
 1 Ki. 10. 55.
^h 1 Ki. 10. 27.
 ch. 15. 1.

would have deprived them of all power to molest him in future; whereas by his foolish and worldly policy, so unworthy of God's vicergerent, to misapply the temple treasures, and corrupt the fidelity of an ally of the king of Israel, he had tempted the cupidity of the one and increased the hostility of the other, and rendered himself liable to renewed troubles (1 Ki. xv. 32). This rebuke was pungent, and, from its truth and justness, ought to have penetrated and afflicted the heart of such a man as Asa. But his pride was offended at the freedom taken by the honest reprover of royalty, and in a burst of passionate resentment he ordered Hanani to be thrown into prison.

10. Asa oppressed some of the people the same time. What was the form or degree of this oppression is not recorded. The cause of his oppressing them was, probably, the same offence as Hanani's—for a strong expression of their dissatisfaction with his conduct in leaguings with Benhadad, or, it may be, his maltreatment of the Lord's servant.

12. diseased in his feet—probably the gout, his disease was exceeding great—better, 'moved upwards' in his body, which proves the violent and dangerous type of the malady. yet in his disease he sought not to the Lord, but to the physicians—most probably Egyptian physicians, who were anciently in high repute at foreign courts, and who pretended to expel diseases by charms, incantations, and mystic arts. Asa's fault consisted in his trusting to such physicians, while he neglected to supplicate the aid and blessing of God. The best and holiest men have been betrayed for a time into sins, but through repentance have risen again; and as Asa is pronounced a good man (ch. xv. 17), it may be presumed that he also was restored to a better state of mind. 14. they buried him in his own sepulchres. The tombs in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem were excavated in the side of a rock. One cave contained several tombs or sepulchres. and laid him in the bed . . . filled with sweet odours and divers kinds of spices. It is evident that a sumptuous public funeral was given him, as a tribute of respect and gratitude for his pious character and patriotic

government. But whether "the bed" means a state couch, on which he lay exposed to public view, the odoriferous perfumes being designed to neutralize the offensive smell of the corpse, or whether it refers to an embalmment, in which aromatic spices were always used in great profusion, it is impossible to say. they made a very great burning for him. According to some, for consuming the spices; but according to others, it was a magnificent pile for the cremation of the corpse—a usage which was at that time, and long after, prevalent among the Hebrews, and the omission of which in the case of royal personages was reckoned a great indignity (ch. xxi. 19; 1 Sam. xxxi. 12; Jer. xxxiv. 5; Amos vi. 10).

CHAP. XVII. 1-6.—JEHOSHAPHAT REIGNS WELL, AND PROSPERS.

1. strengthened himself against Israel. The temper and proceedings of the kings of Israel rendered it necessary for him to prepare vigorous measures of defence on the northern frontier of his kingdom, and these consisted in filling all the fortresses with their full complement of troops, and establishing military stations in various parts of the country, as well as in the cities of mount Ephraim, which belonged to Jehoshaphat (ch. xv. 8). 3. he walked in the first ways of his father David. He imitated the piety of his great ancestor in the early part of his reign, before he made those unhappy lapses which dishonoured his character. and sought not unto Baalim—a term used for idols generally, in contradistinction to the Lord God of his father. 4. and not after the doings of Israel. He observed with scrupulous fidelity, and employed his royal influence to support, the Divine institutions as enacted by Moses, abhorring that spurious and unlawful calf-worship which formed now the established religion in Israel. Being thus far removed alike from gross idolatry and Israelitish apostasy, and adhering zealously to the requirements of the Divine law, the blessing of God rested on his government; for, ruling in the fear of God, and for the good of his subjects, "the Lord established the kingdom in his hand."

5. all Judah brought . . . presents. This was customary with the people generally at the beginning

6 abundance. And his heart³ was lifted up in the ways of the LORD: moreover⁹ he took away the high places and groves out of Judah.

7 Also in the third year of his reign he sent to his princes, *even* to Ben-hail, and to Obadiah, and to Zechariah, and to Nethaneel, and to 8 Michaiiah,^h to teach in the cities of Judah. And with them *he sent* Levites, *even* Shemaiah, and Nethaniah, and Zebadiah, and Asahel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehonathan, and Adonijah, and Tobijah, and Tob- 9 adonijah, Levites; and with them Elishama and Jehoram, priests. Andⁱ they taught in Judah, and *had* the book of the law of the LORD with them, and went about throughout all the cities of Judah, and taught the people.

10 And^j the fear of the LORD⁴ fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands that *were* round about Judah, so that they made no war against Jehoshaphat.

11 Also *some* of the Philistines^k brought Jehoshaphat presents, and tribute silver; and the Arabians brought him flocks, seven thousand and seven 12 hundred rams, and seven thousand and seven hundred he-goats. And Jehoshaphat waxed great exceedingly; and he built in Judah⁵ castles, 13 and cities of store. And he had much business in the cities of Judah: and the men of war, mighty men of valour, *were* in Jerusalem.

14 And these *are* the numbers of them according to the house of their fathers: of Judah, the captains of thousands; Adnah the chief, and with 15 him mighty men of valour three hundred thousand. And⁶ next to him *was* Jehohanan the captain, and with him two hundred and fourscore 16 thousand. And next him *was* Amasiah the son of Zichri,⁴ who willingly offered himself unto the LORD; and with him two hundred thousand 17 mighty men of valour. And of Benjamin; Eliada a mighty man of valour, and with him armed men with bow and shield two hundred thou- 18 sand. And next him *was* Jehozabad, and with him an hundred and four- 19 score thousand ready prepared for the war. These waited on the king, besides *those* whom the king put in the fenced cities throughout all Judah.

B. C. 913.

³ That is, was encouraged.

⁹ 1 Ki. 22 4, 5.

ch. 14. 3.

ch. 15. 17.

ch. 19. 3.

ch. 20. 33.

ch. 31. 1.

ch. 31. 3-7.

ch. 15. 3.

^h Lev. 10. 11.

ⁱ Deut. 4. 6-9.

Josh. 1. 7, 8.

ch. 35. 5.

Neh. 8. 7.

Isa. 8. 10.

Mal. 2. 7.

Matt. 15. 2-9.

^j Luke 4. 17-19.

^k Gen. 35. 5.

Ex. 15. 15.

Deut. 11. 25.

ch. 14. 14.

⁴ was.

^k 2 Sam. 8. 2.

⁵ Or, palaces.

⁶ at his hand.

^j Judg. 5. 2, 9.

1 Chr. 29. 9.

14-17.

Ps. 110. 3.

2 Cor. 8. 12.

of a reign (1 Sam. x. 27), and with the nobles and high functionaries yearly afterwards. They were given in the form of voluntary offerings, to avoid the odious idea of a tax or tribute. 6. his heart was lifted up in the ways of the Lord. Full of faith and piety, he possessed zeal and courage to undertake the reformation of manners, to suppress all the works and objects of idolatry (see on ch. xx. 33), and held out public encouragement to the pure worship of God.

7-11.—HE SENDS LEVITES TO TEACH IN JUDAH.

7. Also in the third year of his reign he sent . . . to teach in the cities of Judah. It does not appear that the ordinary work of teaching devolved on the priests. Their proper duty was to attend to the performance of the holy rites; besides which, from their sacred character recommending them as suitable arbiters and peacemakers, they were entrusted with the decision of controversies (Deut. xvii. 8-11; xxi. 5; Ezek. xlv. 24), and the legal treatment of leprosy and divorce cases, (Lev. x. 11; Deut. xxxiii. 10; Mal. ii. 7: cf. *Michaëlis*, 'Commentary on the Laws of Moses,' article lii.) But they were conjoined along with extraordinary commissioners, who were appointed probably to ascertain whether the work had been done or neglected. This deputation of five princes, assisted by two priests and nine Levites, was to make a circuit of the towns in Judah; and it is the first practical measure we read of as being adopted by any of the kings for the religious instruction of the people. Time and unbroken opportunities were afforded for carrying fully out this excellent plan of home education, for the

kingdom enjoyed internal tranquillity as well as freedom from foreign wars. It is conformable to the pious style of the sacred historian to trace this profound peace to the 'fear of the Lord having fallen on all kingdoms of the lands that were round about Judah.' 9. the book of the law—*i. e.*, either the whole Pentateuch or only the book of Deuteronomy, which contains an abridgment of it.

11. Also some of the Philistines brought Jehoshaphat presents, and tribute silver. Either they had been his tributaries, or they were desirous of securing his valuable friendship, and now made a voluntary offer of tribute. Perhaps they were the Philistines who had submitted to the yoke of David (2 Sam. viii. 1; Ps. lx. 8). the Arabians—the nomad tribes on the south of the Dead Sea, who, seeking the protection of Jehoshaphat after his conquest of Edom, paid their tribute in the way most suitable to their pastoral habits—the tale of so many heads of cattle.

12-19.—HIS GREATNESS, CAPTAINS, AND ARMIES. 14. these are the numbers. The warriors were arranged in the army according to their fathers' houses. The army of Jehoshaphat, commanded by five great generals, and consisting of five unequal divisions, comprised 1,160,000 men, without including those who garrisoned the fortresses. No monarch, since the time of Solomon, equalled Jehoshaphat in the extent of his revenue, in the strength of his fortifications, and the number of his troops. The extent and wealth of the southern kingdom were as great as that of the northern. But the nucleus of it, on which the responsibility

18 NOW Jehoshaphat "had riches and honour in abundance, and ^bjoined
² affinity with Ahab. And ¹after ^ccertain years he went down to Ahab to
 Samaria: and Ahab killed sheep and oxen for him in abundance, and for
 the people that *he had* with him, and persuaded him to go up *with him*
³ to Ramoth-gilead. And Ahab king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat king
 of Judah, Wilt thou go with me to Ramoth-gilead? And he answered
 him, I *am* as thou *art*, and my people as thy people; and *we will be* with
 thee in the war.
⁴ And Jehoshaphat said unto the king of Israel, "Enquire, I pray thee, at
⁵ the word of the LORD to-day. Therefore the king of Israel gathered to-
 gether of prophets four hundred men, and said unto them, Shall we go
 to Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall I forbear? And they said, "Go up;
 for God will deliver *it* into the king's hand.
⁶ But Jehoshaphat said, *Is there* not here a prophet of the LORD ²be-
⁷ sides, that we might enquire of him? And the king of Israel said unto
 Jehoshaphat, *There is* yet one man, by whom we may enquire of the LORD:
 but I hate him; for he never prophesied good unto me, but always evil:
 the same *is* Micaiah the son of Imla. And Jehoshaphat said, Let not the
 king say so.
⁸ And the king of Israel called for one of *his* ³officers, and said, ⁴Fetch
⁹ quickly Micaiah the son of Imla. And the king of Israel and Jeho-
 shaphat king of Judah sat either of them on his throne, clothed in *their*
 robes, and they sat in a ⁵void place at the entering in of the gate of
¹⁰ Samaria; and all the prophets prophesied before them. And Zedekiah
 the son of Chenaanah had made him horns of iron, and said, Thus saith
 the LORD, With these thou shalt push Syria until ⁶they be consumed.
¹¹ And all the prophets prophesied so, saying, Go up to Ramoth-gilead, and
 prosper; for the LORD shall deliver *it* into the hand of the king.
¹² And the messenger that went to call Micaiah spake to him, saying,
 Behold, the words of the prophets *declare* good to the king ⁷with one
 assent: let thy word therefore, I pray thee, be like one of theirs, and
¹³ speak thou good. And Micaiah said, *As* the LORD liveth, even ⁷what
 my God saith, that will I speak.
¹⁴ And when he was come to the king, the king said unto him, Micaiah,
 shall we go to Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall I forbear? And he said,
⁹Go ye up, and prosper, and they shall be delivered into your hand.
¹⁵ And the king said to him, How many times shall I adjure thee that thou
¹⁶ say nothing but the truth to me in the name of the LORD? Then he
 said, I did see all Israel scattered upon the mountains, as sheep that have
 no shepherd: and the LORD said, *These* have no master; let them return
¹⁷ *therefore* every man to his house in peace. And the king of Israel said
 to Jehoshaphat, Did I not tell thee *that* he would not prophesy good unto
¹⁸ me, ⁸but evil? Again he said, Therefore hear the word of the LORD; I
⁸saw the LORD sitting upon his throne, and all the host of heaven standing
¹⁹ on his right hand and *on* his left. And the LORD said, Who shall entice
 Ahab king of Israel, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead? And
 one spake saying after this manner, and another saying after that manner.
²⁰ Then there came out a ²spirit, and stood before the LORD, and said, I will
²¹ entice him. And the LORD said unto him, Wherewith? And he said, I

B. C. 897.

(CHAP. 18,
 ch. 17 5.
 Eccl. 5. 19.
 1 Tim. 4 8.
^b Gen 6 2.
 2 Ki. 1. 18.
 2 Cr 6. 11.
¹ at the end
 of years
^c 1 Ki. 22 2.
 ch. 19 2.
^d 1 Sam. 2. 3, 2,
 4, 9.
 2 Sam. 2. 1.
 1 Ki. 2. 5,
 6.
 ch. 24. 26.
 Jer 21. 2.
 Eze. 20. 3.
^e Jer 23. 17.
 Eze. 13. 3.
 Matt. 23. 13-
 29.
 Luke 11. 42-
 47.
 1 Cor 9. 16.
² yet, or,
 more.
³ Or,
 eunuchs.
⁴ Hasten
⁵ Or, floor
⁶ thou con-
 sume
 them
⁷ with one
 mouth.
^f Num. 21. 18,
 20, 35.
 Num 23. 12,
 27.
 Num 24. 13.
 1 Ki. 22. 14.
 Jer. 23 8.
 Jer. 42. 4.
 Eze. 2. 7.
 Mic. 2 6, 7.
 Acts 20. 27.
 1 Cor 11. 23.
 1 Thess. 2. 4.
⁹ 1 Ki. 18. 27.
 Eccl 11. 9.
 Amos 4. 4.
⁸ Or, but for
 evil.
^a Eze. 10. 1.
 Dan. 7. 9.
 Acts 7. 55,
 56.
 Rev 4. 2, 3.
⁶ Job 1. 6.
 2 Cor 11. 13-
 15.
 2 Thess. 2. 9.

of its defence and security rested, was in compar-
 ison very inconsiderable. All depended on the
 men that occupied the fortress settlements of
 Judah and Benjamin. They furnished the troops
 for the garrisons of Edom, of the wilderness fron-
 tier, of Philistia, and of the various points of
 access into the country. From this point of view,
 we have the means of estimating the strength and
 valour of the southern kingdom at this time; its

position in relation to its dependencies may be
 illustrated by that in which our own country now
 stands to our colonies' (cf. ch. xx. 29, 30: *Drew's*
 'Scripture Lands,' pp. 169, 183, 189).

CHAP. XVIII. 1-34.—JEHOSHAPHAT AND AHAH
 GO AGAINST RAMOTH-GILEAD.

2. after certain years he went down to Ahab
 to Samaria. This is word for word the same as
 1 Ki. xxiii. (See Commentary on that chapter.)

will go out, and ^jbe a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And *the LORD* said, Thou shalt entice *him*, and thou shalt also prevail: go
 22 out, and do *even* so. Now therefore, behold, ^kthe LORD hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of these thy prophets, and the LORD hath spoken evil against thee.

23 Then Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah came near, and ^lsmote Micaiah upon the cheek, and said, Which way went the Spirit of the LORD from
 24 me to speak unto thee? And Micaiah said, Behold, thou shalt see on that day when thou shalt go ⁹into ¹⁰an inner chamber to hide thyself.

25 Then the king of Israel said, Take ye Micaiah, and carry him back to
 26 Amon the governor of the city, and to Joash the king's son; and say, Thus saith the king, ^mPut this *fellow* in the prison, and feed him with bread of affliction and with water of affliction, until I return in peace.

27 And Micaiah said, If thou certainly return in peace, *then* hath not the LORD spoken by me. And he said, Hearken, all ye people.

28 So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah went up to
 29 Ramoth-gilead. And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, I will ⁿdisguise myself, and will go to the battle; but put thou on thy robes. So the king of Israel disguised himself; and they went to the battle.

30 Now the king of Syria had commanded the captains of the chariots that *were* with him, saying, Fight ye not with small or great, save only with
 31 the king of Israel. And it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, that they said, It *is* the king of Israel. Therefore they ^ocompassed about him to fight: but Jehoshaphat cried out, and the LORD
 32 helped him; and God ^pmoved them *to depart* from him. For it came to pass, that, when the captains of the chariots perceived that it was not the
 33 king of Israel, they turned back again ¹¹from pursuing him. And a *certain* man drew a bow ¹²at a venture, and smote the king of Israel ¹³between the joints of the harness: therefore he said to his chariot-man, Turn thine hand, that thou mayest carry me out of the host; for I am
 34 ¹⁴wounded. And the battle increased that day: howbeit the king of Israel stayed *himself* up in *his* chariot against the Syrians until the even; and about the time of the sun going down he died.

19 AND Jehoshaphat the king of Judah returned to his house in peace
 2 to Jerusalem. And Jehu the son of Hanani ^athe seer went out to meet him, and said to king Jehoshaphat, Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and
 3 ^blove them that hate the LORD? therefore *is* ^cwrath upon thee from before the LORD. Nevertheless there are ^dgood things found in thee, in that thou hast taken away the groves out of the land, and hast prepared ^ethine heart to seek God.

4 And Jehoshaphat dwelt at Jerusalem: and ¹he went out again through

B. C. 897.
 j 1 Ki. 22. 24, 22.
 Hos. 4. 12.
 Zech. 13. 2.
 John 9. 44.
 k Job 12. 16.
 Isa. 19. 14.
 Eze. 14. 9.
 Matt. 24. 24, 25.
 2 Thes. 2. 6-11.
 Jas. 1. 13.
 Jer 20. 2.
 Mark 14. 65.
 Acts 23. 2.
 l Or, from chamber to chamber.
 m a chamber in a chamber.
 n 1 Sam. 25. 21.
 ch. 16. 10.
 Luke 23. 2.
 o Pro. 10. 24.
 p Pro. 13. 20.
 q Ps. 46. 1.
 Eze. 1. 1.
 r from after him.
 s in his simplicity.
 t between the joints and between the breast-plate
 u made sick.
 CHAP. 19.
 a 1 Sam. 9. 9.
 b Ps. 15. 4.
 c Pro. 1. 10.
 d ch. 32. 25.
 e ch. 12. 12.
 f ch. 30. 19.
 g Ezra 7. 10.
 h he re-turned and went out.

CHAP. XIX. 1-4.—JEHOSHAPHAT VISITS HIS KINGDOM.

1. Jehoshaphat . . . returned to his house in peace—(see on ch. xviii. 16.) Not long after he had resumed the ordinary functions of royalty in Jerusalem, he was one day disturbed by an unexpected and ominous visit from a prophet of the Lord. This was Jehu, of whose father a notice occurred, ch. xvi. 7. He himself had been called to discharge the prophetic office in Israel; but probably for his bold rebuke to Baasha (1 Ki. xvi. 1) had been driven by that arbitrary monarch within the territory of Judah, where we now find him, with the privileged license of his order, taking the same religious supervision of Jehoshaphat's proceedings as he had formerly done of Baasha's. At the interview here described, he condemned in the strongest terms the king of Judah's imprudent and incongruous league with Ahab, God's open enemy (1 Ki. xxii. 2), as an unholy alliance

that would be conducive neither to the honour and comfort of his house nor to the best interests of his kingdom; and he apprized Jehoshaphat that, on account of that grave offence, 'wrath was upon him from before the Lord'—a judgment that was inflicted soon after, (see on ch. xx.) The prophet's rebuke, however, was administered in a mingled strain of severity and mildness; for he interposed a "nevertheless" (v. 3), which implied that the threatened storm would be averted, in token of the Divine approval of his public efforts for the promotion of the true religion, as well as of the sincere piety of his personal character and life.

4. he went out again through the people. This means his re-appointing the commissioners of public instruction (ch. xvii. 7-9), perhaps with new powers and a larger staff of assistants, to overtake every part of the land. The complement of teachers required for that purpose would be

B. C. 906.

the people, from Beer-sheba to mount Ephraim, and brought them back unto the LORD God of their fathers.

5 And he ^f set judges in the land, throughout all the fenced cities of Judah, 6 city by city, and said to the judges, Take heed what ye do: for ^g ye judge not for man, but for the LORD, ^h who is with you ⁱ in the judgment.

7 Wherefore now let the fear of the LORD be upon you; take heed, and do it: for ^j there is no iniquity with the LORD our God, nor ^k respect of persons, nor taking of gifts.

8 Moreover in Jerusalem did Jehoshaphat set ^l of the Levites, and ^m of the priests, and of the chief of the fathers of Israel, for the judgment of the 9 LORD, and for controversies, when they returned to Jerusalem. And he charged them, saying, Thus shall ye do ⁿ in the fear of the LORD, faith- 10 fully, and with a perfect heart. And ^o what cause soever shall come to you of your brethren that dwell in their cities, between blood and blood, between law and commandment, statutes and judgments, ye shall even warn them that they trespass not against the LORD, and so wrath ^p come upon ^q you, and upon your brethren: this do, and ye shall not trespass.

11 And, behold, Amariah the chief priest is over you in all matters of the LORD; and Zebadiah the son of Ishmael, the ruler of the house of Judah, for all the king's matters: also the Levites shall be officers before you. ^r Deal courageously, and the LORD shall be with the good.

20 IT came to pass after this also, that the children of Moab, and the children of Ammon, and with them other besides the Ammonites, came 2 against Jehoshaphat to battle. Then there came some that told Jehoshaphat, saying, There cometh a great multitude against thee from beyond the sea on this side Syria; and, behold, they be ^s in Hazazon-tamar,

f Deut. 16 1.
 g Deut. 1. 17.
 h Ps. 82. 1.
 i Eccl. 5. 8.
 j in the matter of judgment.
 k Deut. 32. 4.
 l Rom. 9. 14.
 m Deut. 10. 17.
 n Job 31. 10.
 o Acts 10. 34.
 p Rom. 2. 11.
 q Gal. 2. 6.
 r Eph. 6. 9.
 s Col. 3. 25.
 t 1 Pet. 1. 17.
 u Deut. 16. 18.
 v Deut. 17. 9-13.
 w 1 Chr 21. 4.
 x 1 Chr. 21. 23.
 y ch. 17. 8.
 z 2 Sam. 23. 3.
 aa Deut. 17. 8.
 ab Num. 16. 46.
 ac Eze. 3. 18.
 ad 3 Take courage and do.
 CHAP. 20.
 ae Gen. 14. 7.

easily obtained, from the whole tribe of Levites being now concentrated within the kingdom of Judah.

5-7.—HIS INSTRUCTIONS TO THE JUDGES.

5. he set judges in the land. There had been judicial courts established at an early period. But Jehoshaphat was the first king who modified these institutions according to the circumstances of the now fragmentary kingdom of Judah. He fixed local courts in each of the fortified cities, these being the provincial capitals of every district (see on Deut. xvi. 18-20).

8-11.—TO THE PRIESTS AND LEVITES.

8. set of the Levites . . . priests, and . . . chief of the fathers of Israel. A certain number of these three classes constituted a supreme court, which sat in Jerusalem to review appellate cases from the inferior courts. It consisted of two divisions: the first of which had jurisdiction in ecclesiastical matters; the second, in civil, fiscal, and criminal cases. According to others, the two divisions of the supreme court adjudicated: the one according to the law contained in the sacred books; the other, to the law of custom and equity, —as in Eastern countries at the present day the written and unwritten law are objects of separate jurisdiction. It would thus appear that in Jehoshaphat's time the old constitutional government by elders still continued in force, for they formed the basis of this council, which was only enlarged by the addition of priests and Levites, as a wholesome element for preserving the courts of justice pure and uncorrupt (cf. Ezek. viii. 1; Ezra iv. 23; viii. 1-15).

CHAP. XX. 1-21.—JEHOSHAPHAT, INVADIED BY THE MOABITES, PROCLAIMS A FAST.

1. the children of Moab . . . Ammon, and with them other besides the Ammonites—supposed to be rather the name of a certain people called Mo-hammonim or Mehunim (ch. xxvi. 7) [Septuagint, ἐκ τῶν Μωάβιτων], of the Moabites or Mehunim (see

Robinson's 'Physical Geography'), who dwelt in mount Seir—either a branch of the old Edomite race, or a separate tribe who were settled there. 2. from beyond the sea on this side Syria. Instead of Syria, some versions read 'Edom,' and many able critics prefer this reading, both because the nomad tribes here mentioned were far from Syria, and because express mention is made of mount Seir, i. e., Edom. The meaning then is, that this confederate horde was composed of the different tribes that inhabited the far-distant regions bordering on the northern and eastern coasts of the Red Sea. Their progress was apparently by the southern point of the Dead Sea as far as En-gedi, which, more anciently, was called Hazazon-tamar (Gen. xiv. 7). This, the ascent of En-gedi, is the uniform route taken by the Arabs in their marauding expeditions at the present day; and in coming round the southern end of the Dead Sea, they can penetrate along the low-lying Ghor far north, without letting their movements be known to the tribes and villages west of the mountain chain. Thus, anciently, the invading horde in Jehoshaphat's time had marched as far north as En-gedi before intelligence of their advance was conveyed to the court. En-gedi is recognized in the modern Ain-jidy, and is situated at a point of the western shore nearly equidistant from both extremities of the lake. 'Below the falls at Ain-jidy, in the centre of the plain, is a group of ruins of some extent, built of un-bveiled square stones of fair size, but nothing megalithic, and all very much weathered. These crumbled walls carry us with a mighty stride across the history of man. They are all that remains to tell of a city as old as the oldest in Syria, perhaps in the world—"Hazazon-tamar (the felling of the palm trees), which is En-gedi"—the contemporary city of Sodom and Gomorrah, an existing city when Hebron first arose. Through it passed the Assyrian hordes of Chedorlaomer. The plain

3 which is ^bEn-gedi. And Jehoshaphat feared, and set ¹himself to seek
 4 the LORD, and ^cproclaimed a fast throughout all Judah. And ^dJudah
 gathered themselves together to ask *help* of the LORD: even out of all the
 cities of Judah they came to seek the LORD.
 5 And Jehoshaphat stood in the congregation of Judah and Jerusalem,
 6 in the house of the LORD, before the new court, and said, O LORD God of
 our fathers, *art* not thou ^eGod in heaven? and ^fruldest not thou over all
 the kingdoms of the heathen? and ^gin thine hand *is there not power* and
 7 might, so that none is able to withstand thee? *Art* not thou ^hour God,
ⁱwho didst drive out the inhabitants of this land before thy people Israel,
 8 and gavest it to the seed of Abraham ^jthy friend for ever? And they
 dwelt therein, and have built thee a sanctuary therein for thy name, say-
 9 ing, If, ^kwhen evil cometh upon us, as the sword, judgment, or pestilence,
 or famine, we stand before this house, and in thy presence, (for thy name
 is in this house,) and cry unto thee in our affliction, then thou wilt hear
 10 and help. And now, behold, the children of Ammon and Moab and mount
 Seir, whom thou wouldest ^lnot let Israel invade, when they came out of
 the land of Egypt, but ^mthey turned from them, and destroyed them not;
 11 behold, *I say, how* they reward us, to ⁿcome to cast us out of thy posses-
 sion, which thou hast given us to inherit. O our God, wilt thou not
 12 judge them? for ^owe have no might against this great company that
 cometh against us; neither know we what to do: but ^pour eyes are upon
 thee.
 13 And all Judah stood before the LORD, with their little ones, their wives,
 and their children.
 14 Then upon Jahaziel the son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of
 Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah, a Levite of the sons of Asaph, ^qcame the
 15 Spirit of the LORD in the midst of the congregation; and he said, Hearken
 ye, all Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem, and thou king Jeho-
 shaphat, Thus saith the LORD unto you, ^rBe not afraid nor dismayed by
 reason of this great multitude; for the battle *is* not yours, but God's.
 16 To-morrow go ye down against them: behold, they come up by the ^scliff
 of Ziz; and ye shall find them at the end of the ^tbrook, before the wilder-
 17 ness of Jeruel. Ye ^ushall not need to fight in this battle: set yourselves,
 stand ye *still*, and see the salvation of the LORD with you, O Judah and
 Jerusalem: fear not, nor be dismayed; to-morrow go out against them:
 18 for ^vthe LORD will be with you. And Jehoshaphat ^wbowed his head with
 his face to the ground: and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jeru-

B. C. 896.
^b Josh. 15. 62.
¹ Sam. 23.
² 1.
³ Song 1. 14.
⁴ his face.
⁵ Jer. 31. 9.
⁶ Jer. 31. 5.
⁷ Joel 1. 14.
⁸ Deut. 4. 39.
⁹ 1 Ki. 8. 23.
¹⁰ Matt. 6. 9.
¹¹ Ps. 47. 2.
¹² Dan. 4. 17.
¹³ Ps. 67. 11.
¹⁴ Matt. 6. 13.
¹⁵ Gen. 17. 7.
¹⁶ Ex. 6. 7.
¹⁷ thou.
¹⁸ Isa. 41. 8.
¹⁹ Jas. 2. 27.
²⁰ 1 Ki. 8. 33.
²¹ 37.
²² ch. 6. 28.
²³ 29.
²⁴ Deut. 2. 4.
²⁵ Num. 20. 21.
²⁶ Ps. 83. 12.
²⁷ 1 Sam. 3. 13.
²⁸ 2 Cor. 3. 5.
²⁹ Ps. 25. 15.
³⁰ Ps. 121. 1.
³¹ Ps. 123. 1.
³² Ps. 141. 8.
³³ Num. 11. 25.
³⁴ Num. 24. 2.
³⁵ ch. 15. 1.
³⁶ ch. 24. 20.
³⁷ Ex. 14. 3.
³⁸ Deut. 1. 27.
³⁹ Deut. 31. 6.
⁴⁰ 8.
⁴¹ ch. 3. 7.
⁴² ascent.
⁴³ Or, valley.
⁴⁴ Ex. 14. 13.
⁴⁵ Num. 14. 9.
⁴⁶ ch. 15. 2.
⁴⁷ ch. 12. 8.
⁴⁸ Ex. 4. 31.

around is now as desolate as the old city of the Amorites, though once a forest of palms' (*Tristram*). 3. Jehoshaphat . . . proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah. Alarmed by the intelligence, and conscious of his total inability to repel this host of invaders, Jehoshaphat felt his only refuge was at the horns of the altar. He resolved to implore the aid of his God, and, in conformity with this resolution, summoned his whole subjects to observe a solemn fast at the sanctuary. It was customary with the Hebrew kings to proclaim fasts in perilous circumstances, either in a city, a district, or throughout the entire kingdom, according to the greatness of the emergency. On this occasion it was a universal fast, which extended to infants (v. 13: see also Joel ii. 15, 16; Jonah iii. 7).

5. Jehoshaphat stood in the . . . house of the Lord, before the new court—i. e., the great or outer court (ch. iv. 9), called the new court, probably from having been at that time enlarged or beautified. 6. And said, O Lord God of our fathers. This earnest and impressive prayer embraces every topic and argument which, as king and represen-

tative of the chosen people, he could urge; and then concludes with an earnest appeal to the justice of God to protect those who, without provocation, were attacked, and who were unable to defend themselves against overwhelming numbers. 13. all Judah stood before the Lord, with their little ones, &c. [צָרַף, a collective noun in the singular, which, as used here, includes the women as well as the children (cf. Gen. xlvii. 12).]

14. Then upon Jahaziel . . . came the Spirit of the Lord. This prophet is not elsewhere mentioned, but his claim to the inspiration of a prophetic spirit was verified by the calm and distinct announcement he gave, both of the manner and the completeness of the deliverance he predicted. 16. they come up by the cliff of Ziz. This seems to have been nothing else than the present pass, which leads northwards, by an ascent from Engedi, to Jerusalem, issuing a little below Tekoa. The wilderness of Jeruel was, probably, the large flat district adjoining the desert of Tekoa, called el-Husasah, from a wady on its northern side (*Lobinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' ii., p. 215). 18. Jehoshaphat bowed his head . . . and all Judah,

- 19 salem fell before the LORD, worshipping the LORD. And the Levites, of the children of the Kohathites, and of the children of the Korhites, stood up to praise the LORD God of Israel with a loud voice on high.
- 20 And they rose early in the morning, and went forth into the wilderness of Tekoa: and as they went forth, Jehoshaphat stood and said, Hear me, O Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem; ^vBelieve in the LORD your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper. And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed singers unto the LORD, ^wand ⁵that should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army, and to say, ^xPraise the LORD; for ^yhis mercy endureth for ever.
- 22 ⁶And when they began ⁷to sing and to praise, ²the LORD set ambushments against the children of Ammon, Moab, and mount Seir, which were come against Judah; and ⁸they were smitten. For the children of Ammon and Moab stood up against the inhabitants of mount Seir, utterly to slay and destroy *them*: and when they had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir, every one helped ⁹to destroy another.
- 24 And when Judah came toward the watch tower in the wilderness, they looked unto the multitude, and, ^abehold, they *were* dead bodies fallen to the earth, and ¹⁰none escaped. And when Jehoshaphat and his people came to take away the spoil of them, they found among them in abundance both riches with the dead bodies, and ¹¹precious jewels, (which they stripped off for themselves,) more than they could carry away: and they were three days in gathering of the spoil, it was so much. And on the fourth day they assembled themselves in the valley of ¹²Berachah; for there they blessed the LORD: therefore the name of the same place was called, The valley of Berachah, unto this day.
- 27 Then they returned, every man of Judah and Jerusalem, and Jehoshaphat in the ¹³fore front of them, to go again to Jerusalem with joy; for the LORD had made ^bthem to rejoice over their enemies. And they came to Jerusalem with psalteries and harps and trumpets unto the house of the LORD. And ^cthe fear of God was on all the kingdoms of *those* countries, when they had heard that the LORD fought against the enemies of Israel. So the realm of Jehoshaphat was quiet; for his ^dGod gave him rest round about.

B. C. 896.

^v Isa. 7. 9.
Isa. 26 3.
John 11. 40.
John 11. 1.
Rom 5. 31.
^w 1 Chr 16 29.
Ps 29 2.
Ps. 56. .
⁵ praises.
² 1 Chr. 16. 34.
ch 7. 3. 6.
Ezra 3. 11.
Ps. 106. 1.
Ps. 136. 1.
Jer. 33. 11.
^y ch. 5. 13.
ch. 7. 3.
⁶ And in the time that they, etc
⁷ in singing and praise.
² Judg 7. 22.
¹ Sam. 14. 20.
² Ki. 6. 17.
Isa. 1) 2.
⁸ Or, they smote one another
⁹ for the destruction.
^a Ex. 14. 13.
¹⁰ there was not an escaping.
¹¹ ves-els of desire.
¹² That is, blessing.
¹³ head.
^b Neh 12 43.
^c ch 17. 10.
^d ch. 15. 15.
Job 34. 19.

&c. This attitude was expressive of reverence to God and His word, of confidence in His promise, and thankfulness for so extraordinary a favour. 19. the Levites . . . stood up to praise the Lord—doubtless by the king's command; and their anthem was sung with such a joyful acclaim as showed that they universally regarded the victory as already obtained.

20. as they went forth, Jehoshaphat stood—probably in the gate of Jerusalem, the place of general rendezvous; and as the people were on the eve of setting out, he exhorted them to repose implicit trust in the Lord and His prophet, not to be timid or desponding at sight of the enemy, but to remain firm, in the confident assurance of a miraculous deliverance without their striking a single stroke. 21. he appointed singers . . . that should praise . . . as they went out before the army. Having arranged the line of procession, he gave the signal to move forward, when the Levites, leading the van with their musical instruments, and singing the 136th Psalm, the people went on, not as an army marching against an enemy, but returning in joyful triumph after a victory.

22-30.—THE OVERTHROW OF HIS ENEMIES. 22. when they began to sing and to praise, the Lord set ambushments. Some think that

this was done by angels in human form, whose sudden appearance diffused an uncontrollable panic; others entertain the more probable opinion that, in the camp of this vast horde, composed of different tribes, jealousies and animosities had sprung up, which led to wide-spread dissensions and fierce feuds, in which they drew the sword against each other. The consequence was, that as the mutual strife commenced when the Hebrew procession set out from Jerusalem, the work of destruction was completed before Jehoshaphat and his people arrived at the battle-field. Thus easy is it for God to make the wrath of man to praise Him, to confound the counsels of His enemies, and employ their own passions in defeating the machinations they have devised for the overthrow of His Church and people.

24. when Judah came toward the watch tower in the wilderness—most probably the conical hill, Jebel Fereidis, or Frank Mountain, from the summit of which they obtained the first view of the scene of slaughter. Jehoshaphat and his people found the field strewn with dead bodies, so that they had not to fight at all, but to take possession of an immense booty, the collection of which occupied three days. On the fourth they set out on their return to Jerusalem in the same order and joyful mood as they came. The place where they mustered

- 31 And ^eJehoshaphat reigned over Judah. *He was* thirty and five years old when he began to reign; and he reigned twenty and five years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Azubah the daughter of Shilhi.
- 32 And he walked in the way of Asa his father, and departed not from it, doing *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD. Howbeit the high places were not taken away; for as yet the people had not ^fprepared their hearts unto the God of their fathers.
- 34 Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, first and last, behold, they *are* written in the ¹⁴book of Jehu the son of Hanani, ^gwho ¹⁵is mentioned in the book of the kings of Israel.
- 35 And after this did Jehoshaphat king of Judah join himself with
- 36 Ahaziah king of Israel, who did very wickedly: and ¹⁶he joined himself with him to make ships to go to Tarshish: and they made the ships in Ezion-gaber. Then Eliezer the son of Dodavah of Mareshah prophesied against Jehoshaphat, saying, Because thou hast joined thyself with Ahaziah, the LORD hath broken thy works. And the ships were broken, that they were not able to go to ^hTarshish.
- 21 NOW Jehoshaphat slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David:
- 2 And Jehoram his son reigned in his ¹stead. And he had brethren the sons of Jehoshaphat, Azariah, and Jehiel, and Zechariah, and Azariah, and Michael, and Shephatiah: all these *were* the sons of Jehoshaphat king of Israel. And their father gave them great gifts of silver, and of gold, and of precious things, with fenced cities in Judah: but the kingdom gave he
- 4 to ²Jehoram, because he *was* the first-born. Now when Jehoram was risen up to the kingdom of his father, he strengthened himself, and ^eslew all his brethren with the sword, and *divers* also of the princes of Israel.
- 5 Jehoram ³was thirty and two years old when he began to reign, and he
- 6 reigned eight years in Jerusalem. And he walked in the way of the kings of Israel like as did the house of Ahab: for he had the daughter of

B. C. 897.
 * 1 Ki. 22. 41.
 † Deut. 29. 4.
 ch. 12. 14.
 ch. 19. 3.
 ch. 30. 19.
¹⁴ words.
^g 1 Ki. 16. 1.
¹⁵ was made to ascend.
¹⁶ At first Jehoshaphat was unwilling.
 1 Ki. 22. 49.
 h Gen. 10. 4.
 1 Ki. 10. 22.
 1 Ki. 22. 48.
 ch. 9. 21.
 1s. 48. 7.
 Isa. 2. 16.
 Eze 27. 12.
 Jon. 1. 3.

CHAP. 21.
 1 Alone.
 2 Jehoram made partner of the kingdom with his father.
 2 Ki. 8. 16.
^a Gen. 4. 8.
 Judg. 9. 5.
 ch. 10. 8, 10.
 1 ro. 1. 6. 24-6.
 1 John 3. 12.
³ in consert.

previous to departure was, from their public thanksgiving service, called 'the valley of Berachah' (benediction), now wady Bereikut. 31-37.—HIS REIGN.

31. Jehoshaphat reigned over Judah—(see ch. xxiv. 1.) 32. walked in the way of Asa his father, and departed not from it. He was more steadfast and consistently religious (cf. ch. xv. 18). 33. the high places were not taken away. Those on which idolatry was practised were entirely destroyed (ch. xvii. 6), but those where the people, notwithstanding the erection of the temple, continued to worship the true God, prudence required to be slowly and gradually abolished, in deference to popular prejudice.

35. after this did Jehoshaphat . . . join himself with Ahaziah . . . 36. to make ships. A combined fleet was built at Ezion-geber, the destination of which was to voyage to Tartessus, but it was wrecked. Jehoshaphat's motive for entering into this partnership was to secure a free passage through Israel, for the vessels were to be conveyed across the Isthmus of Suez, and to sail to the west of Europe from one of the ports of Palestine on the Mediterranean. Eliezer, a prophet, denounced this unholy alliance, and foretold, as a Divine judgment, the total wreck of the whole fleet. The consequence was, that although Jehoshaphat broke off, in obedience to the Divine will, his league with Ahaziah, he formed a new scheme of a merchant fleet, and Ahaziah wished to be admitted a partner. The proposal of the Israelitish king was respectfully declined. The destination of this new fleet was to Ophir, because the

Israelitish seaports were not accessible to him for the Tartessus trade; but the ships, when just off the docks, were wrecked in the rocky creek of Ezion-geber.

CHAP. XXI. 1-4.—JEHORAM SUCCEEDS JEHO-SHAPHAT.

1. Jehoshaphat slept with his fathers . . . Jehoram . . . reigned. The late king left seven sons. Two of them are in our version named Azariah; but in the Hebrew they appear considerably different, the one being spelt Azariah, and the other Azariahu. Though Jehoshaphat had made his family arrangements with prudent precaution, and while he divided the functions of royalty in his lifetime (cf. 2 Ki. viii. 16), as well as fixed the succession to the throne in his eldest son, he appointed each of the others to the government of a fenced city, thus providing them with an honourable independence. But his good intentions were frustrated. For no sooner did Jehoram find himself in the sole possession of sovereign power, than from jealousy, or on account of their connections, he murdered all his brothers, together with some leading influential persons, who, he suspected, were attached to their interest, or would avenge their deaths. Similar tragedies have been sadly frequent in Eastern courts, where the heir of the crown looks upon his brothers as his most formidable enemies, and is therefore tempted to secure his power by their death.

5-7.—HIS WICKED REIGN.

6. he walked . . . as did the house of Ahab. The precepts and examples of his excellent father were soon obliterated by his matrimonial alliance

^bAhah to wife: and he wrought *that which was evil* in the eyes of the
 7 LORD. Howbeit the LORD would not destroy the house of David, because
 of the covenant that he had made with David, and as he promised to give
 a ⁴light to him and to his ^csons for ever.
 8 In ^dhis days the Edomites revolted from under the ^edominion of Judah,
 9 and made themselves a king. Then Jehoram went forth with his princes,
 and all his chariots with him: and he rose up by night, and smote the
 10 Edomites which compassed him in, and the captains of the chariots. So
 the ^eEdomites revolted from under the hand of Judah unto this day.
 The same time *also* did Libnah revolt from under his hand; because he
 had forsaken the LORD God of his fathers.
 11 Moreover he made high places in the mountains of Judah, and caused
 the inhabitants of Jerusalem to ^fcommit fornication, and compelled
 12 Judah *thereto*. And there came a ^gwriting to him from Elijah the
 prophet, saying, Thus saith the LORD God of David thy father, Because
 thou hast not walked in the ways of Jehoshaphat thy father, nor in the
 13 ways of Asa king of Judah, but hast walked in the way of the kings of
 Israel, and hast made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to ^ggo a
 whoring, like to the ^hwhoredoms of the house of Ahab, and also hast
 slain thy brethren of thy father's house, *which were better* than thyself:
 14 behold, with ⁱa great plague will the LORD smite thy people, and thy
 15 children, and thy wives, and all thy goods: and thou *shalt have* great
 sickness by disease of thy bowels, until thy bowels fall out by reason of
 the sickness day by day.

B. C. 802.
^b ch. 22. 2.
 Neh. 13. 25,
 26.
⁴ lamp, or,
 candle.
^c 2 Sam. 7. 12,
 13.
 1 Ki. 11. 36.
 2 Ki. 8. 19.
 1's 13. 11.
 Luke 1. 69,
 79.
^d Gen. 27. 40.
 2 Ki. 5. 20.
⁵ hand.
^e Gen. 27. 40.
^f Lev. 17. 7.
 Lev. 20. 5.
 2 Ki. 9. 22.
 1's. 106. 33.
 Eze. 16. 15.
 Rev. 17. 1-
 5.
^g Which was
 writ before
 his death.
^h Ex. 34. 15.
ⁱ 2 Ki. 9. 22.
⁷ a great
 stroke.

with a daughter of the royal house of Israel. Through the influence of Athaliah he abolished the worship of the Lord, and encouraged an introduction of all the corruptions prevalent in the sister kingdom. The Divine vengeance was denounced against him, and would have utterly destroyed him and his house had it not been for a tender regard to the promise made to David (2 Sam. vii.: 2 Ki. viii. 19).

8. 17.—EDOM AND LIBNAH REVOLT.
 8. the Edomites revolted. That nation had been made dependent by David, and down to the time of Jehoshaphat was governed by a tributary ruler (1 Ki. xxiii. 47; 2 Ki. iii. 9). But that king having been slain in an insurrection at home, his successor thought to ingratiate himself with his new subjects by raising the flag of independence (*Josephus*). The attempt was defeated in the first instance by Jehoram, who possessed all the military establishments of his father; but being renewed unexpectedly, the Edomites succeeded in completely emancipating their country from the yoke of Judah (Gen. xxvii. 40). Libnah, which lay on the southern frontier and towards Edom, followed the example of that country.

12. there came a writing to him from Elijah. There have been various efforts made towards an explanation of this singular occurrence. Some have thought that that prophet's translation having taken place in the reign of Jehoshaphat, the name of Elijah has, by the error of a transcriber, been put for that of Elisha. That opinion, however, is not supported by any MS. authority. *Grotius* considered that the letter had come directly from the invisible world. *Cajetan* conjectured that some other Elijah was intended. But 'the writing' [כְּתָבָא] was in all probability a written prophecy rather than a letter; and in that case it might very well have been written by Elijah, as, according to the best chronological reckoning, Jehoram must have arrived at maturity before the venerable prophet's departure; and as he had exhibited deplorable proofs of an utterly irrel-

gious and wicked character, it pleased the spirit of prophecy to dictate this letter, which was probably committed to Elisha, or some other prophet, to be delivered to the king at a particular crisis, when the writing would make the deepest impression on his mind. *Henderson* ('On Inspiration,' p. 145) remarks, 'that the Hebrew text [כְּתָבָא אֵלֶיךָ] does not necessarily imply that the letter was written by the prophet at the time of its delivery. [The preposition כְּ connects with כְּתָבָא, a writing, more readily than with the verb אָב, and refers to Elijah as its author, so that it may have been composed years before it reached the hands of the wicked monarch whom it was designed to reprove.] 13. hast made . . . like to the whoredoms of the house of Ahab—i. e., introduced the superstitious and vices of Phœnician idolatry (see on Deut. xiii. 6-14). [כְּתָבָא, used here and in Hos. i. 2; iv. 10, 13, 18, refers to Lev. xix. 29, and the consideration of such a reference as establishing the guilt of the king's apostasy is very important. No doubt *Gesenius*, and several other critics, hold that חָתַם is used transitively in the Pentateuch, but intransitively by the author of Chronicles, and by Hosea. But, as *Hengstenberg* pertinently remarked ('Pentateuch,' i. p. 109), 'this assertion cannot be maintained on account of the evident reference to Leviticus. Besides, the assumption that Hophal here loses its characteristic meaning is quite arbitrary. In this passage of Chronicles, the transitive meaning is as clear as day: you gave Judah the tone, you made the people go a whoring against the law.'] On this account, as well as for his unnatural cruelties, Divine vengeance was denounced against him, which was soon after executed exactly as the prophet had foretold. A series of overwhelming calamities befell this wicked king; for, in addition to the revolts already mentioned, two neighbouring tribes (see ch. xvii. 11) made hostile incursions on the southern and western portions of his kingdom; his country was ravaged, his capital taken, his palace

16 Moreover the LORD ¹ stirred up against Jehoram the spirit of the Philistines, and of the Arabians, that *were* near the Ethiopians: and they came up into Judah, and brake into it, and ² carried away all the substance that was found in the king's house, and ³ his sons also, and his wives; so that there was never a son left him, save ⁴ Jehoahaz, the youngest of his sons. And after all this the LORD smote him in his bowels with an incurable disease. And it came to pass, that in process of time, after the end of two years, his bowels fell out by reason of his sickness: so he died of sore diseases. And his people made no burning for him, like the burning of his fathers. Thirty and two years old was he when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jerusalem eight years, and departed ⁵ without being desired: howbeit they buried him in the city of David, but not in the sepulchres of the kings.

22 AND the inhabitants of Jerusalem made ^a Ahaziah his youngest son king in his stead: for the band of men that came with the Arabians to the camp had slain all ^b the eldest. So Ahaziah the son of Jehoram king of Judah reigned. Forty ^c and two years old was Ahaziah when he began to reign, and he reigned one year in Jerusalem. His mother's name also was ^d Athaliah the daughter of Omri. He also walked in the ways of the house of Ahab: for his mother was his counsellor to do wickedly. Wherefore he did evil in the sight of the LORD like the house of Ahab: for they were his counsellors, after the death of his father, ^e to his destruction. He walked also after their counsel, and went ^f with Jehoram the son of Ahab king of Israel to war against Hazael king of Syria at Ramoth-gilead: and the Syrians smote Joram. And ^g he returned to be healed in Jezreel because of the wounds ^h which were given him at Ramah, when he fought with Hazael king of Syria.

And ² Azariah the son of Jehoram king of Judah went down to see Jehoram the son of Ahab at Jezreel, because he was sick. And the ³ destruction of Ahaziah ^k was of God, by coming to Joram: for when he was come, he ⁱ went out with Jehoram against Jehu the son of Nimshi, ^j whom the LORD had anointed to cut off the house of Ahab. And it came to pass, that, when Jehu was ^k executing judgment upon the house

B. C. 887.
¹ 2 Sam. 24. 1.
² 1 Ki. 11. 14. ch. 23. 11.
³ carried captive.
⁴ ch. :2. 1.
⁵ ch. 24. 7.
⁶ r.
 Ahaziah, ch. 22. 1. or, Azariah, ch. 21. 6. He became Prorex soon after.
⁷ 2 Ki. 8. 25.
⁸ without desire.
 Jer 22. 13.

CHAP. 22.
^a 2 Ki. 8. 21.
^b ch. 21. 17.
^c 2 Ki. 8. 26.
^d ch. 21. 6.
^e Fro. 13. 20.
^f 2 Ki. 8. 28.
^g 2 Ki. 9. 15.
^h wherewith they wounded him.
² Ahaziah, ver. 1.
 Jehoahaz, ch. 21. 17.
³ reading down.
^k Judg. 14. 4.
ⁱ 2 Ki. 9. 21.
^j 2 Ki. 9. 6, 7.
^k 2 Ki. 10. 10

plundered, his wives carried off, all his children slain except the youngest, himself was seized with a chronic and incurable dysentery [accompanied by prolapsus ani; but, according to some, חַיִּי חַיִּי, thy intestines come out, denotes rupture, so that the bowels protrude from the abdomen], which, after subjecting him to the most painful suffering for the unusual period of two years, carried him off, a monument of the Divine judgment; and, to complete his degradation, his death was unlamented, his burial unhonoured, by his subjects. This usage, similar to what obtained in Egypt, seems to have crept in among the Hebrews, of giving funereal honours to their kings, or withholding them, according to the good or bad characters of their reign.

CHAP. XXII. 1-4. — AHAZIAH SUCCEEDING, REIGNS WICKEDLY.

1. the inhabitants of Jerusalem made Ahaziah . . . king—or Jehoahaz (ch. xxi. 17). All his elder brothers having been slain scattered by the Arab marauders, the throne of Judah rightfully belonged to him, as the only legitimate heir of Joram. 2. Forty and two years old—(cf. 2 Ki. viii. 26.) According to that passage, the commencement of his reign is dated in the twenty-second year of his age; and according to this, in the forty-second year of the kingdom of his mother's family. 'If Ahaziah ascended the throne in the twenty-second year of his life, he must have been boru in his

father's nineteenth year. Hence it may seem strange that he had elder brothers; but in the East they marry early, and royal princes had, besides the wife of the first rank, usually concubines, as Jehoram had (ch. xxi. 17); he might, therefore, in the nineteenth year of his age, very well have several sons' (*Keil*) (cf. ch. xxi. 20; 2 Ki. viii. 17). Athaliah the daughter of Omri—more properly, grand-daughter. The expression is used loosely, as the statement was made simply for the purpose of intimating that she belonged to that idolatrous race. 3. his mother was his counsellor. 4. they were his counsellors. The facile king surrendered himself wholly to the influence of his mother and her relatives. Athaliah and her son introduced a universal corruption of morals, and made idolatry the religion of the court and the nation. By them he was induced not only to conform to the religion of the northern kingdom, but to join a new expedition against Ramoth-gilead (see on 2 Ki. ix. 10). 5. went . . . to war against Hazael king of Syria. It may be mentioned as a very minute and therefore important confirmation of this part of the sacred history, that the names of Jehu and Hazael his contemporary have both been found on Assyrian sculptures; and there is also a notice of Ithbaal, king of Sidon, who was the father of Jezebel.

6. Azariah . . . went down—i. e., from Ramoth-gilead, to visit the king of Israel, who was lying ill of his wounds at Jezreel, and fled there on the

of Ahab, and found the princes of Judah, and the sons of the brethren of
 9 Ahaziah, that ministered to Ahaziah, he slew them. And he sought
 Ahaziah: and they caught him, (for he was hid in Samaria,) and brought
 him to Jehu: and when they had slain him, they buried him: Because, said
 they, he is the son of Jehoshaphat, who sought the LORD with all his heart.
 So the house of Ahaziah had no power to keep still the kingdom.
 10 But when Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead,
 11 she arose and destroyed all the seed royal of the house of Judah. But
 4 Jehoshabeath, the daughter of the king, took Joash the son of Ahaziah,
 and stole him from among the king's sons that were slain, and put him
 and his nurse in a bed-chamber. So Jehoshabeath, the daughter of king
 Jehoram, the wife of Jehoiada the priest, (for she was the sister of
 12 Ahaziah,) hid him from Athaliah, so that she slew him not. And he was
 with them hid in the house of God six years: and Athaliah reigned over
 the land.
 23 AND in the seventh year Jehoiada strengthened himself, and took
 the captains of hundreds, Azariah the son of Jeroham, and Ishmael the
 son of Jehohanan, and Azariah the son of Obed, and Maaseiah the son of
 2 Adaiah, and Elishaphat the son of Zichri, into covenant with him. And
 they went about in Judah, and gathered the Levites out of all the cities
 of Judah, and the chief of the fathers of Israel, and they came to
 3 Jerusalem. And all the congregation made a covenant with the king
 in the house of God. And he said unto them, Behold, the king's son
 4 shall reign, as the LORD hath said of the sons of David. This is the
 thing that ye shall do; A third part of you entering on the sabbath, of
 5 the priests and of the Levites, shall be porters of the doors; and a third
 part shall be at the king's house; and a third part at the gate of the
 foundation: and all the people shall be in the courts of the house of the
 6 LORD. But let none come into the house of the LORD, save the priests,
 and they that minister of the Levites; they shall go in, for they are

B. C. 834.

2 Ki. 9. 2,
 at
 Megiddo
 in the
 kingdom
 of
 Samaria.
 4 Je-
 hosheba,
 2 Ki. 11. 2.

CHAP. 23.

a 2 Ki. 11. 4.
 b Ps. 112. 5.
 Matt. 10. 16.
 Eph. 5. 15.
 c 2 Sam. 7. 12.
 16.
 1 Ki 2. 4.
 1 Ki. 9. 5.
 ch. 6. 16.
 ch. 7. 18.
 ch. 21. 7.
 Ps. 89, 29,
 35.
 d 1 Chr. 9. 25.
 1 Chr. 21. 32.
 6.
 1 Chr. 24. 3-
 6.
 Luke 1. 8.
 9.
 1 thresholds.
 e Acts 3. 2.
 f 2 Ki. 11. 6.
 7.
 1 Chr. 23. 28,
 29.

alarm of Jehu's rebellion. 9. sought Ahaziah . . (for he was hid in Samaria)—(cf. 2 Ki. ix. 27-29.) The two accounts are easily reconciled. 'Ahaziah fled first to the garden-house and escaped to Samaria; but was here, where he had hid himself, taken by Jehu's men, who pursued him, brought to Jehu, who was still near or in Jezreel, and at his command slain at the hill Gur, beside Ibleam, in his chariot; that is, mortally wounded with an arrow, so that he, again fleeing, expired at Megiddo' (Keil). Jehu left the corpse at the disposal of the king of Judah's attendants, who conveyed it to Jerusalem, and out of respect to his grandfather, Jehoshaphat's memory, gave him an honourable interment in the tombs of the kings. So the house of Ahaziah had no power to keep still the kingdom. His children were too young to assume the reins of government, and all the other royal princes had been massacred by Jehu (v. 8).

10-12. ATHALIAH, DESTROYING THE SEED ROYAL SAVE JOASH, USURERS THE KINGDOM.

10. Athaliah . . . arose and destroyed all the seed royal—(see on 2 Ki. xi. 1-3.) Maddened by the massacre of the royal family of Ahab, she resolved that the royal house of David should have the same fate. Knowing the commission which Jehu had received to extirpate the whole of Ahab's posterity, she expected that he would extend his sword to her. Anticipating his movements, she resolved, as her only defence and security, to usurp the throne and destroy "the seed royal," both because they were hostile to the Phœnician worship of Baal, which she was determined to uphold, and because, if one of the young

princes became king, his mother would supersede Athaliah in the dignity of queen-mother. 12. he was with them hid in the house of God. Certain persons connected with the priesthood had a right to occupy the buildings in the outer wall, and all within the outer wall was often called the temple. Jehoiada and his family resided in one of these apartments.

CHAP. XXIII. 1-11.—JHOIADA MAKES JOASH KING.

1. in the seventh year Jehoiada . . . took the captains of hundreds, &c.—(see on 2 Ki. xi. 4, 17.) The five officers mentioned here had probably formed part of the royal guard, and were known to be strongly disaffected to the government of Athaliah. 2. chief of the fathers of Israel. This name is frequently used in Chronicles for Judah and Benjamin, now all that remained of Israel. Having cautiously entrusted the secret of the young prince's preservation to all the leading men in the kingdom, he enlisted their interest in the royal cause, and got their pledge to support it by a secret oath of fidelity. they came to Jerusalem. The time chosen for the grand discovery was, probably, one of the annual festivals, when there was a general concourse of the nation at the capital. 4. This is the thing that ye shall do. The arrangements made for defence are here described. The people were divided into three bodies: one attended as guards to the king, while the other two were posted at all the doors and gates, and the captains and military officers who entered the temple unarmed, to lull suspicion, were furnished with weapons out of the sacred armoury, where David had deposited his trophies.

- 7 ²holy: but all the people shall keep the watch of the LORD. And the Levites shall compass the king round about, every man with his weapons in his hand; and whosoever *else* cometh into the house, he shall be put to death: but be ye with the king when he cometh in, and when he goeth out.
- 8 So the Levites and all Judah did according to all things that Jehoiada the priest had commanded, and took every man his men that were to come in on the sabbath, with them that were to go out on the sabbath:
- 9 for Jehoiada the priest dismissed not the ⁹courses. Moreover Jehoiada the priest delivered to the captains of hundreds spears, and bucklers, and shields, that *had been* king David's, which *were* in the house of God. And he set all the people, every man having his weapon in his hand, from the right ³side of the ⁴temple to the left side of the temple, along by the altar and the temple, by the king round about. Then they brought out the king's son, and put upon him the crown, and ^hgave him the testimony, and made him king: and Jehoiada and his sons anointed him, and said, ⁵God save the king.
- 12 Now when Athaliah heard the noise of the people running and praising the king, she came to the people into the house of the LORD: and she looked, and, behold, the king stood at his pillar at the entering in, and the princes and the trumpets by the king: and all the people of the land rejoiced, and sounded with trumpets, also the singers with instruments of music, and ¹such as taught to sing praise. Then Athaliah rent her
- 14 clothes, and said, ⁶Treason, Treason! Then Jehoiada the priest brought out the captains of hundreds that were set over the host, and said unto them, Have her forth of the ranges: and whoso followeth her, let him be slain with the sword. For the priest said, ⁷Slay her not in the house of
- 15 the LORD. So they laid hands on her: and when she was come to the entering ^kof the horse gate by the king's house, they ¹slew her there.

B. C. 878.

- ² holiness.
 Num 16. 6.
 Ezra 8. 25.
⁹ 1 Chr 24 1.
 1 Chr 25. 1.
³ shoulder.
⁴ house.
^h Ex. 25. 16.
 Ex. 31. 18.
 Deut 17. 18.
 Ps. 2. 10-12.
 Ps. 78. 5.
 Isa. 8. 10.
 20.
 Isa 40. 23.
⁵ Let the king live.
 1 Sam. 10. 24.
 2 Sam. 16. 16.
 1 Ki 1. 39.
 1 Chr. 25. 8.
⁶ Con-
 spiracy.
 1 Ki. 18. 17, 18.
 Rom. 2. 3.
⁷ Num. 5. 2.
 Num. 19. 14.
^k Neh. 3. 28.
¹ Gen. 9. 5.
 Judg. 1. 7.
 ch. 22. 10.
 Matt. 7. 2.
 Rev. 16. 5-7.

of victory, and which was re-opened on this occasion.

8. Jehoiada . . . dismissed not the courses. As it was necessary to have as large a disposable force as he could command on such a crisis, the high priest detained those who, in other circumstances, would have returned home on the expiry of their week of service.

11. put upon him the crown, and gave him the testimony [כִּי]—the diadem, (2 Sam. i. 10; 2 Ki. xi. 12, &c.) A crown was worn by Jewish kings, even in battle, and by Joash at his coronation; though of what form and of what materials is unknown. But this was not the state crown, which in all probability was kept in the temple. Some think that the original word rendered "testimony," as its derivation warrants, may signify here the regalia, especially the bracelet (2 Sam. i. 10); and this view they support on the ground that "gave him" being supplemented, the text properly runs thus, 'put upon him the crown and testimony.' Accordingly *Montanus*, while he translated the Hebrew by *testimonium*, has *ornamentum* in the margin. At the same time, it seems equally pertinent to take "the testimony" in the usual acceptation of that term; and, accordingly, many are of opinion that a roll containing a copy of the law (Deut. xvii. 18) was placed in the king's hands, which he held as a sceptre or truncheon, or it was held over his diademed head in a symbolical manner (*Thenius*, in loco); while others, referring to the custom of Oriental people, when receiving a letter or document from a highly respected quarter, lifting it up to their heads before opening it, consider that Joash, besides the crown, had the book of the law laid upon his head

(see Job xxxi. 35, 36). God save the king—*lit.*, Long live the king.

12-15.—ATHALIAH SLAIN.

12. when Athaliah heard the noise. The unusual commotion indicated by the blast of the trumpets, and the vehement acclamations of the people, drew her attention or excited her fears. She might have flattered herself that, having slain all the royal family, she was in perfect security; but it is just as likely that, finding on reflection one had escaped her murderous hands, she might not deem it expedient to institute any inquiries; but the very idea would keep her constantly in a state of jealous suspicion and irritation. In that state of mind, the wicked usurper, hearing across the Tyropean the outburst of popular joy, rushed across the bridge to the temple grounds, and, penetrating from a single glance the meaning of the whole scene, raised a shriek of "Treason!"

13. behold, the king stood at his pillar at the entering in. The king's pillar was in the people's court, opposite that of the priests. The young king, arrayed in the royal insignia, had been brought out of the inner, to stand forth in the outer, court to the public view. Some think that he stood on the brazen scaffold of Solomon, erected beside the pillar. 14. Slay her not in the house of the Lord. . . 15. the entering of the horse gate by the king's house, they slew her there. The high priest ordered her immediately to be taken out of the temple grounds and put to death; "and they laid hands on her; and she went by the way by the which horses came into the king's house, and there was she slain" (2 Ki. xi. 16). 'Now, we are not to suppose that horses came into' the king's house 'of residence, but into the king's

16 And Jehoiada made ^ma covenant between him, and between all the people, and between the king, that they should be the LORD's people.
 17 Then all the people went to ⁿthe house of Baal, and brake it down, and brake his altars and his images in pieces, and ^oslew Mattan the priest of Baal before the altars. Also Jehoiada appointed the offices of the house of the LORD by the hand of the priests the Levites, whom David had ^pdistributed in the house of the LORD, to offer the burnt offerings of the LORD, as *it is* written in the ^qlaw of Moses, with rejoicing and with singing,
 19 as *it was ordained* ^rby David. And he set the ^rporters at the gates of the house of the LORD, that none *which was* unclean in any thing should enter in. And ^she took the captains of hundreds, and the nobles, and the governors of the people, and all the people of the land, and brought down the king from the house of the LORD: and they came through the high gate into the king's house, and set the king upon the throne of the kingdom. And all ^tthe people of the land rejoiced: and the city was quiet, after that they had slain Athaliah with the sword.
 24 JOASH ^uwas seven years old when he began to reign; and he reigned forty years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also *was* Zibiah of Beer-sheba. And Joash ^vdid *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD all the days of Jehoiada the priest. And Jehoiada took for him two wives; and he begat sons and daughters.
 4 And it came to pass after this, *that* Joash was minded ^wto repair the house of the LORD. And he gathered together the priests and the Levites, and said to them, Go out unto the cities of Judah, and ^xgather of all Israel money to repair the house of your God from year to year, and see that ye hasten the matter. Howbeit the Levites hastened *it* not.
 6 And ^ythe king called for Jehoiada the chief, and said unto him, Why hast thou not required of the Levites to bring in, out of Judah and out of Jerusalem, the collection, *according to the commandment* ^zof Moses the servant of the LORD, and of the congregation of Israel, for the ^{aa}tabernacle of witness? For ^{ab}the sons of Athaliah, that wicked woman, had broken up the house of God; and also all the ^{ac}dedicated things of the house of the LORD did they bestow upon Baalim.
 8 And at the king's commandment ^{ad}they made a chest, and set it with-
 9 out at the gate of the house of the LORD. And they made ^{ae}a proclamation through Judah and Jerusalem, to bring in to the LORD the collection ^{af}that Moses the servant of God *laid* upon Israel in the wilderness. And all the princes and all the people rejoiced, and brought in, and cast into
 11 the chest, until they had made an end. Now it came to pass, that at what time the chest was brought unto the king's office by the hand of

B. C. 878.
^m 2 Ki. 11. 17.
 ch. 15. 12.
 14.
 ch. 29. 10.
 Ezra 10. 3.
 Neh. 9. 33.
ⁿ 2 Ki. 10. 23.
 2 Ki. 11. 18.
 2 Ki. 18. 4.
^o Deut. 13. 9.
^p 1 Chr. 23. 6.
 30. 31.
 1 Chr. 24. 1.
^q Ex. 29. 38.
 Num. 28. 2.
^r by the hands of David.
 1 Chr. 25. 2, 6.
^s 1 Chr. 26. 1.
^t 2 Ki. 11. 19.
^u 1 Ki. 1. 40.
 Pro. 11. 10.
 Pro. 29. 2.

CHAP. 24.
^v 2 Ki. 11. 21.
 2 Ki. 12. 1.
^w ch. 26. 5.
 Mark 4. 16, 17.
^x to renew.
^y 2 Ki. 12. 4.
 ch. 29. 3.
 ch. 34. 8, 9.
^z 2 Ki. 12. 7.
^{aa} Ex. 30. 12-14. 16.
^{ab} Num. 1. 50.
 Num. 17. 7, 8.
 Num. 18. 2.
 Acts 7. 44.
^{ac} ch. 21. 17.
 ch. 22. 3, 4.
 Ps. 12. 8.
^{ad} 2 Ki. 12. 4.
 Mark 12. 41.
^{ae} 2 Ki. 12. 9.
^{af} a voice.
 Ex. 26. 6.

(horses') house or hippodrome (the gate of the king's mules) (*Josephus*) he had built for them on the south-east of the temple, in the immediate vicinity of the horse gate in the valley of Kedron—a valley which was at that time a kind of desecrated place, by the destruction of idols and their appurtenances' (2 Ki. xxiii. 2, 6, 12) (*Barclay's 'City of the Great King'*).

16.—JEHOIADA RESTORES THE WORSHIP OF GOD, AND SETTLES THE KING.

16. Jehoiada made a covenant—(see on 2 Ki. xi. 17.)

CHAP. XXIV. 1-14.—JOASH REIGNS WELL ALL THE DAYS OF JEHOIADA.

1. Joash . . . began to reign—(see on 2 Ki. xii. 1-3.) 3. Jehoiada took for him two wives [בָּ]—for him or for himself. If the reference is to Jehoiada himself, the rabbis may be right in maintaining that he married this second wife on the death of the first, for there is nothing in the context to warrant the conclusion that he married the two to-

gether; and besides, there is no recorded instance of polygamy in a priest. If the meaning is, though, that Jehoiada took for Joash two wives—and the generality of interpreters apply this statement to the young king—the fact mentioned of Joash, that he "did that which was right in the sight of the Lord," does not justify this double marriage in the eye of the law, any more than the same affirmation made respecting David justifies the numerous sins that he committed. The whole amount of meaning attached to this phrase is, that the king's public conduct, as a theocratic ruler, was generally acceptable to God. 4. Joash was minded to repair the house of the Lord. (See on 2 Ki. xii. 4-16.) 7. For the sons of Athaliah, that wicked woman, had broken up the house of God [הַבַּיִת]—wickedness (concrete) for the wicked woman. A voluntary contribution was resolved upon for the due repairs of the temple, from the dilapidations committed upon it by Athaliah and her emissaries for enriching the worship of Baal.

the Levites, and when ^jthey saw that *there was* much money, the king's scribe and the high priest's officer came and emptied the chest, and took it, and carried it to his place again. Thus they did day by day, and gathered
 12 money in abundance. And the king and Jehoiada gave it to such as did the work of the service of the house of the LORD, and hired masons and carpenters to repair the house of the LORD, and also such as wrought
 13 iron and brass to mend the house of the LORD. So the workmen wrought, and ^kthe work was perfected by them, and they set the house of God in
 14 his state, and strengthened it. And when they had finished *it*, they brought the rest of the money before the king and Jehoiada, ^lwhereof were made vessels for the house of the LORD, *even* vessels to minister, and ^mto offer *withal*, and spoons, and vessels of gold and silver: and they ⁿoffered burnt offerings in the house of the LORD continually all the days of Jehoiada.

15 But Jehoiada waxed old, and ^owas full of days when he died; an
 16 hundred and thirty years old *was he* when he died. And they buried him in ^pthe city of David among the kings, because he had done good in Israel, both toward God, and toward his house.

17 Now after ^qthe death of Jehoiada came the princes of Judah, and
 18 made obeisance to the king: then the king hearkened unto them. And they left the house of the LORD God of their fathers, and served ^rgroves and idols: and ^swrath came upon Judah and Jerusalem for this their
 19 trespass. Yet he ^tsent prophets to them, to bring them again unto the LORD; and they testified against them: but they would not give ear.

20 And ^uthe Spirit of God ^vcame upon Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest, which stood above the people, and said unto them, Thus saith God, ^wWhy transgress ye the commandments of the LORD, that ye cannot

E. C. 556.

^j 2 Ki. 12. 10.
^k the healing went up upon the work, or by their hand, Neh. 4. 7.
^l 1 Ki. 7. 60.
^m 2 Ki. 12. 13.
ⁿ Or, pestils.
^o Ex 20. 33.
^p Gen. 15. 15.
^q Gen. 25. 8.
^r Job 5. 26.
^s Pro 10. 27.
^t 1 Ki. 2. 10.
^u Acts 20. 29.
^v 1 Ki. 14. 23.
^w Judg 6. 8.
^x ch 36. 15.
^y Jer. 7. 25, 26.
^z Jer. 25. 4.
^{aa} ch 15. 1.
^{ab} ch. 20. 14.
^{ac} cloth-d.
^{ad} Judg. 6. 34.
^{ae} Num. 14. 41.
^{af} 1 Sam. 13. 13, 14.
^{ag} Zech. 7. 11-14.

15, 16.—JEHOIADA BEING DEAD.

15. Jehoiada waxed old, and . . . died. His life, protracted to unusual longevity, and spent in the service of his country, deserved some tribute of public gratitude, and this was rendered in the posthumous honours that were bestowed on him. Among the Hebrews, intramural interment was prohibited in every city but Jerusalem, and there the exception was made only to the royal family and persons of eminent merit, on whom the distinction was conferred of being buried in the city of David, among the kings, as in the case of Jehoiada.

17, 22.—JOASH FALLS INTO IDOLATRY.

17. Now . . . came the princes of Judah, and made obeisance to the king. Hitherto, while Joash occupied the throne, his uncle had held the reins of sovereign power, and by his excellent counsels had directed the young king to such measures as were calculated to promote both the civil and religious interests of the country. The fervent piety, practical wisdom, and inflexible firmness of that sage counsellor exerted immense influence over all classes. But now that the helm of the state ship was no longer steered by the sound head and firm hand of the venerable high priest, the real merits of Joash's administration appear; and for want of good and enlightened principle, as well as, perhaps, of natural energy of character, he allowed himself to be borne onward in a course which soon wrecked the vessel upon hidden rocks, the king hearkened unto them, &c. They were secretly attached to idolatry, and their elevated rank affords sad proof how extensively and deeply the nation had become corrupted during the reigns of Jehoram, Ahaziah, and Athaliah. With strong professions of allegiance, they humbly requested that they might not be subjected to the continued necessity of frequent and expensive

journeys to Jerusalem, but allowed the privilege their fathers had enjoyed of worshipping God in high places at home; and they framed their petition in this plausible and least offensive manner, well knowing that, if excused attendance at the temple, they might—without risk of discovery or disturbance—indulge their tastes in the observance of any private rites they pleased. The weak-minded king granted their petition; and the consequence was, that when they left the house of the Lord God of their fathers, they soon “served groves and idols.” 18. *wrath came upon Judah and Jerusalem.* The particular mention of Jerusalem as involved in the sin, implies that the neglect of the temple and the consequent idolatry received not only the king's toleration, but his sanction; and it naturally occurs to ask how, at his mature age, such a total abandonment of a place with which all his early recollections were associated can be accounted for. It has been suggested that what he had witnessed of the conduct of many of the priests in the careless performance of the worship, and especially their unwillingness to collect the money, as well as apply a portion of their revenues for the repairs of the temple, had alienated and disgusted him (*Leclerc*). 19. *Yet he sent prophets—Elisha, Micah, Jehu son of Hanani, Jahaziel son of Zechariah (ch. xx. 14), Eliezer son of Dodavah (ch. xx. 37), lived and taught at that time.* But all their prophetic warnings and denunciations were unheard and unheeded.

20. *the Spirit of God came upon Zechariah the son of Jehoiada—probably a younger son, for his name does not occur in the list of Aaron's successors, (1 Chr. vi.) [Septuagint, Ἀζαρίας]. stood above the people.* Being of the priestly order, he spoke from the inner court, which was considerably higher than that of the people. and said unto them, &c. His near relationship to the king

- prosper? ^u because ye have forsaken the LORD, he hath also forsaken you.
- 21 And they conspired against him, and stoned ^v him with stones at the
- 22 commandment of the king in the court of the house of the LORD. Thus Joash the king remembered not the kindness which Jehoiada his father had done to him, but slew his son. And when he died, he said, The LORD look upon *it*, and require *it*.
- 23 And it came to pass ⁶ at the end of the year, *that* ^w the host of Syria came up against him: and they came to Judah and Jerusalem, and destroyed all the princes of the people from among the people, and sent
- 24 all the spoil of them unto the king of ⁷ Damascus. For the army of the Syrians ² came with a small company of men, and the LORD ^y delivered a very great host into their hand, because they had forsaken the LORD God of their fathers. So they ^z executed judgment against Joash.
- 25 And when they were departed from him, (for they left him in great diseases,) his ^a own servants conspired against him for ^b the blood of the sons of Jehoiada the priest, and slew him on his bed, and he died: and they buried him in the city of David, but they buried him not in the sepulchres
- 26 of the kings. And these are they that conspired against him; ⁸ Zabad the son of Shimeath an Ammonitess, and Jehozabad the son of ⁹ Shimrith
- 27 a Moabite. Now *concerning* his sons, and the greatness of ^c the burdens *laid* upon him, and the ¹⁰ repairing of the house of God, behold, they *are* written in the ¹¹ story of the book of the kings. ^d And Amaziah his son reigned in his stead.
- 25 AMAZIAH ^e was twenty and five years old *when* he began to reign, and he reigned twenty and nine years in Jerusalem. And his mother's 2 name *was* Jehoaddan of Jerusalem. And he did *that which was* right

B. C. 840
^u ch. 15. 2.
^v Jer. 2. 19.
^w Matt. 23 35.
^x Acts 7. 58.
^y in the revolution of the year.
^z 2 Ki. 12. 17.
¹ Darnesek.
² Lev. 21. 8.
³ Deut. 32 30.
⁴ Isa. 30. 17.
⁵ Jer. 37. 10.
⁶ Lev. 26. 25.
⁷ Deut. 28. 25.
⁸ Isa. 10. 5.
⁹ 2 Ki. 12. 20.
¹⁰ Ps. 10. 14.
¹¹ Or.
¹² Jozachar.
¹³ 2 Ki. 12. 21.
¹⁴ Or.
¹⁵ Shomer.
¹⁶ 2 Ki. 12. 15.
¹⁷ founding.
¹⁸ Or, commentary.
¹⁹ 2 Ki. 12. 21.
²⁰ 1 Chr. 3. 12 ch. 25. 1.
 CHAP. 25.
²¹ 2 Ki. 14. 1.

might have created a feeling of delicacy and reluctance to interfere; but at length he, too, was prompted by an irresistible impulse to protest against the prevailing impiety. The bold freedom and energy of his remonstrance, as well as his denunciation of the national calamities that would certainly follow, were most unpalatable to the king, while they so roused the fierce passions of the multitude, that a band of miscreants, at the secret instigation of Joash, stoned him to death (cf. Matt. xxiii. 35). This deed of violence involved complicated criminality on the part of the king. It was a horrid outrage on a prophet of the Lord—base ingratitude to a family who had preserved his life—atrocious treatment of a true Hebrew patriot—an illegal and unrighteous exercise of his power and authority as a king. 22. *when he died, he said, The Lord look upon it, and require it.* These dying words, if they implied a vindictive imprecation, exhibit a striking contrast to the spirit of the first Christian martyr (Acts vii. 60). But, instead of being the expression of a personal wish, they might be the utterance of a prophetic doom. The resting place of Zechariah is still pointed out, according to immemorial tradition, in a monument detached from the rock which fronts the area of the temple, and bearing a strong resemblance to that of Absalom (so-called). 23-27.—HE IS SLAIN BY HIS SERVANTS.

23. *at the end of the year . . . the host of Syria came up.* This invasion took place under the personal conduct of Hazael, whom Joash, to save the miseries of a siege, prevailed on to withdraw his forces by a large present of gold (2 Ki. xii. 18). Most probably, also, he promised the payment of an annual tribute, on the neglect or refusal of which the Syrians returned the following year, and, with a mere handful of men, inflicted a total and humiliating defeat on the collected force of the Hebrews.

25. *they left him in great diseases.* The close of his life was embittered by a painful malady, which long confined him to bed. *his own servants conspired against him.* These two conspirators (whose fathers were Jews, but their mothers aliens) were probably courtiers, who, having constant access to the bed-chamber, could the more easily execute their design. *for the blood of the sons—read 'the son' of Jehoiada.* Public opinion seems to have ascribed the disasters of his life and reign to that foul crime; and as the king had long lost the esteem and respect of his subjects, neither horror nor sorrow was expressed for his miserable end. *they buried him in the city of David, but they buried him not in the sepulchres of the kings.* The sepulchres of the kings, hewn out of the rock, and situated about a mile to the north-west of the modern Jerusalem, have long presented a scene of interest to travellers in that famous city. Of course, it is a question whether those sepulchres were the tombs of the Jewish sovereigns; for it is expressly said that the real sepulchres were in "the city of David." But there are none now to be seen on mount Zion; and yet, in favour of these tombs being "the sepulchres of the kings," it must be borne in mind that, though they are considerably removed from the northern wall of the town, they seem to have been included within the wall of the ancient city, which is universally allowed to have extended far in that direction (cf. 2 Ki. xii. 20; *Sepp's* 'Jerusalem and the Holy Land,' in which the site of Milo is fixed, according to the Septuagint, at the extreme north of the city, where he locates also the city of David).

CHAP. XXV. 1-4.—AMAZIAH BEGINS TO REIGN WELL.

1. Amaziah was twenty and five years old, &c. —(see on 2 Ki. xiv. 1-6.)

- 3 in the sight of the LORD, ^bbut not with a perfect heart. Now ^cit came to pass, when the kingdom was ¹established to him, that he slew his
- 4 servants that had killed the king his father. But he slew not their children, but *did* as *it is* written in the law in the book of Moses, where the LORD commanded, saying, ^d"The fathers shall not die for the children, neither shall the children die for the fathers, but every man shall die for his own sin.
- 5 Moreover Amaziah gathered Judah together, and made them captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, according to the houses of *their* fathers, throughout all Judah and Benjamin: and he numbered them ^efrom twenty years old and above, and found them three hundred thousand choice *men*, ^fable to go forth to war, that could handle spear
- 6 and shield. He hired also an hundred thousand mighty men of valour out of Israel for an hundred talents of silver.
- 7 But there came a man of God to him, saying, O king, let not the army of Israel go with thee; for ^gthe LORD *is* not with Israel, *to wit*, with all
- 8 the children of Ephraim. But if thou wilt go, do *it*, be strong for the battle: God shall make thee fall before the enemy: for God hath ^hpower
- 9 to help, and to cast down. And Amaziah said to the man of God, But what shall we do for the hundred talents which I have given to the
- 10 ²army of Israel? And the man of God answered, The ¹LORD is able to give thee much more than this. Then Amaziah separated them, *to wit*,
- 11 the army that was come to him out of Ephraim, to go ³home again: wherefore their anger was greatly kindled against Judah, and they returned home ⁴in great anger.
- 12 And Amaziah strengthened himself, and led forth his people, and went to ⁵the valley of Salt, and smote of the children of Seir ten thousand.
- 13 And *other* ten thousand *left* alive did the children of Judah carry away captive, and brought them unto the top of the rock, and cast them down from the top of the rock, that they all were broken in pieces.

B. C. '33.

^b 2 Ki. 14. 4.
Ps. 73. 37.
Isa. 20. 13.
Hos. 10. 2.
Acts 8. 21.
^c 2 Ki. 14. 5.
¹ confirmed upon him.
^d Deut. 21. 16.
2 Ki. 14. 6.
Jer. 31. 33.
Eze. 18. 20.
^e Num. 1. 3.
^f 1 Ki. 12. 28.
ch. 15. 2.
ch. 19. 20.
Isa. 28. 1-3.
Hos. 4. 6.
1-19.
Hos. 5. 7, 15.
Hos. 9. 11, 12, 16, 17.
^g ch. 14. 11.
ch. 20. 6.
Job 5. 19.
Job 42. 2.
Ps. 20. 7.
Ps. 118. 6.
Jer. 52. 17.
² band.
^h Deut. 8. 18.
ch. 1. 12.
Fro. 10. 22.
Hag. 2. 8.
³ to their place.
⁴ in heat of anger.
⁵ 2 Ki. 14. 7.

5.10.—HAVING HIRED AN ARMY OF ISRAELITES AGAINST THE EDMITES, AT THE WORD OF A PROPHET HE LOSES AN HUNDRED TALENTS, AND DISMISSES THEM.

5. Amaziah . . . made them captains, &c. As all who were capable of bearing arms were liable to serve, it was quite natural, in making up the muster-roll, to class them according to their respective families, and to appoint the officers of each corps from the same quarter; so that all the soldiers who formed a regiment were brothers, relatives, friends. Thus the Hebrew troops were closely linked together, and had strong inducements to keep steady in their ranks. found them three hundred thousand choice men. This was only a fourth part of Jehoshaphat's army (ch. xvii. 14-19), showing how sadly the kingdom of Judah had, in the space of eighty-two years, been reduced in population by foreign wars, no less than by internal corruptions. But the full amount of Amaziah's troops may not be here stated. 6. He hired also an hundred thousand . . . for an hundred talents of silver. This sum was paid into the exchequer of Jehoahaz, not given as bounty to the mercenaries who were obliged to serve at the sovereign's call, their remuneration consisting only in the booty they might obtain. It was about £50,000 sterling, being 10s. per man, including officers—a very paltry pay, compared with the bounty given for a soldier in this country. But it must be remembered that in ancient times campaigns were short, and the hazards of the service comparatively small.

7. there came a man of God—sent to dissuade Amaziah from the course he was following, on the

ground that "the Lord was not with Israel." This statement was perfectly intelligible to the king. But the historian, writing long after, thought it might require explanation, and therefore added the comment, "with all the children of Ephraim." Idolatry had long been the prevailing religion in that kingdom, and Ephraim its head-quarters. As to the other part of the prophet's advice (v. 8), considerable obscurity hangs over it, as the text stands; and hence some able critics have suggested the insertion of 'not' in the middle clause, so that the verse will be thus,—'But if thou wilt go (alone), do, be strong for the battle; God shall not make thee fall before the enemy.' 10. separated them . . . the army . . . out of Ephraim . . . their anger was greatly kindled against Judah. Amaziah, who knew his position as the Lord's viceroy, complied with the prophet's counsel, and, consenting to forfeit the purchase-money of the Israelitish soldiers, discharged them. Exasperated at this treatment, they resolved to indemnify themselves for the loss of their expected booty, and so on their return home they plundered all the towns in their way, committing great havoc both of life and property, without any stoppage, as the king of Judah and his army had set out on their expedition (2 Ki. xiv. 7).

11. valley of Salt. This ravine lies to the south of the Dead Sea. The arms of Amaziah, in reward for his obedience to the Divine will, were crowned with victory—10,000 of the Edomites were slain on the field, and as many taken prisoners, who were put to death by precipitation "from the top of the rock." This rock might be situated in the neighbourhood of the battle-field, but more prob-

- 13 But ⁵the soldiers of the army which Amaziah sent back, that they should not go with him to battle, fell upon the cities of Judah, from Samaria even unto Beth-horon, and smote three thousand of them, and took much spoil.
- 14 Now it came to pass, after that Amaziah was come from the slaughter of the Edomites, that ⁷he brought the gods of the children of Seir, and set them up to be ^khis gods, and bowed down himself before them, and
- 15 burned incense unto them. Wherefore the anger of the LORD was kindled against Amaziah, and he sent unto him a prophet, which said unto him, Why hast thou sought after ^tthe gods of the people, which
- 16 could not deliver their own people out of thine hand? And it came to pass, as he talked with him, that *the king* said unto him, Art thou made of ^mthe king's counsel? forbear; why shouldst thou be smitten? Then the prophet forbare, and said, I know that God hath ⁶determined to destroy thee, because thou hast done this, and hast not hearkened unto my counsel.
- 17 Then ⁿAmaziah king of Judah took advice, and sent to Joash, the son of Jehohaz, the son of Jehu, king of Israel, saying, Come, let us see one
- 18 another in the face. And Joash king of Israel sent to Amaziah king of Judah, saying, The ⁷thistle that *was* in Lebanon sent to the cedar that *was* in Lebanon, saying, Give thy daughter to my son to wife: and there passed by ⁸a wild beast that *was* in Lebanon, and trode down the thistle.
- 19 Thou sayest, Lo, thou hast smitten the Edomites; and thine heart lifteth thee up to boast: abide now at home; why shouldst thou ⁶meddle to *thine* hurt, that thou shouldst fall, *even* thou, and Judah with thee?
- 20 But Amaziah would not hear; for ²it *came* of God, that he might deliver them into the hand of *their enemies*, because they sought after the gods
- 21 of Edom. So Joash the king of Israel went up; and they saw one another in the face, *both* he and Amaziah king of Judah, at Beth-shemesh,
- 22 which *belongeth* to Judah. And Judah was ⁹put to the worse before
- 23 Israel, and they fled every man to his tent. And Joash the king of Israel took Amaziah king of Judah, the son of Joash, the son of ²Jehohaz, at Beth-shemesh, and brought him to Jerusalem, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem from the gate of Ephraim to ¹⁰the corner gate,
- 24 four hundred cubits. And *he took* all the gold and the silver, and all the vessels that were found in the house of God with Obed-edom, and the treasures of the king's house, the ¹¹hostages also, and returned to Samaria.

B. C. 827.

⁵ the sons of the band.

j ch 25. 23.

⁶ Ex. 20. 3, 5.

1 Sam. 5. 21.

⁷ Ps. 96. 5.

Ps. 115. 5-3.

Fs. 135. 15-18.

Isa. 47. 1, 2.

Jer. 10. 3-5.

Jer. 14. 15.

Acts 10. 26.

1 Cor. 8. 4.

^m ch. 16. 10.

Pro. 9. 7, 8.

Matt 21. 21.

2 Tim. 4. 3.

⁶ coun-

selled.

1 Sam. 2. 25.

ⁿ 2 Ki. 14. 8,

9.

ch. 18. 2,

21.

⁷ Or. furze

bush, or,

thorn.

⁸ a beast of the field.^o Pro. 18. 6.

Pro. 10. 3.

Luke 11. 21.

^p 1 Ki. 12. 15.

ch. 22. 7.

Fs. 51. 11,

12.

Isa. 46. 10.

2 Thes. 2. 9.

1 Pet. 2. 8.

⁹ smitten.^q ch. 21. 17.

ch. 22. 1, 6.

¹⁰ the gate of it that

looketh.

¹¹ sons of

pledge, or,

power.

ably it formed one of the high craggy cliffs of Selah (Petra), the capital of the Edomites, whither Amaziah marched directly from the valley of Salt, and which he captured (see on 2 Ki. xiv. 7). The savage cruelty dealt out to them was either in retaliation for similar barbarities inflicted on the Hebrews, or to strike terror into so rebellious a people for the future. The mode of execution, by dashing against stones (Ps. cxxvii. 9), was common among ancient nations.

14. Amaziah . . . brought the gods of the children of Seir. The Edomites worshipped the sun under different forms and with various rites. But burning incense upon altars was a principal act of worship, and this was the very thing Amaziah is described as having, with strange infatuation, performed. Whether he had been captivated with the beauty of the images, or hoped, by honouring the gods, to disarm their spite at him for his conquest and harsh treatment of their votaries, his conduct in establishing these objects of religious homage in Jerusalem was foolish, ignorant, and highly offensive to God, who commissioned a prophet to rebuke him for his apostasy, and

threaten him with the calamity that soon after befell him. 16. as he talked with him, &c. Those who were invested with the prophetic character were entitled to counsel kings, and Amaziah, had he not been offended by unwelcome truths, would have admitted the claim of this prophet, who was probably the same that had given him counsel previous to the war with Edom. But victory had elated and blinded him.

17. — HE PROVOKES JOASH TO HIS OVERTHROW.

17. Then Amaziah . . . sent to . . . Joash . . . Come, let us see one another in the face. This homage to the gods of Edom led indirectly to the defeat of his army by Joash, king of Israel, and exposed him to the infamy attached to the demolition of the wall of Jerusalem, as well as of the spoliation of the precious vessels of the temple. These disasters having started up a spirit of opposition to his government amongst the people of Jerusalem, occasioned the formation of a conspiracy against his life. He took flight, but was traced to Lachish, and slain there (see on 2 Ki. xiv. 8-20).

- 25 And ^rAmaziah the son of Joash king of Judah lived after the death of
 26 Joash, son of Jehoahaz king of Israel, fifteen years. Now the rest of the
 acts of Amaziah, first and last, behold, *are* they not written in the book
 27 of the kings of Judah and Israel? Now after the time that Amaziah did
 turn away ¹²from following the LORD they ¹³made a conspiracy against
 him in Jerusalem; and he fled to Lachish: but they sent to Lachish after
 28 him, and slew him there. And they brought him upon horses, and buried
 him with his fathers in the city of ¹⁴Judah.
- 26 THEN all the people of Judah took ¹Uzziah, who *was* sixteen years
 2 old, and made him king in the room of his father Amaziah. He built
 Eloth, and restored it to Judah, after that the king slept with his
 fathers.
- 3 Sixteen years old *was* Uzziah when he began to reign, and he reigned
 fifty and two years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also *was* Jecoliah
 4 of Jerusalem. And he did that *which was* right in the sight of the LORD,
 5 according to all that his father Amaziah did. And ^ahe sought God in
 the days of Zechariah, who ^bhad understanding ²in the visions of God:
 and as long as he sought the LORD, God made him to prosper.
- 6 And he went forth and ^cwarred against the Philistines, and brake down
 the wall of Gath, and the wall of Jabneh, and the wall of Ashdod, and
 7 built cities ³about Ashdod, and among the Philistines. And God helped
 him against ^dthe Philistines, and against the Arabians that dwelt in Gur-
 8 baal, and the Mehunims. And the Ammonites ^egave gifts to Uzziah:
 and his name ⁴spread abroad *even* to the entering in of Egypt; for he
 strengthened *himself* exceedingly.
- 9 Moreover Uzziah built towers in Jerusalem at the ^fcorner gate, and at
 10 the valley gate, and at the turning of the wall, and ⁵fortified them. Also
 he built towers in the ^gdesert, and ⁶digged many wells: for he had much
 cattle, both in the low country, and in the plains; husbandmen *also*,
 and vine-dressers in the mountains, and in ⁷Carmel: for he loved ⁸hus-
 bandry.

B. C. 820

^r 2 Ki. 14. 17.¹² from
after.¹³ conspired
a con-
spiracy.¹⁴ That is,
the city of
David, as
it is,

2 Ki. 14. 20.

CHAP. 26.

1 Cr.

Azariah,
2 Ki. 14. 1-1.
22.^a ch. 24. 2.^b Gen. 41. 15.² in the see-
ing of Grd.^c Isa. 14. 9.³ Or, in the
country of
Ashdod.^d ch. 21. 16.^e 2 Sam. 8. 2.
ch. 17. 11.⁴ went.^f 2 Ki. 14. 12.

Zech. 14. 10.

⁵ Or,

repaired

^g ch. 21. 16.⁶ Or, cut out
many
cisterns.⁷ Or, fruitful

fields.

⁸ ground.

CHAP. XXVI. 1-8.—UZZIAH SUCCEEDS AMA-
 ZIAH, AND REIGNS WELL IN THE DAYS OF ZECHA-
 RIAH.

1. Then all the people of Judah took Uzziah
 —(see on 2 Ki. xiv. 21, 22; xv. 1-3.) 2. He built
 Eloth—or, 'He it was who built Eloth.' The
 account of the fortifications of this port on the
 Red Sea, which Uzziah restored to the kingdom of
 Judah (ch. xxxiii. 13), is placed before the chron-
 ological notices (*v.* 3), either on account of the im-
 portance attached to the conquest of Eloth, or
 from the desire of the historian to introduce
 Uzziah as the king who was known as the con-
 queror of Eloth. Besides, it indicates that the
 conquest occurred in the early part of his reign,
 that it was important as a port, and that Hebrew
 merchants maintained the old trade between it
 and the countries of the East (*Bertheau*).

5. he sought God in the days of Zechariah—
 a wise and pious counsellor, who was skilled in
 understanding the meaning and lessons of the
 ancient prophecies, and who wielded a salutary
 influence over Uzziah.

6. went forth and warred against the Phillis-
 tines. He overcame them in many engagements,
 dismantled their towns, and erected fortified
 cities in various parts of the country, to keep
 them in subjection. Jabneh—the same as Jabneel
 (Josh. xv. 11). Gur-baal—is thought by some to be
 Gerar, and by others Gebal. 8. the Ammonites
 gave gifts. The countries east of the Jordan be-
 came tributary to him, and by the rapid succession
 and extent of his victories his kingdom extended

to the Egyptian frontier (cf. Isa. xvi. 1-5, with 2
 Ki. iii. 4).

9, 10.—HIS BUILDINGS.

9. Uzziah built towers in Jerusalem, &c.—
 whence resistance could be made or missiles dis-
 charged against assailants. The sites of the
 principal of these towers were—at the corner gate
 (ch. xxv. 23), the north-west corner of the city; at
 the valley gate on the west, where the Joppa gate
 now is; at the "turning"—a curve in the city wall
 on the eastern side of Zion. The town at this
 point commanded the horse-gate, which defended
 Zion and the temple hill on the south-east (*Ber-
 theau*). 10. Also he built towers in the desert
 —for the threefold purpose of defence, of observa-
 tion, and of shelter to his cattle (cf. tower of Edar,
 or of the flock, Gen. xxxv. 21; 2 Ki. xvii. 9; Isa.
 v. 2). He dug also a great many wells, for he loved
 and encouraged all branches of agriculture. Some
 of these 'were in the desert'—*i. e.*, in the district
 to the south-east of Jerusalem, on the west of the
 Dead Sea—an extensive grazing district. in the
 low country—the Shephelah, lying between the
 mountains of Judah and the Mediterranean. and
 in the plains—east of the Jordan, within the ter-
 ritory of Reuben (Deut. vi. 43; Josh. xx. 8). in
 Carmel. This mountain being within the bound-
 ary of Israel, did not belong to Uzziah; and as it is
 here placed in opposition to the vine-bearing
 mountains, it is probably used, not as a proper
 name, but to signify, as the word denotes, 'fruit-
 ful fields' (*margin*). Thus he cultivated the art
 of peace.

- 11 Moreover Uzziah had an host of fighting men, that went out to war by bands, according to the number of their account by the hand of Jeiel the scribe, and Maaseiah the ruler, under the hand of Hananiah, *one* of the king's captains. The whole number of the chief of the fathers of the mighty men of valour *were* two thousand and six hundred. And under their hand *was* ⁹an army, three hundred thousand, and seven thousand and five hundred, that made war with mighty power, to help the king against the enemy. And Uzziah prepared for them, throughout all the slings, shields, and spears, and helmets, and habergeons, and bows, and ¹⁰slings to cast stones. And he made in Jerusalem engines, invented by cunning men, to be on the towers and upon the bulwarks, to shoot arrows and great stones withal. And his name ¹¹spread far abroad; for he was marvellously helped, till he was strong.
- 16 But ^hwhen he was strong, his heart was ⁱlifted up to *his* destruction: for he transgressed against the LORD his God, and went ^jinto the temple of the LORD to burn incense upon the altar of incense. And ^kAzariah the priest went in after him, and with him fourscore priests of the LORD, *that were* valiant men: and they ^lwithstood Uzziah the king, and said unto him, *It* ^mappertaineth not unto thee, Uzziah, to burn incense unto the LORD, but to the ⁿpriests the sons of Aaron, that are consecrated to burn incense: go out of the sanctuary; for thou hast trespassed: neither *shall it be* for thine honour from the LORD God.
- 19 Then Uzziah was wroth, and *had* a censer in his hand to burn incense: and while he was wroth with the priests, ^othe leprosy even rose up in his forehead before the priests in the house of the LORD, from beside the incense altar. And Azariah the chief priest, and all the priests, looked upon him, and, behold, he *was* leprous in his forehead, and they thrust him out from thence; yea, himself ^phasted ^qalso to go out, because the LORD had smitten him. And ^rUzziah the king was a leper unto the day of his death, and dwelt in a ^sseveral house, *being* a leper; for he was cut off from the house of the LORD: and Jotham his son *was* over the king's house, judging the people of the land.
- 22 Now the rest of the acts of Uzziah, first and last, did ^tIsaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, write. So ^uUzziah slept with his fathers, and they buried him with his fathers in the field of the burial which *belonged* to the kings; for they said, He *is* a leper: and Jotham his son reigned in his stead.

B. C. 80.
⁹ the power of an army.
¹⁰ stones of slings. Judg 20. 16. 1 Sam. 17. 49.
¹¹ went forth. Matt. 4. 24.
^h Deut. 8. 14. 17.
 Deut. 33. 15. ch. 25. 19. ch. 32. 25. Pro. 16. 18. Hab 2. 4. Col. 2. 18.
ⁱ Deut. 8. 14. ch. 25. 19.
^j 2 Ki. 16. 12, 13.
^k 1 Chr. 6. 10. ch. 16 7-9. ch. 19. 2. Jer. 13. 18. Matt 10. 16-23.
 Matt 14. 4. 2 Cor. 5. 16. Gal. 2. 11.
^l Num 16. 40-46.
 Num. 18. 7.
^m Ex. 30. 7.
 Heb. 5. 4.
ⁿ Num. 12. 10.
 2 Ki. 5. 27.
^o Esth. 6. 12.
^p 2 Ki. 15. 5.
^q 12 free.
 Lev. 13. 46. Num. 5. 2.
^r Isa. 1. 1.
^s 2 Ki. 15. 6, 7.
 Isa. 6. 1.

11-15.—HIS HOST AND ENGINES OF WAR.

11. a host of fighting men, that went out to war by bands. He raised a strong body of militia, divided into companies or regiments of uniform amount, which served in rotation. The enumeration was performed by two functionaries expert in the drawing up of military muster rolls, under the superintendence of Hananiah, one of the high officers of the crown. The army consisted of 307,500 picked men, under the command of 2,000 gallant officers, chiefs or heads of fathers' houses, so that each father's house formed a distinct band. They were fully equipped with every kind of military accoutrements, from brasen helmets, a habergeon, or coat of mail, to a sling for stones. 15. made . . . engines, invented by cunning men . . . to shoot arrows and great stones—catapults contrived by [חֲרֻשִׁים], an artificer. This is the first notice that occurs in history of the use of machines for throwing projectiles. The invention is apparently ascribed to the reign of Uzziah, and *Pliny* expressly says they originated in Syria. he was marvellously helped, till he was strong. He conducted himself as became the viceroy of the Divine King, and prospered.

16-21.—HE INVADES THE PRIEST'S OFFICE, AND IS SMITTEN WITH LEPROSY.

16. he transgressed against the Lord, &c.—(see on 2 Ki. xv. 5.) This daring and wicked act is in both records traced to the intoxicating influence of overweening pride and vanity. But here the additional circumstances are stated, that his entrance was opposed, and strong remonstrances made (1 Chr. vi. 10), by the high priest, who was accompanied by eighty inferior priests. 18. It appertaineth not unto thee, Uzziah [לֹא יִשְׁמַח לְךָ אֲתָּה לְבַרְחֵי הַיְיָ]—it is not to thee (not thy province) to burn incense. Rage and threats were the only answers he deigned to return; but God took care to vindicate the sacredness of the priestly office, and at the moment of the king's lifting the censer, struck him with leprosy. The earthquake mentioned, Amos i. 1; Zech. xiv. 4, 5, is said to have been felt at the moment (*Josephus*, 'Antiquities,' b. ix., ch. x., sec. 4).

21. dwelt in a several house—in an infirmary; i. e., was excommunicated from communion with Judah (*Bertheau*). 23. they buried him . . . in the field of the burial which belonged to the kings.

- 27** JOTHAM ^awas twenty and five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also *was* 2 Jerushah, the daughter of Zadok. And he did *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father Uzziah did: howbeit ^bhe entered not into the temple of the LORD. And ^cthe people did yet 3 corruptly. He built the high gate of the house of the LORD, and on the wall of ¹Ophel he built much.
- 4 Moreover he built cities in the mountains of Judah, and in the forests 5 he built castles and towers. He ^dfought also with the king of the Ammonites, and prevailed against them. And the children of Ammon gave him the same year an hundred talents of silver, and ten thousand measures of wheat, and ten thousand of barley. ²So much did the children of Ammon pay unto him, both the second year and the third. 6 So Jotham became mighty, because he ³prepared his ways before the LORD his God.
- 7 Now the rest of the acts of Jotham, and all his wars, and his ways, lo, 8 they *are* written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah. He was five and twenty years old when he began to reign, and reigned sixteen 9 years in Jerusalem. And Jotham slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David: and Ahaz his son reigned in his stead.
- 28** AHAZ ^ewas twenty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem: but he did not *that which was* right in the 2 sight of the LORD, like David his father: for he walked in the ways of the 3 kings of Israel, and made also ^fmolten images for ^gBaalim. Moreover he ¹burnt incense in ^hthe valley of the son of Hinnom, and burnt his ⁱchildren in the fire, after the abominations of the heathen whom the 4 LORD had cast out before the children of Israel. He sacrificed also and burnt incense in the high places, and on the hills, and under every green tree.
- 5 Wherefore ^jthe LORD his God delivered him into the hand of the king of Syria; and they ^ksmote him, and carried away a great multitude of them captives, and brought *them* to ²Damascus. And he was also

B. C. 758.

CHAP. 27.

^a 2 Ki. 15. 32.

1 Chr. 3. 12.

Isa. 1. 1.

Hos. 1. 1.

Mic. 1. 1.

Matt. 1. 9.

^b ch. 26. 16-

21.

Ps. 119. 120.

Acts 5. 13.

^c 2 Ki. 15. 35.¹ Or, the

tower.

ch. 33. 14.

Neh. 3. 23.

^d 2 Ki. 3. 4.

ch. 26. 8.

Jer. 49. 1-6.

² This.³ Or, estab-

lished.

ch. 12. 11.

ch. 19. 3.

CHAP. 28.

^a 2 Ki. 16. 2.^b Ex. 34. 17.

Lev. 19. 4.

^c Judg. 2. 11.¹ Or, offered

sacrifice.

^d 2 Ki. 3. 10.

Jer. 7. 31.

^e Lev. 18. 21.

2 Ki. 16. 3.

ch. 33. 6.

Eze. 16. 20.

Mic. 6. 7.

^f Isa. 7. 1.^g 2 Ki. 16. 5.² Darmisek.

He was interred, not in, but near, the sepulchre of the kings, as the corpse of a leper would have polluted it.

CHAP. XXVII. 1-4.—JOTHAM, REIGNING WELL, PROSPERS.

1. Jotham was twenty and five years old—(see on 2 Ki. xv. 32-35.) His mother's name also was Jerushah, the daughter of Zadok—or descendant of the famous priest of that name. 2. he did that which was right. The general rectitude of his government is described by representing it as conducted on the excellent principles which had guided the early part of his father's reign. the people did yet corruptly—(see 2 Ki. xv. 35); but the description here is more emphatic, that though Jotham did much to promote the good of his kingdom, and aimed at a thorough reformation in religion, the wide-spread and inveterate wickedness of the people frustrated all his laudable efforts. 3. He built the high gate of the house of the Lord—situated on the north—that portion of the temple hill which was high compared with the southern part; hence “the higher,” or upper gate, 2 Ki. xv. 35. “He built”—i. e., repaired or embellished. and on the wall of Ophel—the Ophel; i. e., the mound or eminence on the south-eastern slope of the temple mount—a ridge lying between the valleys Kidron and Tyropœon, called ‘the lower city’ (Josephus), he built much—having the same desire as his father to secure the defence of Jerusalem in every direction.

4. in the mountains of Judah, and in the forests he built castles and towers—i. e., in the elevated and wooded spots [צְרִיפִים, in the dense woods] (1 Sam. xxiii. 15; Ezek. xxxi. 3), where fortified cities could not be placed, he erected castles and towers.

5-9.—HE SUBDUES THE AMMONITES.

5. He fought also with the king of the Ammonites. This invasion he not only repelled, but, pursuing the Ammonites into their own territory, imposed on them a yearly tribute, which for two years they paid; but when Rezin, king of Syria, and Pekah, king of Israel, combined to attack the kingdom of Judah, they took the opportunity of revolting, and Jotham was too distracted by other matters to attempt the re-conquest (see on 2 Ki. xv. 37).

CHAP. XXVIII. 1-21.—AHAZ, REIGNING WICKEDLY, IS AFFLICTED BY THE SYRIANS.

1. Ahaz was twenty years old—(see on 2 Ki. xvi. 1-4.) This prince, discarding the principles and example of his excellent father, early betrayed a strong bias to idolatry. He ruled with an arbitrary and absolute authority, and not as a theocratic sovereign; he not only forsook the temple of God, but embraced first the symbolic worship established in the sister kingdom, and afterwards the gross idolatry practised by the Canaanites.

5. the Lord . . . delivered him into the hand of the king of Syria. This verse, without alluding

delivered into the hand of the king of Israel, who smote him with a great slaughter. For ²Pekah the son of Remaliah slew in Judah an hundred and twenty thousand in one day, *which were* all ³valiant men; because they had forsaken the LORD God of their fathers. And Zichri, a mighty man of Ephraim, slew Maaseiah the king's son, and Azrikam the governor of the house, and Elkanah *that was* ⁴next to the king. And the children of Israel carried away captive of their ⁵brethren two hundred thousand, women, sons, and daughters, and took also away much spoil from them, and brought the spoil to Samaria.

9 But a prophet of the LORD was there, whose name *was* Oded: and he went out before the host that came to Samaria, and said unto them, Behold, ⁶because the LORD God of your fathers was wroth with Judah, he hath delivered them into your hand, and ye have slain them in a rage *that reacheth* ⁷up unto heaven. And now ye purpose to keep under the children of Judah and Jerusalem for bondmen ⁸and bondwomen unto you: *but are there* not with ⁹you, even with you, sins against the LORD your God? Now hear me therefore, and deliver the captives again, which ye have taken captive of your brethren: ¹⁰for the fierce wrath of the LORD *is* upon you. Then certain of the heads of the children of Ephraim, Azariah the son of Johanan, Berechiah the son of Meshillemoth, and Jehizkiah the son of Shallum, and Amasa the son of Hadlai, stood up against them that came from the war, and said unto them, Ye shall not bring in the captives hither: for whereas we have offended against the LORD *already*, ye intend to ¹¹add *more* to our sins and to our trespass: for our trespass is great, and *there is* fierce wrath against Israel. So the armed men left the captives and the spoil before the princes and all the congregation. And the men which were expressed by name rose up, and took the captives, and with the spoil clothed all that were naked among them, and arrayed them, and shod them, and ¹²gave them to eat and to

B. C. 741.
² Ki. 15. 27.
 Isa. 9. 21.
³ sons of
 valour.
⁴ Josh. 23. 16.
 Jer. 2. 19.
⁵ the second
 to the
 king.
⁶ ch. 11. 4.
⁷ Ps. 69. 26.
 Isa. 10. 5.
 Isa. 47. 6.
 Eze. 25. 12,
 15.
 Eze. 20. 2.
 Obad. 10.
 Zech. 1. 15.
⁸ Gen. 4. 10.
 Ezra 9. 6.
 Rev. 18. 5.
⁹ Lev. 25. 59.
¹⁰ Jer. 25. 29.
 Rom. 12. 20,
 21.
 1 Pet. 4. 17,
 18.
¹¹ Matt. 5. 7.
 Matt. 7. 2.
 Jas. 2. 13.
¹² Num. 32. 14.
 Josh. 22. 17.
¹³ 2 Ki. 6. 22.
 Fro. 25. 21,
 22.
 Luke 6. 27.
 Rom. 12. 20.

to the formation of a confederacy between the Syrian and Israelitish kings to invade the kingdom of Judah, or relating the commencement of the war in the close of Jotham's reign (2 Ki. xv. 37), gives the issue only of some battles that were fought in the early part of the campaign. and they smote him . . . he was also delivered—*i. e.*, his army, for Ahaz was not personally included in the number either of the slain or the captives. They attempted to besiege him in Jerusalem, which, however, they found impregnable, and raised the siege; but he ventured to pursue the retreating enemy, who resisted him on the plains north of the city in a pitched battle, and totally defeated his troops. The slaughter of 120,000 in one day was a terrible calamity, which, it is expressly said (*v.* 6), was inflicted as a judgment on Judah, "because they had forsaken the Lord God of their fathers." Among the slain were some persons of distinction. 7. Maaseiah the king's son. *Serome* ('Quest. Hebraicæ'), on this passage, renders the words "the king's son," "the seed of Molech," or the seed royal. The sons of Ahaz being too young to take part in a battle, this individual must have been a younger son of the late king Jotham. Azrikam the governor of the house—*i. e.*, the palace. and Elkanah that was next to the king—*i. e.*, the vizier or prime minister (Gen. xli. 40; Esth. x. 3). These were all cut down on the field by Zichri, an Israelitish warrior, or, as some think, ordered to be put to death after the battle. A vast number of captives also fell into the power of the conquerors; and an equal division of war prisoners being made between the allies, they were sent off under a military escort to the respective capitals of Syria and

Israel. 8. the children of Israel carried away captive of their brethren two hundred thousand. These captives included a great number of women, boys, and girls—a circumstance which creates a presumption that the Hebrews, like other Orientals, were accompanied in the war by multitudes of non-combatants (see on Judg. vi. 8). The report of these "brethren" being brought as captives to Samaria excited general indignation among the better disposed inhabitants; and Oded, a prophet, accompanied by the princes (*v.* 12, compared with *v.* 14), went out, as the escort was approaching, to prevent the disgraceful outrage of introducing such prisoners into the city. The officers of the squadron were, of course, not to blame; they were simply doing their military duty in conducting those prisoners of war to their destination. But Oded clearly showed that the Israelitish army had gained the victory, not by the superiority of their arms, but in consequence of the Divine judgment against Judah; he forcibly exposed the enormity of the offence of keeping "their brethren" as slaves got in war; he protested earnestly against adding this great offence of unnatural and sinful cruelty (Lev. xxv. 43, 44; Mic. ii. 8, 9) to the already overwhelming amount of their own national sins; and such was the effect of his spirited remonstrance, and the opposing tide of popular feeling, that "the armed men left the captives and the spoil before the princes and all the congregation."

15. the men which were expressed by name rose up. These were either the "heads of the children of Ephraim" (mentioned in *v.* 12), or some other leading individuals chosen for the benevolent office. Under their kindly superintendence, the

drink, and anointed them, and carried all the feeble of them upon asses, and brought them to Jericho, the city of palm trees, to their brethren: then they returned to Samaria.

16 At that time did king Ahaz send unto the kings of Assyria to help him. For again the Edomites had come and smitten Judah, and carried away captives. The Philistines also had invaded the cities of the low country, and of the south of Judah, and had taken Beth-shemesh, and Ajalon, and Gederoth, and Shocho with the villages thereof, and Timnah with the villages thereof, Gimzo also and the villages thereof: and they dwelt there. For the LORD brought Judah low because of Ahaz king of Israel; for he made Judah naked, and transgressed sore against the LORD. And Tilgath-pilneser king of Assyria came unto him, and distressed him, but strengthened him not. For Ahaz took away a portion out of the house of the LORD, and out of the house of the king, and of the princes, and gave it unto the king of Assyria: but he helped him not.

22 And in the time of his distress did he trespass yet more against the LORD: this is that king Ahaz. For he sacrificed unto the gods of Damascus, which smote him: and he said, Because the gods of the kings of Syria help them, therefore will I sacrifice to them, that they may help me. But they were the ruin of him, and of all Israel. And Ahaz gathered together the vessels of the house of God, and cut in pieces the vessels of the house of God, and shut up the doors of the house of the LORD, and he made him altars in every corner of Jerusalem. And in every several city of Judah he made high places to burn incense unto other gods, and provoked to anger the LORD God of his fathers.

26 Now the rest of his acts and of all his ways, first and last, behold,

B. C. 711.
 Deut 31. 3.
 Judg. 1. 16.
 2 Ki. 16. 7.
 Isa. 7. 1-2, 17.
 Lev. 26. 18.
 a captivity.
 Josh. 15. 22.
 Eze. 16. 27, 57.
 ch. 21. 2.
 Ex. 32. 25.
 Rev. 3. 17.
 2 Ki. 16. 29.
 2 Ki. 16. 7-9.
 Isa. 7. 20.
 Isa. 1. 5.
 Jer. 6. 3.
 Eze. 21. 13.
 Hos. 5. 15.
 Rev. 16. 11.
 ch. 25. 14.
 Darnesek.
 Jer. 44. 17, 18.
 ch. 29. 3, 7.
 Or, to offer.
 2 Ki. 16. 19, 20.
 ch. 20. 34.
 ch. 27. 7-9.

prisoners were not only released, but out of the spoils were comfortably relieved with food and clothing, and conveyed as far as Jericho on their way back to their own homes. This is a beautiful incident, and full of interest, as showing that even at this period of national decline there were not a few who stedfastly adhered to the law of God.

16. At that time did king Ahaz send unto the kings of Assyria—"kings," the plural for the singular, which in many ancient versions is found. "At that time" refers to the period of Ahaz's great distress, when, after a succession of defeats, he retreated within the walls of Jerusalem, whither, either in the same or a subsequent campaign, the Syrian and Israelitish allies marched to besiege him (see on 2 Ki. xvi. 7-9). Though delivered from this danger, other enemies infested his dominions both on the south and the west. 17. again the Edomites had come. This invasion must have been after Rezin (at the beginning of the late Syro-Israelitish war) had released that people from the yoke of Judah (ch. xv. 11: cf. 2 Ki. xvi. 6; Isa. vii., viii., ix., relating to this period). 18. Gederoth—on the Philistine frontier (Josh. xv. 41). Shocho—or Socah (Josh. xv. 35), now Shuweikeh, a town in the valley of Judah (see on 1 Sam. xvii. 1). Gimzo—now Jimzu, a little east of Ludd (Lydda) (*Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' iii., p. 56). All these disasters, by which the "Lord brought Judah low," was because of Ahaz, king of Israel (Judah) (see ch. xxi. 2; xxiv. 16; xxviii. 27), who "made Judah naked, and transgressed sore against the Lord." 20. Tilgath-pilneser . . . distressed him, but strengthened him not—i. e., notwithstanding the temporary relief which Tilgath-pilneser afforded him by the conquest of Damascus and the slaughter of Rezin (2 Ki. xvi. 9), little advantage resulted from

it, for Tilgath-pilneser spent the winter in voluptuous revelry at Damascus; and the connection formed with the Assyrian king was eventually a source of new and greater calamities and humiliation to the kingdom of Judah (v. 2, 3). "The expression, "distressed him, but strengthened him not," should probably be understood simply of the exhausting effects of the tribute payments, and not of any failure of the Assyrian king to perform his compact relating to the Syro-Israelitish invasion. The silence of the Chronicles as to the aid given on that occasion is remarkable, and not easy to explain. Possibly the chronicler deemed it but of little worth, seeing that, after all, it had proved unable to save either Ahaz from further transgression or his kingdom from the hostile inroads of his bitterest enemies' (*Vance Smith*, 'Prophecies relating to the Assyrians,' p. 27). The unhappy case of Judah, after Ahaz had invoked the aid of the Assyrians, is paralleled in our early history by the Britons invoking the Saxons against the Scots and Picts. The Saxons did come and help them in repelling the northern invaders, but they remained masters of the country.

22-27.—HIS IDOLATRY IN HIS DISTRESS.
 22. in the time of his distress did he trespass yet more. This infatuated king surrendered himself to the influence of idolatry, and exerted his royal authority to extend it, with the intensity of a passion, with the ignorance and servile fear of a heathen (v. 23: cf. Jer. xlv. 16-18; Hos. ii. 5), and a ruthless defiance of God (2 Ki. xvi. 10-20). this is that king Ahaz. The original, 'this king Ahaz,' is more terse and pointed. 23. For he sacrificed unto the gods of Damascus. His superstitious mind led him to believe that he would, by doing them homage, obtain some share of the favours they had bestowed on the Syrians.

- 27 they *are* written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel. And Ahaz slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city, *even* in Jerusalem; but they brought him not into the sepulchres of the kings of Israel: and Hezekiah his son reigned in his stead.
- 29 HEZEKIAH "began to reign *when he was* five and twenty years old, and he reigned nine and twenty years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Abijah, the daughter ^b of Zechariah. And he did *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that David his father had done.
- 3 He, in the 'first year of his reign, in the first month, ^aopened the 4 doors of the house of the LORD, and repaired them. And he brought in the priests and the Levites, and gathered them together into the east 5 street, and said unto them, Hear me, ye Levites; 'sanctify now yourselves, and sanctify the house of the LORD God of your fathers, and carry 6 forth the ¹filthiness out of the holy *place*. For our fathers have trespassed, and done *that which was* evil in the eyes of the LORD our God, and have forsaken him, and have ⁷turned away their faces from the 7 habitation of the LORD, and ²turned *their* backs. Also ⁹they have shut up the doors of the porch, and put out the lamps, and have not burnt incense nor offered burnt offerings in the holy *place* unto the God of 8 Israel. Wherefore the ^hwrath of the LORD was upon Judah and Jerusalem, and he hath delivered them to ³trouble, to astonishment, and to 9 'hissing, as ye see with your eyes. For, lo, ⁴our fathers have fallen by the sword, and our sons and our daughters and our wives *are* in captivity 10 for this. Now *it is* in mine heart to make ^ha covenant with the LORD 11 God of Israel, that his fierce wrath may turn away from us. My sons, ⁴be not now negligent; for the LORD hath ⁴chosen you to stand before him, to serve him, and that ye should minister unto him, and ⁵burn incense.
- 12 'Then the Levites arose, Mahath the son of Amasai, and Joel the son of Azariah, of the sons of the Kohathites: and of the sons of Merari;

B. C. 723.
 CHAP. 29.
 a 2 Ki. 18. 1.
 1 Chr 3. 13.
 Isa 1. 1.
 Hos. 1. 1.
 b ch. 26. 5.
 c Pro. 8. 17.
 d ch. 28. 24.
 e 1 Chr. 15. 12.
 ch. 35. 6.
 1 That is,
 idols, etc.
 f Jer. 2. 27.
 Eze. 4. 15.
 2 given the
 neck.
 g ch. 23. 24.
 h ch. 24. 18.
 3 commo-
 tion.
 Deut. 25. 25.
 i 1 Ki. 9. 8.
 Jer. 15. 16.
 Jer. 19. 8.
 Jer. 25. 9.
 18.
 Jer. 29. 18.
 j ch. 25. 5, 6,
 8, 17.
 k ch. 15. 12.
 4 Or, be not
 now de-
 ceived.
 1 Cor. 6. 9.
 l Num. 3. 6.
 Num. 8. 14.
 Num. 15. 2.
 6.
 5 Or, offer
 sacrifice.

CHAP. XXIX. 1, 2.—HEZEKIAH'S GOOD REIGN.

1. Hezekiah began to reign, &c.—(see on 2 Ki. xviii. 1-3.) His mother's name, which, in the passage referred to, appears in an abridged form, is here given in full.

3-11.—HE RESTORES RELIGION.

3. in the first year of his reign, in the first month—not the first month after his accession to the throne, but in Nisan, the first month of the sacred year, the season appointed for the celebration of the passover. opened the doors of the house of the Lord—which had been closed up by his father (ch. xxviii. 24). and repaired them—or embellished them (cf. 2 Ki. xviii. 16). 4. the east street—the court of the priests, which fronted the eastern gate of the temple. Assembling the priests and Levites there, he enjoined them to set about the immediate purification of the temple. It does not appear that the order referred to the removal of idols, for objects of idolatrous homage could scarcely have been put there, seeing the doors had been shut up; but in its forsaken and desolate state the temple and its courts had been polluted by every kind of impurities. 6. our fathers have trespassed. Ahaz and the generation contemporary with him were specially meant, for they "turned away their faces from the habitation of the Lord;" and whether or not they turned east to the rising sun, they abandoned the worship of God. 7. they . . . shut up the doors of the porch—so that the sacred ritual was entirely discontinued. 8. Wherefore the wrath of the Lord was upon Judah and Jerusalem. This pious king

had the discernment to ascribe all the national calamities that had befallen the kingdom to the true cause—viz., apostasy from God. The country had been laid waste by successive wars of invasion, and its resources drained—many families mourned members of their household still suffering the miseries of foreign captivity—all their former prosperity and glory had fled—and to what was this painful and humiliating state of affairs to be traced, but the manifest judgment of God upon the kingdom for its sins? 10. Now it is in mine heart to make a covenant with . . . God. Convinced of the sin and bitter fruits of idolatry, Hezekiah intended to reverse the policy of his father, and to restore, in all its ancient purity and glory, the worship of the true God. His announcement of this resolution at the beginning of his reign attests his sincere piety, and it also proves the strength of his conviction that righteousness exalteth a nation; for, instead of waiting till his throne was consolidated, he devised measures of national reformation at the beginning of his reign, and vigorously faced all the difficulties which, in such a course, he had to encounter, after the people's habits had so long been moulded to idolatry. His intentions were first disclosed to this meeting of the priests and Levites—for the agency of these officials was to be employed in carrying them into effect.

12-36.—THE HOUSE OF GOD CLEANSSED.

12. Then the Levites arose. Fourteen chiefs undertook the duty of collecting and preparing their brethren for the important work of 'cleans-

Kish the son of Abdi, and Azariah the son of Jehalelel: and of the Ger-
 13 shonites; Joah the son of Zimnah, and Eden the son of Joah: and of
 the sons of Elizaphan; Shimri and Jeiel: and of the sons of Ashaph;
 14 Zechariah and Mattaniah: and of the sons of Heman; Jehiel and Shimei:
 15 and of the sons of Jeduthun; Shemaiah and Uzziel. And they gathered
 their brethren, and sanctified themselves, and came, according to the
 commandment of the king, ^oby the words of the LORD, ^mto cleanse the
 16 house of the LORD. And the priests went into ⁿthe inner part of the
 house of the LORD, to cleanse *it*, and brought out all the uncleanness that
 they found in the temple of the LORD into the court of the house of the
 LORD. And the Levites took *it*, to carry *it* out abroad into the brook
 17 Kidron. Now they began on the first *day* of the first month to sanctify,
 and on the eighth day of the month came they to the ^oporch of the LORD:
 so they sanctified the house of the LORD in eight days; and in the six-
 teenth day of the first month they made an end.
 18 Then they went in to Hezekiah the king, and said, We have cleansed
 all the house of the LORD, and the altar of burnt offering, with all the
 vessels thereof, and the showbread table, with all the vessels thereof.
 19 Moreover all the vessels, which king Ahaz in his reign did ^qcast away in
 his transgression, have we prepared and sanctified, and, behold, they *are*
 before the altar of the LORD.
 20 Then Hezekiah the king rose early, and gathered the rulers of the city,
 21 and went up to the house of the LORD. And they brought seven bullocks,
 and seven rams, and seven lambs, and seven he-goats, for a ^qsin offering
 for the kingdom, and for the sanctuary, and for Judah. And he com-
 manded the priests the sons of Aaron to offer *them* on the altar of the
 22 LORD. So they killed the bullocks, and the priests received the blood,
 and ^rsprinkled *it* on the altar: likewise, when they had killed the rams,
 they sprinkled the blood upon the altar: they killed also the lambs, and
 23 they sprinkled the blood upon the altar. And they brought ^rforth the
 he-goats for the sin offering before the king and the congregation; and
 24 they laid their ^shands upon them: and the priests killed them, and they
 made reconciliation ^twith their blood upon the altar, ^uto make an atone-
 ment for all Israel: for the king commanded *that* the burnt offering and

B. C. 726.
^o Or, in the business of the LORD, ch 31. 12.
^m 1 Chr. 27. 23.
ⁿ Ex. 26, 33, 41.
¹ Ki. 6 19, 20, 27.
 That is, the sanctuary, and holy of holies. ch. 3. 8. ch. 5. 7.
² Heb. 9. 28, 23 21.
³ 1 Ki. 6. 3. 1 Chr. 28. 11. ch. 3. 4.
⁴ ch 28, 34.
⁵ Lev. 4. 3, 11. Num 15. 22. 21.
⁶ 2 Cor. 5. 21.
⁷ Lev. 1. 5. Lev. 4. 7. Lev. 8. 14. 15, 19, 24. Lev. 13. 34. Heb. 9. 21, 22.
⁸ near.
⁹ Lev. 1. 4. Lev. 4. 15, 24.
¹⁰ Lev. 6. 3. Lev. 8. 15. Eze. 45. 15, 17.
¹¹ Lev. 14. 20. Col. 1. 20.

ing the Lord's house.' Beginning with the outer courts—that of the priests and that of the people—the cleansing of these occupied eight days, after which they set themselves to purify the interior; but as the Levites were not allowed to enter within the walls of the temple, the priests brought all the sweepings out to the porch, where they were received by the Levites, and thrown into the brook Kidron. This took eight days more; and at the end of this period they repaired to the palace, and announced that not only had the whole of the sacred edifice, within and without, undergone a thorough purification, but all the vessels which the late king had taken away and applied to a common use in his palace had been restored "and sanctified." 19. did cast away [Septuagint, ἀ ἐπίταυεν]—which he had profaned or defiled.

20. Then Hezekiah the king rose early, and gathered the rulers of the city. His anxiety to enter upon the expiatory service with all possible despatch, now that the temple had been properly prepared for it, prevented his summoning the whole representatives of Israel. The requisite number of victims having been provided, and the officers of the temple having sanctified themselves according to the directions of the law, the priests were appointed to offer sacrifices of atonement successively "for the kingdom"—i. e., for the sins

of the king and his predecessors; "for the sanctuary"—i. e., for the sins of the priests themselves, and for the desecration of the temple; "and for Judah"—i. e., for the people, who, by their voluntary consent, were involved in the guilt of the national apostasy. When the nation had ignorantly fallen into the sin of idolatry, the sacrifice of a single bullock or goat was prescribed, with the addition of another bullock as a burnt offering. But when the apostasy had been general and aggravated, involving not only the neglect of the appointed rites of religion, but also the adoption of foreign and heathen observances, both a bullock and a goat [on the use of the word קִבְּרִי, he-goat, see 'Introduction' to Chronicles] were required as particular sacrifices, with the superadded bullock for the burnt offering, which betokened the revival of the ancient ritual. Thus Hezekiah, on re-opening the temple after it had been for some time closed and many foreign superstitions introduced, offered for the two offences an expiating sacrifice of bullocks and goats. Animals of the kinds used in sacrifice were offered by sevens—that number indicating completeness. The Levites were ordered to praise God in their several choirs, divided into different classes, amongst which there seems to have been a female choir (see ch I Chr. xxv. 5); and with musical instruments, which, although not originally used in the tabernacle, had been enlisted

25 the sin offering *should be made* for all Israel. And ^vhe set the Levites in the house of the LORD with cymbals, with psalteries, and with harps, ^waccording to the commandment of David, and of ^xGad the king's seer, and Nathan the prophet: ^yfor *so was* the commandment ^zof the LORD

26 ⁹by his prophets. And the Levites stood with the instruments ²of David,

27 and the priests with ^athe trumpets. And Hezekiah commanded to offer the burnt offering upon the altar. And ¹⁰when the burnt offering began, ^bthe song of the LORD began *also* with the trumpets, and with the

28 ¹¹instruments *ordained* by David king of Israel. And all the congregation worshipped, and the ¹²singers sang, and the trumpeters sounded: *and* all

29 *this continued* until the burnt offering was finished. And when they had made an end of offering, ^cthe king and all that were ¹³present with him bowed themselves, and worshipped. Moreover Hezekiah the king and the princes commanded the Levites to sing praise unto the LORD with the words of David, and of Asaph the seer: and they sang ^dpraises with gladness, and they bowed their heads and worshipped.

31 Then Hezekiah answered and said, Now ye have ¹⁴consecrated yourselves unto the LORD, come near and bring sacrifices and thank ^eofferings into the house of the LORD. And the congregation brought in sacrifices and thank offerings; and as many as were of a free heart, burnt offerings.

32 And the number of the burnt offerings, which the congregation brought, was threescore and ten bullocks, an hundred rams, *and* two hundred

33 lambs: all these *were* for a burnt offering to the LORD. And the consecrated things *were* six hundred oxen and three thousand sheep. But the priests were too few, so that they could not flay all the burnt offerings; wherefore ^ftheir brethren the Levites ¹⁵did help them, till the work was ended, and until the *other* priests had sanctified themselves: ^gfor the Levites *were* more ^hupright in heart to sanctify themselves than the

35 priests. And also the burnt offerings *were* in abundance, with ⁱthe fat of the peace offerings, and ^jthe drink offerings for *every* burnt offering.

36 So the service of the house of the LORD was set in order. And Hezekiah rejoiced, and all the people, that God had prepared the people: for ^kthe thing was *done* suddenly.

B. C. 721.
^v 1 Chr. 16. 4.
^w 1 Chr. 25. 6.
^x 1 Chr. 23. 5.
^y 1 Chr. 25. 1.
^z ch. 8. 14.
¹ 2 Sam. 24. 11.
² ch. 37. 12.
^a by the hand of the LORD.
^b by the hand of.
^c 1 Chr. 23. 5.
^d Amos 6. 5.
^e Num. 10. 8.
^f 1 Chr. 15. 24.
^g 1 Chr. 16. 6.
^h in the time.
ⁱ ch. 21. 18.
^j bands of instruments.
^k song
^l ch. 10. 18.
^m 13 found.
ⁿ Ps. 100. 1.
^o Ps. 101. 2.
^p Or, filled your heart.
^q ch. 13. 9.
^r Lev. 7. 12.
^s ch. 35. 11.
^t strength-ened them.
^u ch. 30. 3.
^v Ps. 7. 10.
^w Lev. 3. 16.
^x Num. 15. 5.
^y 7. 10.
^z Ps. 118. 27.
 Acts 2. 41.

in the service of Divine worship by David, on the advice of the prophets Gad and Nathan, as well calculated to animate the devotions of the people. At the close of the special services of the occasion—viz., the offering of atonement sacrifices—the king and all civic rulers who were present joined in the worship. A grand anthem was sung (v. 30) by the choir, consisting of some of the Psalms of David and Asaph (the name of Asaph, as a writer of sacred songs, is still famous in the East, particularly in Affghanistan and the valley of Cashmere: *Wolff's 'Missionary Researches,'* p. 493), and a great number of thank offerings, praise offerings, and free-will burnt offerings were presented at the invitation of the king. Thus, at the restoration of the Divine service in the time of Hezekiah, the sacred odes or hymns of David were publicly recognized as part of the divinely-appointed worship of Zion. But, as *Saalschutz* observes ('*Archæol. der Hebr.*' i., p. 299), no notice is taken of women with timbrels, and dances (see on 2 Sam. vi. 14, 20, 22), so that this element was discontinued after David's death.

31. Hezekiah . . . said, Now ye have consecrated yourselves unto the Lord, come near. This address was made to the priests, as being now, by the sacrifice of the expiation offerings, anew consecrated to the service of God, and qualified to resume the functions of their sacred office (Exod. xxviii. 41; xxix. 32). the congregation brought in—i. e., the body of civic rulers pre-

sent. 34. the priests were too few . . . wherefore their brethren the Levites did help them. The skins of beasts intended as peace offerings might be taken off by the officers, because in such cases the carcass was not wholly laid upon the altar; but animals meant for burnt offerings, which were wholly consumed by fire, could be flayed by the priests alone, not even Levites being allowed to touch them, except, as here, in cases of unavoidable necessity (ch. xxxv. 11). The duty being assigned by the law to the priests (Lev. i. 6), was construed by consuetudinary practice as an exclusion of all others not connected with the Aaronic family. for the Levites were more upright in heart to sanctify themselves than the priests—i. e., displayed greater alacrity than the priests. This service was hastened on by the irrepressible solicitude of the king; and whether it was that many of the priests being absent in the country, had not arrived in time—whether, from the long interruption of the public duties, some of them had relaxed in their wonted attention to personal cleanliness, and had many preparations to make—or whether, from some having participated in the idolatrous services introduced by Ahaz, they were backward in repairing to the temple—a reflection does seem to be cast upon their order as dilatory and not universally ready for duty (cf. ch. xxx. 15). Thus was the newly-consecrated temple re-opened, to the no small joy of the pious king and all the people.

30 AND Hezekiah sent to all Israel and Judah, and wrote letters also to Ephraim and Manasseh, that they should come to the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, to keep the passover unto the LORD God of Israel. For the king had taken counsel, and his princes, and all the congregation in Jerusalem, to keep the passover in the ^asecond month. For they could not keep it ^bat that time, ^cbecause the priests had not sanctified themselves sufficiently, neither had the people gathered themselves together to Jerusalem. And the thing ¹pleased the king and all the congregation. 5 So they established a decree to make proclamation throughout all Israel, from Beer-sheba even to Dan, that they should come to keep the passover unto the LORD God of Israel at Jerusalem: for they had not done *it* of a long time in such sort as it was written. 6 So the posts went with the letters ²from the king and his princes throughout all Israel and Judah, and according to the commandment of the king, saying, Ye children of Israel, ^aturn again unto the LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, and he will return to the remnant of you that are escaped out of the hand of ^cthe kings of Assyria. And be not ye ^jlike your fathers, and like your brethren, which trespassed against the LORD God of their fathers, *who* therefore ^ggave them up to desolation, as ye see. Now ³be ye not ^hstiff-necked, as your fathers *were*, but ⁴yield yourselves unto the LORD, and enter into his sanctuary, which he hath sanctified for ever; and serve the LORD your God, ⁱthat the fierceness of his wrath may turn away from you. For if ye turn again unto the LORD, your brethren and your children *shall find* ^jcompassion before them that lead them captive, so that they shall come again into this land: for the LORD your God *is* gracious ^kand merciful, and will not turn away *his* face from you, if ye ^lreturn unto him.

B. C. 721.
 CHAP. 30.
^a Num 9. 10.
^b Ex. 12. 6.
^c ch. 29. 4.
¹ was right in the eyes of the king.
² from the hand
^d 1 Sam 7. 3.
 4.
 Isa. 55. 6, 7.
 Hos. 6. 1.
 Hos. 12. 0.
 Hos. 14. 1.
 Joel 2. 13.
 Mal. 3. 7.
 Jas. 4. 8.
^e 2 Ki 15. 19.
 ch. 28. 20.
^f Eze. 20. 18.
^g ch. 29. 8.
^h harden not your necks.
ⁱ Deut. 10. 16.
^j give the hand.
^k ch. 29. 10.
^l Lev 26. 40.
^m Ex. 34. 6.
 Mic. 7. 18.
ⁿ Isa. 55. 7.

CHAP. XXX. 1-12.—HEZEKIAH PROCLAIMS A PASSOVER.

1. Hezekiah sent to all . . . Judah, and wrote letters also to Ephraim and Manasseh. The names of these leading tribes are used for the whole kingdom of Israel. It being judged impossible, however, that the temple, the priests, and people could be all duly sanctified at the usual time appointed for the anniversary—viz., the fourteenth day of the first month (Nisan)—it was resolved, instead of postponing the feast till another year, to observe it on the fourteenth day of the second month: a liberty which, being in certain circumstances (Num. ix. 6-13) granted to individuals, might, it was believed, be allowed to the whole people. This postponement, however, is no proof that inward holiness was an indispensable qualification to that solemnity. For "sanctified," in this historical connection, means nothing more than being free from ceremonial uncleanness, which many bad men might, and many good men might not, be, come to . . . Jerusalem, to keep the passover. This great religious festival had not been regularly observed by the Hebrews in their national capacity for a long time, in consequence both of the division of the kingdom and the many disorders that had followed that unhappy event. Hezekiah longed extremely to see its observance revived; and the expression of his wishes having received a hearty response from the princes and chief men of his own kingdom, the preparatory steps were taken for a renewed celebration of the national solemnity. 5. they established a decree to make proclamation throughout all Israel, &c. Hezekiah's proclamation was, of course, authoritative in his own kingdom, but it could not have been made and circulated in all the towns and villages of the neighbouring kingdom without the concurrence, or at least the permission, of the

Israelitish sovereign. Hoshea, the reigning king, is described as, though evil in some respects, yet more favourably disposed to religious liberty than any of his predecessors since the separation of the kingdom. This is thought to be the meaning of the mitigating clause in his character (2 Ki. xvii. 2). It may be added that the great cause of religious schism between the kingdoms of Israel and Judah had been removed by the transportation of the golden calves—first, that of Dan by Tiglath-pileser, and, secondly, that of Beth-el by Shalmanezzer; and that in consequence, multitudes of the Israelites had resumed their annual pilgrimages to Jerusalem a considerable time before the issue of Hezekiah's proclamation.

6. the posts [קָרָאִים]—runners, or royal messengers, who were taken from the king's body-guard (ch. xxiii. 1, 2). Each, well mounted, had a certain number of miles to traverse, and, having performed his course, was relieved by another, who had to scour an equal extent of ground; so that, as the government messengers were despatched in all directions, public edicts were speedily diffused throughout the country. The proclamation of Hezekiah was followed by a verbal address from himself, piously urging the duty, and setting forth the advantages, of a return in a spirit of true penitence to the pure faith and institutions which God had delivered to their ancestors through Moses. the remnant of you, that are escaped out of the hand of the kings of Assyria. This implies that several expeditions against Israel had already been made by Assyrian invaders:—by Pul (2 Ki. xv. 19), but none of the people were then removed; at a later period by Tiglath-pileser, when it appears that numbers among the tribes east of Jordan (1 Chr. v. 26), and afterwards in the northern parts of Israel (2 Ki. xv. 20), were carried into foreign exile. The invasion of Salmaneser cannot

- 10 So the posts passed from city to city through the country of Ephraim and Manasseh even unto Zebulun: but ^mthey laughed them to scorn, and 11 mocked them. Nevertheless ⁿdivers of Asher and Manasseh and of 12 Zebulun humbled themselves, and came to Jerusalem. Also in Judah ^othe hand of God was to give them one heart to do the commandment of the king and of the princes, ^pby the word of the LORD.
- 13 And there assembled at Jerusalem much people to keep the feast of 14 unleavened bread in the second month, a very great congregation. And they arose, and took away ^qthe altars that *were* in Jerusalem, and all the altars for incense took they away, and cast *them* into the brook Kidron.
- 15 Then they killed the passover on the fourteenth *day* of the second month: and the priests and the Levites were ^rashamed, and sanctified themselves, 16 and brought in the burnt offerings into the house of the LORD. And they stood in ^stheir place after their manner, according to the law of Moses the man of God: the priests sprinkled the blood, *which they received* of the hand of the Levites:
- 17 For *there were* many in the congregation that were not sanctified: ^ttherefore the Levites had the charge of the killing of the passovers for 18 every one *that was* not clean, to sanctify *them* unto the LORD. For a multitude of the people, *even* many of Ephraim, and Manasseh, Issachar, and Zebulun, had not cleansed themselves, yet ^udid they eat the passover otherwise than it was written: but Hezekiah prayed for them, saying, 19 The good LORD pardon every one *that* ^vprepareth his heart to seek God, the LORD God of his fathers, though *he be* not *cleansed* according to the 20 purification of the sanctuary. And the LORD hearkened to Hezekiah, and ^whealed the people.
- 21 And the children of Israel that were ^xpresent at Jerusalem kept ^ythe

B. C. 726.
^a ch. 6 16.
 Neh. 2. 19.
 Jer. 5. 12.
 Matt. 21 35
^b ch. 11. 11.
^c Ps. 110. 3.
 2 Cor. 3. 5.
 Phil. 2. 13.
 Heb. 13 21.
^d ch. 29. 25.
^e ch. 28. 21.
 Isa. 2. 17-21.
^f ch. 29. 34.
^g their standing.
^h ch. 29. 31.
ⁱ Ex. 12. 43.
^j ch. 19. 3.
 ch. 20. 33.
 Ezra 7. 10.
 Job 11. 13.
 Ps. 10. 17.
 Pro. 23. 6.
^k Ex. 15. 26.
 Ps. 103. 3.
 Jas. 5. 16.
^l found.
^m Ex. 12. 15.
 Ex. 17. 6.
 Lev. 23. 6.
 Luke 22. 1. 7.
 1 Cor. 5. 7. 8.

be alluded to, as it did not take place till the sixth year of Hezekiah's reign (2 Ki. xvii. 6; xviii. 9-12).

10. the posts passed from city to city. It is not surprising that after so long a discontinuance of the sacred festival, this attempt to revive it should, in some quarters, have excited ridicule and opposition; and, accordingly, among the tribes of Ephraim, Manasseh, and Zebulun, Hezekiah's messengers met with open insults and ill-usage (cf. Matt. xxii. 1-14). Numbers, however, in these very districts, as well as throughout the kingdom of the ten tribes generally, complied with the invitation; while in the kingdom of Judah there was one unanimous feeling of high expectation and pious delight. The concourse that repaired to Jerusalem on the occasion was very great, and the occasion was ever after regarded as one of the greatest passovers that had ever been celebrated.

13-27.—THE ASSEMBLY DESTROY THE ALTARS OF IDOLATRY.

14. they arose and took away the altars that were in Jerusalem. As a necessary preparation for the right observance of the approaching solemnity, the removal of the altars was resolved upon, which Ahaz had erected in the city (ch. xxviii. 24); for, as being the people of God, the Hebrews were bound to extirpate all traces of idolatry; and it was a happy sign and pledge of the influence of the Spirit pervading the minds of the people when they voluntarily undertook this important preliminary work. 15. the priests and the Levites were ashamed. Though the Levites are associated in this statement, the priests were principally referred to: those of them who had been dilatory or negligent in sanctifying themselves (ch. xxix. 34) were put to the blush and stimulated to their duty by the greater alacrity and zeal of the people. 16. the priests sprinkled

the blood, which they received of the hand of the Levites. This was a deviation from the established rules and practices in presenting the offerings of the temple; and the reason was, that numbers present on the occasion having not sanctified themselves, the Levites slaughtered the paschal victims (see on ch. xxxv. 5) for every one that was unclean; while at other times the heads of families killed the lambs themselves, the priests receiving the blood from their hands and presenting it on the altar. The practice seems to have been introduced after the erection of the temple—when the people had to kill the passover “in the court of the temple”—of taking some of the blood and sprinkling it upon the altar; but it was not observed at the first celebration of the passover in Egypt, nor the second in the Sinaitic wilderness; and it nowhere appears that there was any command laid upon the priests to that effect (see on ch. xxxv. 11). Multitudes of the Israelites, especially from certain tribes (*v.* 18), were in this unsanctified state, and yet they ate the passover—an exceptional feature, and one opposed to the law (Num. ix. 6; cf. *Josephus*, ‘Jewish Wars,’ b. vi., ch. ix., sec. 3); but this exception was allowed in answer to Hezekiah's prayer (*v.* 18-20).

20. the Lord . . . healed the people. We imagine the whole affair to have been the following: in consequence of their transgressions they had cause to fear disease and even death (Lev. xv. 31). Hezekiah prayed for the nation, which was on the point of being diseased, and might therefore be regarded as sick already (*Bertheau*). But the statement may be considered as expressed in metaphorical language, and meaning that the people were restored from their miserable state of guilt and apostasy to repentance and reformation of life.

21. the children of Israel . . . kept the feast.

feast of unleavened bread seven days with great gladness: and the Levites and the priests praised the LORD day by day, *singing* with loud instruments unto the LORD. And Hezekiah spake comfortably unto all the Levites that taught the good knowledge of the LORD: and they did eat throughout the feast seven days, offering peace offerings, and making confession to the LORD God of their fathers.

And the whole assembly took counsel to keep other seven days: and they kept other seven days with gladness. For Hezekiah king of Judah did give to the congregation a thousand bullocks and seven thousand sheep; and the princes gave to the congregation a thousand bullocks and ten thousand sheep: and a great number of priests sanctified themselves.

And all the congregation of Judah, with the priests and the Levites, and all the congregation that came out of Israel, and the strangers that came out of the land of Israel, and that dwelt in Judah, rejoiced. So there was great joy in Jerusalem: for since the time of Solomon the son of David king of Israel there was not the like in Jerusalem. Then the priests the Levites arose and blessed the people: and their voice was heard, and their prayer came up to his holy dwelling place, even unto heaven.

NOW when all this was finished, all Israel that were present went out to the cities of Judah, and brake the images in pieces, and cut down the groves, and threw down the high places and the altars out of all Judah and Benjamin, in Ephraim also and Manasseh, until they had utterly destroyed them all. Then all the children of Israel returned, every man to his possession, into their own cities.

And Hezekiah appointed the courses of the priests and the Levites after their courses, every man according to his service, the priests and Levites for burnt offerings and for peace offerings, to minister, and to

B. C. 726.
 7 instruments of strength.
 8 to the heart of all, etc.
 Isa. 40, 2.
 2 Deut. 33, 10.
 ch. 17, 9.
 ch. 31, 3.
 2 Tim. 4, 2.
 10 Ezra 10, 11.
 1 Ki. 8, 65.
 9 lifted up, or, offered.
 ch. 31, 7, 8.
 ch. 29, 34.
 6 vers. 11, 13.
 c Num. 6, 23.
 10 the habitation of his holiness.
 Ps. 68, 5.
 Isa. 57, 15.
 Isa. 66, 1.
 CHAP. 31.
 1 found.
 a 2 Ki. 18, 4.
 2 statues.
 ch. 30, 14.
 3 until to make an end.
 b 1 Chr. 23, 6.
 1 Chr. 24, 1.
 c 1 Chr. 23, 30.

The time appointed by the law for the continuance of the feast was seven days; but in consequence of its having been allowed to fall so long into desuetude, they doubled the period of celebration, and kept it fourteen days with unabated satisfaction and joy, materials for the additional sacrificial meals, amounting to 2,000 bullocks and 17,000 sheep, being supplied by the munificence of the king and the princes. There would be more even than those mentioned; for the general law at all the great festivals was, none should appear before the Lord empty (Exod. xxiii. 15; Deut. xvi. 16). [These private and voluntary offerings were called פָּדוּתָא, a festival.]

22. Hezekiah spake comfortably unto all the Levites that taught the good knowledge of the Lord. It was quite in accordance with the character of this good king to encourage the Levites in the work of religious instruction, and they did eat throughout the feast seven days [פָּדוּתָא]—and they did eat the festival seven days. [In like manner the Septuagint has *καὶ συνετέλεσαν τὴν ἑορτὴν πῶν ἀξίμων ἐπτά ἡμέρας*, and they fulfilled (observed) the festival of unleavened bread seven days.]

24. a great number of priests sanctified themselves—so that there would be a sufficient number of hands for the additional services. 26. since the time of Solomon . . . there was not the like in Jerusalem. The annual festivals, after the schism in the kingdom, seem to have decayed in regularity as well as magnificence of observance. 27. the priests . . . arose and blessed the people—(see on Num. vi. 23-27.)

CHAP. XXXI. 1-10.—THE PEOPLE FORWARD IN DESTROYING IDOLATRY.

1. all Israel . . . present went out to the cities of Judah. The solemnities of this paschal season left a deep and salutary impression on the minds of the assembled worshippers; attachment to the ancient institutions of their country was extensively revived; ardour in the service of God animated every bosom; and, under the impulse of the devout feelings inspired by the occasion, they took measures at the close of the passover for extirpating idolatrous statues and altars out of every city, as at the beginning of the festival they had done in Jerusalem. Judah and Benjamin—denotes the southern kingdom. Ephraim also and Manasseh—refer to the northern kingdom. This unsparing demolition of the monuments of idolatry would receive all encouragement from the king and public authorities of the former; and the force of the popular movement was sufficient to effect the same results among the tribes of Israel, whatever opposition the power of Hoshea, or the inactives of some profane brethren, might have made. Thus the reign of idolatry being completely overthrown, and the pure worship of God re-established throughout the land, the people returned every one to their own home, in the confident expectation that, through the Divine blessing, they would enjoy a happy future of national peace and prosperity.

2. Hezekiah appointed the courses of the priests, &c. The king now turned his attention to provide for the orderly performance of the temple worship—arranging the priests and Levites in their courses, assigning to every one his proper place and functions—and issuing

3 give thanks, and to praise in the gates of the tents of the LORD. *He appointed* also the king's portion of his substance for the burnt offerings, *to wit*, for the morning and evening burnt offerings, and the burnt offerings for the sabbaths, and for the new moons, and for the set feasts, as *it is* written in the ^alaw of the LORD.

4 Moreover he commanded the people that dwelt in Jerusalem to give the ^cportion of the priests and the Levites, that they might be encouraged in ^dthe law of the LORD. And as soon as the commandment ^ecame abroad, the children of Israel brought in abundance ^fthe first-fruits of corn, wine, and oil, and ^ghoney, and of all the increase of the field; and

6 the tithe of all *things* brought them in abundantly. And *concerning* the children of Israel and Judah, that dwelt in the cities of Judah, they also brought in the tithe of oxen and sheep, and the ^htithe of holy things which were consecrated unto the LORD their God, and laid *them* ⁱby

7 heaps. In the third month they began to lay the foundation of the

8 heaps, and finished *them* in the seventh month. And when Hezekiah and the princes came and saw the heaps, they blessed the LORD, and ^jhis

9 people Israel. Then Hezekiah questioned with the priests and the

10 Levites concerning the heaps. And Azariah the chief priest of the house of Zadok answered him, and said, Since ^kthe people began to bring the offerings into the house of the LORD, we have had enough to eat, and have left plenty: for the LORD hath blessed his people; and that which is left *is* this great store.

11 Then Hezekiah commanded to prepare ^lchambers in the house of the

12 LORD; and they prepared *them*, and brought in the offerings and the tithes and the dedicated *things* faithfully: over ^mwhich Cononiah the

13 Levite was ruler, and Shimei his brother was the next. And Jehiel, and Azariah, and Nahath, and Asahel, and Jerimoth, and Jozabad, and Eliel, and Ismachiah, and Mahath, and Benaiah, were overseers ⁿunder the hand of Cononiah and Shimei his brother, at the commandment of

B. C. 726.
 d Num. 28. 1.
 Num. 29. 1.
 e Num. 18. 9.
 Neh. 13. 10.
 f 1 Cor. 9. 13.
 g Mal. 2. 7.
 h brake forth.
 i Ex. 22. 29.
 Ex. 23. 19.
 Lev. 25. 23.
 Num. 15. 12.
 Neh. 13. 12.
 Pro. 3. 9.
 Eze. 40. 40.
 Eze. 44. 30.
 1 Cor. 15. 20.
 Jas. 1. 18.
 k r. dates.
 l Lev. 27. 30.
 Deut. 11. 23.
 m heaps, heaps.
 n Deut. 33. 29.
 2 Sam. 6. 18.
 1 Ki. 8. 55, 56.
 ch. 6. 3.
 Ps. 33. 12.
 Ps. 144. 15.
 Hag. 2. 19.
 Mal. 3. 10.
 1 Tim. 4. 8.
 o Or, store-houses.
 p Neh. 13. 13.
 q at the hand.

edicts for the regular payment of those dues from which the revenues of the sanctuary were derived. in the gates of the tents of the Lord [שַׁעַר הַמִּשְׁכָּן]—in the gates of the camps of the Lord; i. e., the area inclosed by the outer wall of the temple. To set a proper example to his subjects, his own proportion was announced in the first instance, for to the king it belonged, out of his privy purse, to defray the expenses of the altar, both stated and occasional (Num. xxviii. 3, 4, 9, 11, 19); and in making this contribution from his own means, Hezekiah followed the course which David and Solomon had taken before him (see on ch. viii. 14; 1 Ki. ix. 25). Afterwards he re-appointed the people's dues to the temple; and from its being necessary to issue a royal mandate in reference to this matter, it appears that the sacred tribute had been either totally neglected, or as the idolatrous princes were known to appropriate it to their own purposes, the people had in many cases refused or evaded the duty. But in the improved state of public feeling Hezekiah's commandment was readily obeyed, and contributions of first-fruits and tithes were poured in with great liberality from all parts of Judah, as well as from Israel. The first-fruits, even of some articles of produce that were unfit for sacrifice (Lev. ii. 11), such as [שֶׁמֶן] honey (of bees (margin, dates: see on Gen. xliiii. 11), were appropriated to the priests (Num. xviii. 12, 13; Deut. xviii. 4); the tithes (Lev. xxvii. 31) were intended for the support of the whole Levitical tribe (Num. xviii. 8, 20, 24).

6. and laid them by heaps. The contributions began to be sent in shortly after the celebration

of the passover, which had taken place in the middle of the second month. Some time would elapse before the king's order reached all parts of the kingdom. The wheat harvest occurred in the third month, so that the sheaves of that grain, being presented before any other, formed "the foundation"—an under-layer in the corn stores of the temple; and the first-fruits of their land produce being successively sent in all the summer till the close of the fruit and vintage season—i. e., the seventh month—continued to raise heap upon heap. 9. Hezekiah questioned with the priests and the Levites concerning the heaps. The object of his enquiries was to ascertain whether the supplies afforded the prospect of a sufficient maintenance for the members of the sacred order. 10. Azariah . . . answered . . . we have had enough. This is probably the person mentioned, ch. xxvi. 17, and his reply was to the following purport:—There has been an abundant harvest, and a corresponding plenty in the incoming of first-fruits and tithes; the people have testified their gratitude to Him who has crowned the year with His goodness by their liberality toward His servants.

11-19.—HEZEKIAH APPOINTS OFFICERS TO DISPOSE OF THE TITHES.

11. Hezekiah commanded to prepare chambers—store-houses, granaries, or cellars. Either the old ones, which had been allowed through neglect to fall into decay, were to be repaired, or additional ones built. Private individuals brought their own first-fruits to the temple; but the tithes were levied by the Levites, who kept a faithful account of them in their several places of abode, and

- 14 Hezekiah the king, and Azariah the ruler of the house of God. And Kore the son of Imnah the Levite, the porter toward the east, *was* over the free-will offerings of God, to distribute the oblations of the LORD, and the ⁹most holy things. And ¹⁰next him *were* Eden, and Miniamin, and Jeshua, and Shemaiah, Amariah, and Shecaniah, in ⁴the cities of the priests, in *their* ¹¹set office, to give to their brethren by courses, as well
- 16 to the great as to the small: besides their genealogy of males, from three years old and upward, *even* unto every one that entereth into the house of the LORD, his ¹²daily portion for their service in their charges according to their courses; both to the genealogy of the priests by the house of their fathers, and the Levites from ^mtwenty years old and upward, in their
- 18 charges by their courses; and to the genealogy of all their little ones, their wives, and their sons, and their daughters, through all the congregation: for in their ¹³set office they sanctified themselves in holiness: also of the sons of Aaron the priests, *which were* in ⁿthe fields of the suburbs of their cities, in every several city, the men that were ^oexpressed by name, to give portions to all the males among the priests, and to all that were reckoned by genealogies among the Levites.
- 20 And thus did Hezekiah throughout all Judah, and ^pwrought *that which*
- 21 *was* good and right and truth before the LORD his God. And in every work that he began in the service of the house of God, and in the law, and in the commandments, to seek his God, he did *it* with all his heart, ^qand prospered.
- 32 AFTER ^athese things, and the establishment thereof, Sennacherib king of Assyria came, and entered into Judah, and encamped against the fenced cities, and thought ¹to win them for himself.
- 2 And when Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib was come, and that ²he was
- 3 purposed to fight against Jerusalem, he took counsel with his princes and his mighty men to stop the waters of the fountains which *were* without
- 4 the city: and they did help him. So there was gathered much people together, who stopped all the fountains, and the brook that ³ran through

B. C. 726.
⁹ holinesses of holinesses,
¹⁰ at his hand.
¹ Josh. 21. 9.
¹¹ Or, trust.
¹ Chr. 9. 22.
¹² for the things of the day upon his day.
^m 1 Chr. 23. 24, 27.
¹³ Cr. trust.
ⁿ Lev. 25. 34.
^o Num. 35. 2.
^o vers. 12-15.
^p 2 Ki. 20. 3.
² Ki. 22. 2.
² John 1. 47.
¹ Acts 24. 10.
¹ Thes. 2. 10.
^q Deut. 29. 9.
¹ Josh. 4. 7.
¹ Ps. 1. 5.
¹ Pro. 3. 9.
¹ Mal. 3. 10.
¹ Tim. 4. 8.
 CHAP. 32.
^a 2 Ki. 18. 13.
¹ Isa. 26. 1.
¹ to break them up.
² his face was to war.
³ overflowed

transmitted the allotted proportion to the priests. Officers were appointed to distribute equal rations to all in the cities of the priests who, from age or other reasons, could not repair to the temple. With the exception of children under three years of age—an exception made probably from their being considered unfit to receive solid food—lists were kept of the number and age of every male, of priests according to their fathers' house, and Levites from twenty years (see Num. vi. 3; xxviii. 24; 1 Chr. xxiii. 24). But, besides, provision was also made for their wives, daughters, and servants. 18. for in their set office they sanctified themselves. This is the reason assigned for providing for the wives and children out of the revenues of the sanctuary—that priests, withdrawing from those secular pursuits by which they might have maintained their households, devoted themselves entirely to the functions of the ministry.

20. 21.—HIS SINCERITY OF HEART.

20. Hezekiah . . . wrought that which was good and right. He displayed the qualities of a constitutional king, in restoring and upholding the ancient institutions of the kingdom, while his zealous and persevering efforts to promote the cause of true religion and the best interests of his subjects entitled him to be ranked with the most illustrious of his predecessors (2 Ki. xviii. 5).

CHAP. XXXII. 1-20.—SENNACHERIB INVADES JUDAH.

1. After these things, and the establishment thereof—*i. e.*, the restoration of the temple worship. The precise date is given, 2 Ki. xviii. 13. But on recovering the independence of his

country, Hezekiah had determined to refuse to pay the tribute which his father had bound himself to pay to Assyria. Sennacherib . . . entered into Judah, and encamped against the fenced cities. The whole land was ravaged; the strong fortresses of Ashdod (Isa. xx. 1) and Lachish had fallen; the siege of Libnah had commenced; when the king of Judah, doubting his ability to resist, sent to acknowledge his fault, and offer terms of submission by paying the tribute. The commencement of this Assyrian war was disastrous to Hezekiah (2 Ki. xviii. 13). But the misfortunes of the early period of the war are here passed over, as the historian hastens to relate the remarkable deliverance which God wrought for his kingdom of Judah.

2. when Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib . . . was purposed to fight against Jerusalem. An account of the means taken to fortify Jerusalem against the threatened siege is given only in this passage. The polluting or filling up of wells, and the altering of the course of rivers, is an old practice that still obtains in the wars of the East. Hezekiah's plan was to cover the fountain-heads, so that they might not be discovered by the enemy, and to carry the water by subterranean channels or pipes into the city—a plan which, while it would secure a constant supply to the inhabitants, would distress the besiegers, as the country all round Jerusalem was very destitute of water. 4. So there was gathered much people . . . who stopped all the fountains, and the brook that ran through the midst of the land [הַבְּרֶכַח הַיְשׁוּבָה]—the torrent

the midst of the land, saying, Why should the kings of Assyria come, and find much water? Also ^bhe strengthened himself, ^cand built up all the wall that was broken, and raised ^dit up to the towers, and another wall without, and repaired ^eMillo in the city of David, and made ^fdarts and shields in abundance. And he set captains of war over the people, and gathered them together to him in the street of the gate of the city, and ^gspake comfortably to them, saying, Be ^hstrong and courageous, ⁱbe not afraid nor dismayed for the king of Assyria, nor for all the multitude that ^jis with him: for ^kthere be more with us than with him: with him ^lis an arm of flesh; but ^mwith us is the LORD our God to help us; and to fight our battles. And the people ⁿrested themselves upon the words of Hezekiah king of Judah.

9 After ^othis did Sennacherib king of Assyria send his servants to Jerusalem, (but he ^phimself laid siege against Lachish, and all his ^qpower with him,) unto Hezekiah king of Judah, and unto all Judah that ^rwere at Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith Sennacherib king of Assyria, Whereon do ye trust, that ye abide ^sin the siege in Jerusalem? Doth not Hezekiah persuade you to give over yourselves to die by famine and by thirst, saying, The LORD our God shall deliver us out of the hand of the king of Assyria? Hath not the same Hezekiah taken away his high places and his altars, and commanded Judah and Jerusalem, saying, Ye shall worship before one altar, and burn incense upon it? Know ye not what I and my fathers have done unto all the people of ^tother lands? ^uwere the gods of the nations of those lands any ways able to deliver their lands out of mine hand? Who ^vwas there among all the gods of those nations that my fathers utterly destroyed, that could deliver his people out of mine hand, 15 that your God should be able to deliver you out of mine hand? Now therefore let not Hezekiah deceive you, nor persuade you on this manner, neither yet believe him: for no god of any nation or kingdom was able to deliver his people out of mine hand, and out of the hand of my fathers: 16 how much less shall your God deliver you out of mine hand? And his servants spake yet ^wmore against the LORD God, and against his servant Hezekiah.

17 He ^xwrote also letters to rail on the LORD God of Israel, and to speak

B C 13
 b Isa 22. 9,
 10.
 c ch. 25. 23.
 d 2 Sam 5. 9.
 e 1 Ki 9 24.
 f 4 Or, swords,
 or,
 weapons.
 g spike to
 their
 heart.
 h ch 33 21.
 i Is 40 2.
 j Deut. 31. 6.
 k Josh. 1. 6-9.
 l 1 Chr. 28. 10,
 20.
 m ch 20. 15.
 n 2 Ki. 6. 16.
 o Ps. 55. 18.
 p Jer. 17. 5.
 q 1 John 4. 4.
 r ch. 13. 12.
 s Ps. 18. 2.
 t Ps. 46. 7.
 u 11.
 v Ps. 118. 6.
 w Ps 144. 2.
 x Isa. 41. 10,
 13, 14.
 y Amos 5. 14.
 z Rom. 8. 31.
 a leaned.
 b 2 Ki. 18. 17.
 c 7 dominion.
 d Cr, in the
 strong
 hold.
 e 2 Ki 18. 32-
 35.
 f Ex 5. 2.
 g Dan. 3. 15.
 h John 19. 10.
 i 2 Ki. 19. 9.

that overflowed or was flooded (cf. Ps. xlvii. 4; Isa. viii. 6). 'Where these various fountains were, we have now no positive means of ascertaining; though Enrogel, and the spring now called the Virgin's Fount, may well be numbered amongst them. *Josephus* mentions the existence of various fountains without the city, but does not name any of them in this connection but Siloam. "The brook," however, is located with sufficient precision to enable us to trace it very definitely. We are told that "it ran through the midst of the land." Now, a stream, running through either the Kidron or Hinnom valley, could, in no proper sense, be said to run "through the midst of the land;" but one flowing through the true Gihon valley, and separating Akra and Zion from Bezetha, Moriah, and Ophel, as a stream once doubtless did, could, with peculiar propriety, be said to run *through the midst of the land* on which the (Holy) City was built. And that this is the correct meaning of the phrase is not only apparent from the force of circumstances, but is positively so declared in the Septuagint, where, moreover, it is called a "river," which, at least, implies a much larger stream than the Kidron, and comporting well with the marginal reading, where it is said to "overflow through the midst of the land." Previous to the interference of man, there was, no doubt, a very copious stream that gushed forth in the upper portion of that

shallow, basin-like concavity north of Damascus Gate, which is unquestionably the upper extremity of the Gihon valley, and pursuing its meandering course through this valley, entered the Tyropæon at its great southern curve, down which it flowed into the valley of the Kidron' (*Barclay's* 'City of the Great King'). 5. he strengthened himself. He made a careful inspection of the city defences for the purpose of repairing breaches in the wall here (cf. 2 Ki. xiv. 13), renewing the masonry there, raising projecting machines to the towers, and especially fortifying the lower portion of Zion, i. e., Millo, '(in) the original city of David.' "In" is a supplement of our translators, and the text reads better without it, for it was not the whole city that was repaired, but only the lower portion of Zion, or the original "city of David." 6. he . . . gathered them together . . . in the street of the gate of the city [הַיְצוֹן בְּרֹחַב הַשָּׁעַר]—i. e., the forum (improperly rendered "street" here, and in Gen. xix. 2; Judg. xix. 15; Esth. vi. 9, 11), or the large open space at the gate of Eastern cities; and having equipped his soldiers with a full suit of military accoutrements, he addressed them in an animating strain, dwelling on the motives they had to inspire courage and confidence of success,—especially on their consciousness of the favour and helping power of God.

9-20. (See on 2 Ki. xviii. 17-35; also xix. 8-34.)

against him, saying, As the gods of the nations of *other* lands have not delivered their people out of mine hand, so shall not the God of Hezekiah
 18 deliver his people out of mine hand. Then they cried with a loud voice in the Jews' speech unto the people of Jerusalem that *were* on the wall, to affright them, and to trouble them, that they might take the city.
 19 And they spake against the God of Jerusalem, as against the gods of the people of the earth, *which were* the work of the hands of man.
 20 And for this *cause* Hezekiah the king, and the prophet Isaiah the son
 21 of Amoz, prayed and cried to heaven. And the LORD sent an angel, which cut off all the mighty men of valour, and the leaders and captains in the camp of the king of Assyria. So he returned with shame of face to his own land. And when he was come into the house of his god, they
 22 that came forth of his own bowels ⁹slew him there with the sword. Thus the LORD ²saved Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the hand of Sennacherib the king of Assyria, and from the hand of all *other*,
 23 and guided them on every side. And many brought gifts unto the LORD to Jerusalem, and ¹⁰presents to Hezekiah king of Judah; so that he was ⁷magnified in the sight of all nations from thenceforth.
 24 In ⁸those days Hezekiah was sick to the death, and prayed unto
 25 the LORD: and he spake unto him, and he ¹¹gave him a sign. But Hezekiah ⁴rendered not again according to the benefit *done* unto him; for his ⁵heart was lifted up: therefore ⁶there was wrath upon him, and
 26 upon Judah and Jerusalem. Notwithstanding ²⁰Hezekiah humbled himself for ¹²the pride of his heart, *both* he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the wrath of the LORD came not upon them in ²¹the days of Hezekiah.
 27 And Hezekiah had exceeding much riches and honour: and he made himself treasuries for silver, and for gold, and for precious stones, and for
 28 spices, and for shields, and for all manner of ¹³pleasant jewels; store-houses also for the increase of corn, and wine, and oil; and stalls for all
 29 manner of beasts, and cotes for flocks. Moreover he provided him cities, and possessions of flocks and herds in abundance; for ³God had given him substance very much.

B. C. 710.
⁷ 2 Ki. 18. 28.
⁸ Isa. 10. 10.
⁹ Deut. 4. 23.
² 2 Ki. 19. 18.
⁴ Ps. 115. 4.
⁵ Ps. 135. 15-18.
⁶ Jer. 1. 16.
⁷ Jer. 10. 3.
⁸ made him fall.
⁹ Ps. 18. 45-50.
¹⁰ Isa. 31. 5.
¹¹ precious things.
¹² ch. 17. 5.
¹³ 1 Chr. 29. 25.
¹⁴ ch. 1. 1.
¹⁵ Isa. 38. 1.
¹⁶ Or,
 wrought a miracle for him.
¹⁷ Ps. 116. 12.
¹⁸ Hos. 14. 2.
¹⁹ Luke 17. 17.
²⁰ Deut. 8. 12-14. 17.
²¹ 2 Ki. 14. 10.
²² ch. 25. 19.
²³ Hab. 2. 4.
²⁴ ch. 24. 18.
²⁵ Jer. 26. 18.
²⁶ the lifting up.
²⁷ 2 Ki. '0. 19.
²⁸ instruments of desire.
²⁹ 2 Chr. 20. 12.
 ch. 25. 9.

13. they cried with a loud voice . . . unto the people of Jerusalem . . . on the wall. It appears that the wall on the west side of the city reached as far to the side of the uppermost pool of Gihon at that time as it does now, if not farther; and the wall was so close to that pool, that those sent to negotiate with the Assyrian general answered him in their own tongue (see on 2 Ki. xviii. 27).

21-23.—AN ANGEL DESTROYS THE ASSYRIANS.
 21. an angel . . . cut off all the mighty men—(see on 2 Ki. xix. 35-37.)

24-26.—HEZEKIAH'S SICKNESS AND RECOVERY.

24. In those days Hezekiah was sick to the death, and prayed unto the Lord—(see on 2 Ki. xx. 1-11.) and he spake unto him, and he gave him a sign. [נִאֲמָרְךָ לִי.] This verb never signifies to speak with any one; it means to say, and is always followed by the thing said. Gesenius translates the words here, 'and He promised him' (viz., what Hezekiah had prayed for), or suggests that there is a hiatus between לִי and נִאֲמָרְךָ.] 25. But Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him. The conduct of Hezekiah in showing his armoury and treasure-house to the Babylonish ambassadors might seem a trivial offence, if offence at all, and not rather an act of common civility to strangers who had come from a distant country, or of respect to the sovereign who sent them. But in judging of actions the Divine eye is especially

fixed on the intention (v. 31). In this respect Hezekiah failed. Either he valued himself too much on account of the signal tokens of Divine favour he had received, as if they had been merited by his righteous conduct; or trusted in his riches, as if they could have proved the means of his defence; or perhaps he offended in both these respects. Whatever might be the particular ground of displeasure, God declared by the prophet Isaiah that he should be carried away captive, &c. (Isa. xxix. 7, 8.) there was wrath upon him. 26. wrath . . . came not upon them in the days of Hezekiah. For even the sincere repentance of the servants of God, after great transgressions, has not prevented, although it has sometimes delayed, the judicial visitation (cf. 1 Sam. iii. 14; 2 Sam. xii. 10-14) (see Jamieson's 'Sacred History', ii., 118).

27-33.—HIS RICHES AND WORKS.
 27. Hezekiah had exceeding much riches and honour—(cf. 2 Ki. xx. 13; Isa. xxxix. 2.) A great portion of his personal wealth, like that of David and Uzziah, consisted in immense possessions of agricultural and pastoral produce. Besides, he had accumulated large treasures in gold, silver, and precious things, which he had taken as spoils from the Philistines, and which he had received as presents from neighbouring states, amongst which he was held in great honour as a king under the special protection of heaven. Much of his great wealth he expended in improving his capital.

- 30 This ²same Hezekiah also stopped the upper water course of Gihon, and brought it straight down to the west side of the city of David. And
- 31 Hezekiah prospered in all his works. Howbeit in *the business* of the ¹⁴ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who sent ^aunto him to enquire of the wonder that was *done* in the land, God left him, to ^btry him, that he might know all *that was* in his heart.
- 32 Now the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and his ¹⁵goodness, behold, they *are* written in ^cthe vision of Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, and in
- 33 the ^abook of the kings of Judah and Israel. And Hezekiah slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the ¹⁶chiefest of the sepulchres of the sons of David: and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem did him ^ehonour at his death. And Manasseh his son reigned in his stead.
- 33 MANASSEH ^awas twelve years old when he began to reign; and he
- 2 reigned fifty and five years in Jerusalem: but did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD, like unto the ^babominations of the heathen,
- 3 whom the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel. For ¹he built again the high places which Hezekiah his father had ^cbroken down, and he reared up altars for Baalim, and ^amade groves, and worshipped
- 4 ^eall the host of heaven, and served them. Also he built altars in the house of the LORD, whereof the LORD had said, ^fIn Jerusalem shall my name
- 5 be for ever. And he built altars for all the host of heaven ^gin the two
- 6 courts of the house of the LORD. And ^hhe caused his children to pass through the fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom; ⁱalso he observed times, and used enchantments, and used witchcraft, and dealt ^jwith a familiar spirit, and with wizards: he wrought much evil in the sight of
- 7 the LORD, to provoke him to anger. And ^khe set a carved image, the idol which he had made, in the house of God, of which God had said to David and to Solomon his son, In ^lthis house, and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen before all the tribes of Israel, will I put my name for ever:
- 8 neither ^mwill I any more remove the foot of Israel from out of the land which I have appointed for your fathers; so that they will take heed to

B. C. 713.

² Isa. 22. 9.¹⁴Interpreters.^a Isa. 39. 1.^b Gen. 22. 1.

Deut. 8. 2.

John 1. 12.

¹⁵kindnesses^c Isa. 31. 1.^d 2 Ki. 18. 1.¹⁶Or,

highest.

^e 1 Sam. 2. 30.

Pro. 10. 7.

CIAF. 33.

^a 2 Ki. 21. 1.^b Deut. 18. 9.² Chr. 2. 3.¹ he returned

and built.

^c 2 Ki. 18. 4.

ch. 30. 14.

ch. 31. 1.

ch. 32. 12.

^d Deut. 12. 21.^e Deut. 17. 3.^f Deut. 12. 11.¹ Ki. 8. 19.^g ch. 4. 9.^h Lev. 18. 21.

Deut. 18. 10.

ch. 23. 3.

ⁱ Deut. 18. 10.^j 2 Ki. 21. 6.^k 2 Ki. 21. 7.^l 1's 132. 14.^m 2 Sam. 7. 10.

erecting forts, and promoting the internal benefit of his kingdom.

30. stopped the . . . water course of Gihon, and brought it . . . to the west side of the city, &c.—(cf. 2 Ki. xx. 20.) Particular notice is here taken of the aqueduct, as amongst the greatest of Hezekiah's works. 'In exploring the subterranean channel conveying the water from Virgin's Fount to Siloam, I discovered a similar channel entering from the north, a few yards from its commencement; and on tracing it up near the Mugrabin Gate, where it became so choked with rubbish that it could be traversed no farther, I there found it turned to the west, in the direction of the south end of the cleft, or saddle, of Zion; and if this channel was not constructed for the purpose of conveying the waters of Hezekiah's aqueduct, I am unable to suggest any purpose to which it could have been applied. Perhaps the reason why it was not brought down on the Zion side was that Zion was already well watered in its lower portion by the Great Pool, "the lower pool of Gihon." And accordingly Williams, "Holy City," renders this passage, "He stopped the upper outflow of the waters of Gihon, and led them down westward to the city" (Barclay's 'City of the Great King,' cf. Robinson's 'Biblical Researches,' i., p. 484; 'Tent and Khan,' p. 271; 'Porter's Handbook,' p. 135; 'Hardy's 'Notices of the Holy Land,' p. 141). The construction of this aqueduct required not only masonic but engineering skill; for the passage was bored through a continuous mass of rock. Hezekiah's pool or reservoir, made to receive the water within the

north-west part of the city, still remains. It is an oblong quadrangular tank, 240 feet in length, from 144 to 150 feet in breadth, but, from recent excavations, appears to have extended somewhat farther towards the north. Tischendorf ('Travels in the East') calls it a Turkish bath. But it bears all the marks of a great antiquity. 31. in the business of the ambassadors, &c. They brought a present (v. 23) (see on 2 Ki. xx. 12, 13), and a letter of congratulation on his recovery, in which particular enquiries were made about the miracle of the sun's retrocession—a natural phenomenon that could not fail to excite great interest and curiosity at Babylon, where astronomy was so much studied. At the same time there is reason to believe that they proposed a defensive league against the Assyrians. God left him, to try him, &c. Hezekiah's offence was not so much in the display of his military stores and treasures, as in not giving to God the glory both of the miracle and of his recovery, and thus leading those heathen ambassadors to know Him.

32. the rest of the acts of Hezekiah . . . they are written in the vision of Isaiah the prophet . . . and in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel. "And" being a supplement of our translators, it seems from the structure of the sentence that the chronicler intended only to refer to the narrative in 2 Kings, in which Isaiah's prophecy of deliverance is embodied.

CHAP. XXXIII. 1-10. —MANASSEH'S WICKED REIGN.

1. Manasseh . . . 2. did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord—(see on 2 Ki. xxi. 1-16.)

do all that I have commanded them, according to the whole law and the statutes and the ordinances by the hand of Moses.

- 9 So Manasseh made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to err, and to do worse than the heathen, whom the LORD had destroyed before the children of Israel. And the LORD spake to Manasseh, and to his people; but they would not hearken. Wherefore the LORD brought upon them the captains of the host of the king of Assyria, which took Manasseh among the thorns, and bound him with fetters, and carried him to Babylon. And when he was in affliction, he besought the LORD his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, and prayed unto him: and he was entreated of him, and heard his supplication, and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the LORD he was God.
- 14 Now after this he built a wall without the city of David, on the west side of Gihon, in the valley, even to the entering in at the fish gate, and compassed about Ophel, and raised it up a very great height, and put

E. C. 698.
 a Neh. 9. 25.
 Jer 25. 4.
 b Deut. 28. 36.
 Job 31. 8.
 c which were the king's
 d 1's 107. 10.
 e Or, chains.
 f Hos. 5. 15.
 g Jon. 2. 2.
 Mic. 6. 9.
 h 1 Pet 5. 6.
 i 1 Chr. 5. 20.
 j Ezra 8. 21.
 k Is. 4. 16.
 l Dan. 4. 25.
 m 1 Ki. 1. 33.
 n ch 27. 3.
 o Or the tower.

11-19.—HE IS CARRIED UNTO BABYLON, WHERE HE HUMBLING HIMSELF BEFORE GOD, AND IS RESTORED TO HIS KINGDOM.

11. the captains of the host of the king of Assyria. This king was Eсарhaddon (*Rawlinson's* 'Ancient Monarchies,' ii., p. 466; 'Nineveh and Babylon,' p. 621), who, after having devoted the first years of his reign to the consolidation of his government at home, turned his attention to repair the loss of the tributary provinces west of the Euphrates, which, on the disaster and death of Sennacherib, had taken the opportunity of shaking off the Assyrian yoke. Having overrun Palestine and removed the remnant that were left in the kingdom of Israel, he despatched his generals, the chief of whom was Tartan (Isa. xx. 1), with a portion of his army, for the reduction of Judah also. In a successful attack upon Jerusalem, they took multitudes of captives, and got a great prize, including the king himself among the prisoners. took Manasseh among the thorns. This may mean, as is commonly supposed, that he had hid himself among a thicket of briars and brambles; and we know that the Hebrews sometimes took refuge from their enemies in thickets (1 Sam. xiii. 6). But instead of "among the thorns" [צְרִיחִים], some versions read [חַיִּים], 'among the living;' and so the passage would be, 'took him alive.' bound him with fetters, and carried him to Babylon. The Hebrew word rendered fetters, denotes properly two chains of brass. The humiliating state in which Manasseh appeared before the Assyrian monarch may be judged of by a picture on a tablet in the Khorsabad palace, representing prisoners led bound into the king's presence. The captives represented appear to be inhabitants of Palestine. Behind the prisoners stand four persons with inscriptions on the lower part of their tunics. The first two are bearded, and seem to be accusers; the remaining two are nearly defaced; but behind the last appears the eunuch, whose office it seems to be to usher into the presence of the king those who are permitted to appear before him. He is followed by another person of the same race as those under punishment. His hands are manacled, and on his ankles are strong rings fastened together by a heavy bar ('Nineveh and its Palaces'). No name is given, and therefore no conclusion can be drawn that the figure represents Manasseh; but the people appear to be Hebrews; and this pictorial scene will enable us to imagine the manner in which the royal captive from Judah was received into the court of

Babylon. Eсарhaddon had established his residence there; for though, from the many revolts that followed the death of his father, he succeeded at first only to the throne of Assyria, yet having sometime previous to his conquest of Judah recovered possession of Babylon, this enterprising king had united under his sway the two empires of Babylon and Chaldea, and transferred the seat of his government to Babylon. The Assyrian inscriptions show that Eсарhaddon built a palace in Babylon, and resided much in that capital (*Havernick's* 'Introduction,' ii., 1; *Rawlinson's* 'Herodotus,' i., 482; *Winer, 'Realwörterbuch,'* 'Manasse'). 12. when he was in affliction, he besought the Lord his God. In the solitude of exile or imprisonment, Manasseh had leisure for reflection. The calamities forced upon him a review of his past life, under a conviction that the miseries of his dethronement and captive condition were owing to his awful and unprecedented apostasy (v. 7) from the God of his fathers. He humbled himself, repented, and prayed for an opportunity of bringing forth the fruits of repentance. His prayer was heard; for his conqueror not only released him, but, after two years' exile, restored him with honour and the full exercise of royal power, to a tributary and dependent kingdom. Some political motive, doubtless, prompted the Assyrian king to restore Manasseh, and that was most probably to have the kingdom of Judah as a barrier between Egypt and his Assyrian dominions. But God overruled this measure for higher purposes. Manasseh now showed himself, by the influence of sanctified affliction, a new and better man: for he made a complete reversal of his former policy, by not only destroying all the idolatrous statues and altars he had formerly erected in Jerusalem, but displaying the most ardent zeal in restoring and encouraging the worship of God.

14. he built a wall without the city . . . on the west side of Gihon . . . even to the entering in at the fish gate. 'The well-ascertained position of the fish gate shows that the valley of Gihon could be no other than that leading north-west of Damascus Gate, and gently descending southward, uniting with the Tyropœon at the north-east corner of mount Zion, where the latter turns at right angles and runs towards Siloam. The wall thus built by Manasseh, on the west side of the valley of Gihon, would extend from the vicinity of the north-east corner of the wall of Zion in a northerly direction, until it crossed over the valley to form a junction with the outer wall at the trench of Antonia, precisely in the quarter where the temple

- 15 captains of war in all the fenced cities of Judah. And he took away the strange gods, and the idol out of the house of the LORD, and all the altars that he had built in the mount of the house of the LORD, and in Jerusalem, and cast *them* out of the city. And he repaired the altar of the LORD, and sacrificed thereon peace offerings and thank ^oofferings, and
- 16 commanded Judah to serve the LORD God of Israel. Nevertheless ^zthe people did sacrifice still in the high places, *yet* unto the LORD their God only.
- 17 Now the rest of the acts of Manasseh, and his prayer unto his God, and the words of the seers that spake to him in the name of the LORD God of Israel, behold, they *are written* in the book of the kings of Israel. His prayer also, and *how God* was entreated of him, and all his sins, and his trespass, and the places wherein he built high places, and set up groves and graven images, before he was humbled: behold, they *are written*
- 18 among the sayings of ⁵the seers. So Manasseh slept with his fathers, and they buried him in his own house: and Amon his son reigned in his stead.
- 19 Amon *was* two and twenty years old when he began to reign, and reigned two years in Jerusalem. But he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD, as did Manasseh his father: for Amon sacrificed unto all the carved images which Manasseh his father had made, and served
- 20 them; and humbled not himself before the LORD, as Manasseh his father had humbled himself; but Amon ⁶trespassed more and more. And ⁷his servants conspired against him, and slew him in his own house. But the people of the land slew all them that had conspired against king Amon: and the people of the land made Josiah his son king in his stead.
- 21 **34 JOSIAH** ^a*was* eight years old when he began to reign; and he reigned 2 in Jerusalem one and thirty years. And he did *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the ways of David his father, and
- 22 declined *neither* to the right hand nor to the left. For in the eighth year of his reign, while he was yet ^byoung, he began to ^cseek after the God of David his father: and in the twelfth year he began ^dto purge Judah and

B. C. 677.

¹⁰ Lev. 7. 12.¹¹ 1 Ki. 22. 43.

2 Ki. 15. 4.

ch. 15. 17.

ch. 32. 12.

⁵ Or.

Hosai.

⁶ multiplied

trespass.

ch. 23. 22.

Jer. 7. 23.

2 Tim. 3. 13.

⁷ 2 Ki. 1. 5-

12.

2 Ki. 1. 23.

24.

ch. 21. 25,

27.

ch. 25. 27,

28.

Ps. 53. 23.

Rom. 11. 22.

CHAP. 34.

^a 1 Ki. 3. 7-9.

1 Ki. 13. 2.

2 Ki. 22. 1.

1 Chr. 3. 14.

15.

ch. 33. 25.

Ecl. 4. 13.

Jer. 1. 2.

Zeph. 1. 1.

Matt. 1. 10.

11.

^b 1 Sam. 1. 24.

Ps. 119. 9.

Fro. 8. 17.

Ecl. 12. 1.

2 Tim. 3. 15.

^c 1 Chr. 23. 9.

ch. 15. 2.

^d 1 Ki. 13. 2.

would be most easily assailed' (*Barclay*). The necessity for Manasseh's raising this fortification was this:—Psammeticus, having established himself on the throne of Egypt, seven years after Manasseh's restoration, proceeded to extend his conquests, and having laid siege to Ashdod, which lasted twenty-nine years, war ensued between the Egyptians and the Assyrians. In consequence of this, Manasseh, as vassal and lieutenant of the Assyrian sovereign, was obliged to increase the fortifications of Jerusalem. 17. the people did sacrifice still in the high places, yet unto the Lord their God only. Here it appears that the worship on high places, though it originated in a great measure from the practice of heathenism, and too often led to it, did not necessarily imply idolatry, but was meant to celebrate the local adoration of the true God—a violation of God's will, after a central sanctuary had been established.

20-25.—HE DIES, AND AMON SUCCEEDS HIM.

20. Manasseh slept with his fathers . . .

21. Amon . . . began to reign—(see on 2 Ki. xxi. 17-26.)

CHAP. XXXIV. 1, 2.—JOSIAH'S GOOD REIGN.

1. Josiah was eight years old—(see on 2 Ki. xxii. 1, 2.) The testimony borne to the undeviating steadfastness of his adherence to the cause of true religion, places his character and reign in honourable contrast with those of many of his royal predecessors.

3-7.—HE DESTROYS IDOLATRY.

3. in the eighth year of his reign. This was the sixteenth year of his age; and as the kings of Judah were considered minors till they had completed their thirteenth year, it was three years after he had attained majority. He had very early manifested the piety and excellent dispositions of his character. In the twelfth year of his reign, but the twentieth of his age, he began to take a lively interest in the purgation of his kingdom from all the monuments of idolatry which, in his father's short reign, had been erected. [All the different forms of idol-worship are grouped together in this passage; for with הַבַּלְיִם, the Baalim, and הַמַּקְדָּשִׁים, images of the sun, which stood upon their altars, are associated הַמַּלְאָכִים, statues of Astarte, הַמְּסֻבִּים, the hewn or carved stones, and הַמְּסֻבִּים, molten images.] At a later period, his increasing zeal for securing the purity of Divine worship led him to superintend the work of demolition in various parts of his dominions. The course of the narrative in this passage is somewhat different from that followed in the Book of Kings; for the historian, having made allusion to the early manifestation of Josiah's zeal, goes on with a full detail of all the measures this good king adopted for the extirpation of idolatry; whereas the author of the Book of Kings sets out with the cleansing of the temple,

Jerusalem ^e from the high places, and the groves, and the carved images, and the molten images. And ^f they brake down the altars of Baalim in his presence; and the ¹ images that *were* on high above them he cut down; and the groves, and the carved images, and the molten images, he brake in pieces, and made dust *of them*, ^g and strowed *it* upon the ² graves of the 5 them that had sacrificed unto them. And he ^h burnt the bones of the 6 priests upon their altars, and cleansed Judah and Jerusalem. And *so did he* in the cities of Manasseh, and Ephraim, and Simeon, even unto 7 Naphtali, with their ³ mattocks round about. And when he had broken down the altars and the groves, and had ⁱ beaten the graven images ⁴ into powder, and cut down all the idols throughout all the land of Israel, he returned to Jerusalem.

8 Now ^j in the eighteenth year of his reign, when he had purged the land, and the house, he sent Shaphan the son of Azaliah, and Maaseiah the governor of the city, and Joah the son of Joahaz the recorder, to 9 repair the house of the LORD his God. And when they came to Hilkiah the high priest, they delivered ^k the money that was brought into the house of God, which the Levites that kept the doors had gathered of the hand of Manasseh and Ephraim, and of all the remnant of Israel, and of 10 all Judah and Benjamin; and they returned to Jerusalem. And they put *it* in the hand of the workmen that had the oversight of the house of the LORD, and they gave it to the workmen that wrought in the house 11 of the LORD, to repair and amend the house: even to the artificers and builders gave they *it*, to buy hewn stone, and timber for couplings, and 12 ⁵ to floor the houses which the kings of Judah had destroyed. And the men did the work ^l faithfully: and the overseers of them *were* Jahath and Obadiah, the Levites, of the sons of Merari; and Zechariah and Meshullam, of the sons of the Kohathites, to set *it* forward; and *other of the* 13 Levites, all that could skill of instruments of music. Also *they were* over the bearers of burdens, and *were* overseers of all that wrought the work in any manner of service: ^m and of the Levites *there were* scribes, and officers, and porters.

14 And when they brought out the money that was brought into the house

B. C. 6 0.
^o ch. 33. 17, 22.
^p Ex. 23. 24. Lev. 26. 30. Deut. 7. 5. 25.
^q 2 Ki. 23. 4. ch. 33. 3.
^r 1 Or, sun images.
^s 2 Ki. 23. 4. 5, 11. ch. 14. 5.
^t Ex. 32. 20.
^u 2 Ki. 23. 4. Ps. 18. 42. Isa. 27. 9.
^v 2 face of the graves.
^w 2 Ki. 10. 26. 2 Ki. 23. 6.
^x 1 Ki. 13. 2.
^y Or, mauls.
^z 1 Sam. 13. 20, 21.
^{aa} Deut. 9. 21.
^{ab} 4 to make powder.
^{ac} 2 Ki. 22. 3.
^{ad} 2 Ki. 12. 4.
^{ae} Or, to rafter.
^{af} 2 Ki. 12. 15. 2 Ki. 22. 7. Neh. 7. 2. Pro. 23. 20.
^{ag} 1 Cor. 4. 2.
^{ah} 1 Chr. 23. 4. 5.
^{ai} Ezra 7. 6. J. r. 8. 8. Matt. 26. 3.

immediately previous to the celebration of the passover, and embraces that occasion to give a general description of Josiah's policy for freeing the land from idolatrous pollution. The exact chronological order is not followed either in Kings or Chronicles. But it is clearly recorded in both that the abolition of idolatry began in the twelfth and was completed in the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign. Notwithstanding Josiah's undoubted sincerity and zeal, and the people's apparent compliance with the king's orders, he could not extinguish a strongly-rooted attachment to idolatries introduced in the early part of Manasseh's reign. This latent predilection appears unmistakably developed in the subsequent reigns, and the Divine decree for the removal of Judah, as well as Israel, into captivity, was irrevocably passed. 4. the graves of them that had sacrificed unto them. He treated the graves themselves as guilty of the crimes of those who were lying in them (*Bertheau*). 5. he burnt the bones of the priests upon their altars—a greater brand of infamy could not have been put on idolatrous priests than the disinterment of their bones; and a greater defilement could not have been done to the altars of idolatry than the burning upon them the bones of those who had there officiated in their lifetime. 6. with their mattocks—or, 'in their deserts,' so that the verse will stand thus: 'And so did (viz., break the altars, and burn the bones of priests) he in the cities of Manasseh, and

Ephraim, and Simeon, even unto Naphtali, in their deserted heights around.' The reader is apt to be surprised on finding that Josiah, whose hereditary possessions were confined to the kingdom of Judah, exercised as much authority among the tribes of Ephraim, Manasseh, Simeon, and others, as far as Naphtali, as he did within his own dominions; and therefore it is necessary to observe, that after the destruction of Samaria by Shalmanezzer, the remnant that continued on the mountains of Israel maintained a close intercourse with Judah, and looked to the sovereigns of that kingdom as their natural protectors. Those kings acquired great influence over them, which Josiah exercised in removing every vestige of idolatry from the land. He could not have done this without the acquiescence of the people in the propriety of his proceeding, conscious that it was conformable to their ancient laws and institutions. The Assyrian kings, who were now masters of the country, might have been displeased at the liberties Josiah took beyond his own territories. But either they were not informed of his doings, or they did not trouble themselves about his religious proceedings, relating, as they would think, to the god of the land, especially as he did not attempt to seize upon any place, or to disturb the allegiance of the people.

8-18.—HE REPAIRS THE TEMPLE.
 8. in the eighteenth year of his reign . . . he sent Shaphan—(see on 2 Ki. xxii. 3-9.)

of the LORD, Hilkiah the priest ⁷found a book of the law of the LORD
 15 *given* ⁶by Moses. And Hilkiah answered and said to Shaphan the scribe,
 I have found the book of the law in the house of the LORD. And Hilkiah
 16 delivered the book to Shaphan. And Shaphan carried the book to the
 king, and brought the king word back again, saying, All that was com-
 17 mitted ⁷to thy servants, they do *it*. And they have ⁸gathered together
 the money that was found in the house of the LORD, and have delivered
 it into the hand of the overseers, and to the hand of the workmen.
 18 Then Shaphan the scribe told the king, saying, Hilkiah the priest hath
 19 given me a book. And Shaphan read ⁹it before the king. And it came
 to pass, when the king had heard the ⁹words of the law, that he ²rent
 20 his clothes. And the king commanded Hilkiah, and Ahikam the son of
 Shaphan, and ¹⁰Abdon the son of Micah, and Shaphan the scribe, and
 21 Asaiah a servant of the king's, saying, Go, enquire of the LORD for me, and
 for them that are ²left in Israel and in Judah, concerning the words of
 the book that is found: for great *is* the wrath of the LORD that is
 poured out upon us, because our fathers have not kept the word of the
 LORD, to do after all that is written in this book.
 22 And Hilkiah, and *they* that the king *had appointed*, went to Huldah
 the ⁷prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tikvath, ⁸the son of
¹¹Hasrah, keeper of the ¹²wardrobe; (now she dwelt in Jerusalem ¹³in
 23 the college;) and they spake to her to that *effect*. And she answered
 them, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Tell ye the man that sent you
 24 to me, Thus saith the LORD, Behold, ¹I will bring evil upon this place,
 and upon the inhabitants thereof, *even* all the curses that are written
 25 in the book which they have read before the king of Judah: because
 they have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, that
 they might provoke me to anger with all the works of their hands;
 therefore my wrath shall be poured out upon this place, and shall not be
 26 quenched. And as for the king of Judah, who sent you to enquire of
 the LORD, so shall ye say unto him, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel
 27 *concerning* the words which thou hast heard; Because thine heart was
^utender, and thou didst humble thyself before God, when thou heardest
 his words against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, and
 humbledst thyself before me, and didst rend thy clothes, and weep before
 28 me; I have even ^vheard *thee* also, saith the LORD. Behold, I will gather
 thee to thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered to thy grave in peace,
 neither shall thine eyes see all the evil that I will bring upon this place,
 and upon the inhabitants of the same. So they brought the king word
 again.
 29 Then ^wthe king sent and gathered together all the elders of Judah and
 30 Jerusalem. And the king went up into the house of the LORD, and all
 the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the priests, and
 the Levites, and all the people, ¹⁴great and small; and he read in their
 ears all the words of the book of the covenant that was found in the house
 31 of the LORD. And the king stood in ^zhis place, and made a covenant
 before the LORD, to walk after the LORD, and to keep his commandments,
 and his testimonies, and his statutes, with all his heart, and with all his
 soul, to perform the words of the covenant which are written in this book.
 32 And he caused all that were ¹⁵present in Jerusalem and Benjamin to stand
 to *it*. And the inhabitants of Jerusalem did according to the covenant of
 God, the God of their fathers.

B. C. 64.
¹¹ Deut. 31. 24-26.
² Ki. 22. 8.
⁶ by the hand of.
⁷ to the hand of.
⁸ poured out or melted.
⁹ in it.
 Deut. 17. 19.
 Josh. 1. 8.
¹⁰ Deut. 28. 1-68.
 Rom 3. 20.
 Rom 7. 7-11.
 Gal. 2. 19.
 Gal. 3. 10-13.
^P Gen 39. 34.
² Ki. 19. 1.
 Neh. 8. 9.
 Ps. 91. 12, 13.
 Ps. 119. 120.
 Jer. 23. 9, 29.
 Jer. :6. 22-21.
 Joel 2. 13.
 Hab. 3. 16.
¹⁰ Or, Achbor,
² Ki. 22. 12.
⁹ 2 Ki. 17. 6.
⁷ Ex. 15. 20.
 Judg. 4. 4.
 Luke 2. 36.
 Acts 21. 9.
⁸ 2 Ki. 22. 14.
¹¹ Or, Harbas.
¹² garments.
¹³ Or, in the school, or, in the second part.
¹ ch. 31. 6, 21.
 Isa. 5. 5.
 Jer. 25. 9.
 Dan. 9. 11, 12, 16.
 Amos 3. 6.
^u 1's. 51. 17.
^v 1's. 86. 5.
 Dan. 9. 9.
^z 2 Ki. 23. 1.
¹⁴ from great even to small.
² 2 Ki. 11. 14.
² Ki. 23. 3.
 ch. 6. 13.
 Eze. 46. 2.
¹⁵ found.

14. Hilkiah the priest found a book of the law of the Lord given by Moses [בְּסֵפֶר מֹשֶׁה]—by the hand of Moses, which Kennicott ('Dissertations,' ii., p. 300) interprets, 'in the handwriting of Moses—i. e., the original autograph.

19-33.—AND, CAUSING THE LAW TO BE READ, RENEWS THE COVENANT BETWEEN GOD AND THE PEOPLE.

19. when the king had heard the words of the law, &c.—(see on 2 Ki. xxii. 11-20; xxiii. 1-3.)

33 And Josiah took away all the ^aabominations out of all the countries that *pertained* to the children of Israel, and made all that were present in Israel to serve, *even* to serve the LORD their God. ²And all his days they departed ¹⁶from following the LORD, the God of their fathers.

35 **MOREOVER** ^aJosiah kept a passover unto the LORD in Jerusalem: and ²they killed the passover on the ^bfourteenth *day* of the first month. And he set the priests in their ^ccharges, and ^aencouraged them to the service ³of the house of the LORD, and said unto the Levites ^cthat taught all Israel, which were holy unto the LORD, Put ^fthe holy ark ^gin the house which Solomon the son of David king of Israel did build; ^h*it shall not be a burden upon your shoulders: serve now the LORD your God, and his* ⁴people Israel, and prepare *yourselves* by the ⁱhouses of your fathers, after your courses, according to the ^jwriting of David king of Israel, and ⁵according to the ^kwriting of Solomon his son. And ^lstand in the holy *place*, according to the divisions of ¹the families of the fathers of your brethren ²the people, and *after* the division of the families of the Levites. ⁶So kill the passover, and ^msanctify yourselves, and prepare your brethren, that *they* may do according to the word of the LORD by the hand of Moses. ⁷And Josiah ³gave to the people, of the flock, lambs and kids, all for the passover offerings, for all that were present, to the number of thirty thousand, and three thousand bullocks: these *were* of the king's substance.

B. C. 604.
^y 1 Ki. 11. 5.
^z ch. 21. 2.
 Jer 3. 10.
¹⁶ from after.
 CHAP. 35.
^a 2 Ki 23. 21.
 22.
^b Ex. 12. 6.
^c Ezra 6. 19.
^c ch. 23. 18.
 Ezra 6. 18.
^d ch. 29. 5.
^e Deut 33. 10.
^f ch. 31. 14.
^g ch. 5. 7.
^h 1 Chr. 23. 27.
ⁱ 1 Chr. 9. 10.
^j 1 Chr. 23. 1.
^k ch. 8. 14.
^l Ps 131. 1.
¹ the house of the fathers.
² the sons of the people.
^m ch 2. 5. 6.
³ offered.
 Mic 6. 7.

CHAP. XXXV. 1-19.—JOSIAH KEEPS A SOLEMN PASSOVER.

1. Moreover Josiah kept a passover—(see on 2 Ki. xxiii. 21-23.) The first nine verses give an account of the preparations made for the celebration of the solemn feast. The day appointed by the law was kept on this occasion (cf. ch. xxx. 2, 13). The priests were ranged in their courses, and exhorted to be ready for their duties in the manner that legal purity required (cf. ch. xxix. 5; xxx. 16). 3. Put the holy ark in the house which Solomon . . . did build. The ark was placed in the temple by Solomon (1 Ki. viii.), where it remained till the idolatrous kings of Israel profaned the temple, when it was carried by the priests, in their pious zeal, from place to place, to be preserved from pollution. King Josiah caused it to be replaced in the temple. The Levites, the ministers or instructors of the people in all matters pertaining to the Divine worship, were commanded (v. 3) to 'put the holy ark in the house which Solomon did build.' Their duty was to transport the ark from place to place according to circumstances. Some think that it had been ignominiously put away from the sanctuary by order of some idolatrous king, probably Manasseh, who set a carved image in the house of God (ch. xxxiii. 7), or Amon; while others are of opinion that it had been temporarily removed by Josiah himself into some adjoining chamber, during the repairs on the temple. In replacing it, the Levites had evidently carried it upon their shoulders, deeming that still to be the duty which the law imposed on them. But Josiah reminded them of the change of circumstances,—when, as the service of God was now performed in a fixed and permanent temple, they were not required to be bearers of the ark any longer, and, being released from the service, they should address themselves with the greater alacrity to the discharge of other functions. [What became of the ark afterwards is not known, as this is the latest notice of it that is found in the sacred history. It is said (2 Macc. ii. 4) that it occupied its ordinary place till the period of the Chaldean invasion, and was lost during the disorders attending the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchad-

nezzar. No credit, of course, can be attached to an apocryphal legend. But the ark was certainly wanting in the second temple. And in another book of the Apocrypha (Esdra x. 22) the Jews are represented as lamenting that it had been taken away by the Chaldeans. All the Jewish Talmudists agree that it was never seen in Jerusalem. But the Jews themselves confidently expect its miraculous restoration at some future period (see Jer. iii. 16).] 4. prepare yourselves by the houses of your fathers, after your courses—i. e., each course or division was to be composed of those who belonged to the same father's house, according to the writing of David . . . and . . . Solomon. Their injunctions are recorded, ch. viii. 14; 1 Chr. xxiii.; xxiv.; xxv.; xxvi. 5. stand in the holy place—in the court of the priests, the place where the victims were killed. The people were admitted according to their families, in groups or companies of several households at a time. When the first company entered the court (which consisted commonly of as many as it could well hold) the gates were shut, and the offering was made. The Levites stood in rows from the slaughtering places to the altar, and handed the blood and fat from one to another of the officiating priests (ch. xxx. 16-18). 6. So kill the passover, &c. The design of the minute directions given here was to facilitate the distribution of the paschal lambs. These were to be eaten by the respective families according to their numbers (Exod. xii. 3). But multitudes of the people, especially those from Israel, having been reduced to poverty through the Assyrian devastations, were to be provided with the means of commemorating the passover; and, therefore, the king enjoined the Levites, that when the paschal lambs were brought to them to be killed (v. 7-9), they should take care to have everything put in so orderly a train, that the lambs, after due presentation, might be easily delivered to the various families to be roasted and eaten by themselves apart. 7. Josiah gave to the people . . . lambs and kids—these were in all probability destined for the poor. A lamb or a kid might be used at convenience (Exod. xii. 5), and . . . bullocks—which were offered after the lambs on each of the suc-

8 And his princes ⁴ gave willingly unto the people, to the priests, and to the Levites: Hilkiah and Zechariah and Jehiel, rulers of the house of God, gave unto the priests for the passover offerings two thousand and six hundred *small cattle*, and three hundred oxen. Cononiah also, and Shemaiah and Nethaneel, his brethren, and Hashabiah and Jeiel and Jozabad, chief of the Levites, ⁵ gave unto the Levites for passover offerings five thousand *small cattle*, and five hundred oxen.

10 So the service was prepared, and the priests ⁷ stood in their place, and 11 the Levites in their courses, according to the king's commandment. And they killed the passover, and the priests ⁸ sprinkled *the blood* from their 12 hands, and the Levites ⁹ flayed *them*. And they removed the burnt offerings, that they might give according to the divisions of the families of the people, to offer unto the LORD, as *it is written* ² in the book of 13 Moses: and so *did they* with the oxen. And they ⁷ roasted the passover with fire according to the ordinance: but the *other holy offerings* ³ sod they in pots, and in caldrons, and in pans, and ⁶ divided *them* speedily among all the people.

14 And afterward they made ready for themselves, and for the priests: because the priests the sons of Aaron *were busied* in offering of burnt offerings and the fat until night; therefore the Levites prepared for 15 themselves, and for the priests the sons of Aaron. And the singers the sons of Asaph *were* in their ⁷ place, according to the ¹ commandment of David, and Asaph, and Heman, and Jeduthun the king's seer; and the porters ¹⁰ waited at every gate; they might not depart from their service; 16 for their brethren the Levites prepared for them. So all the service of the LORD was prepared the same day, to keep the passover, and to offer burnt offerings upon the altar of the LORD, according to the command-

B. C. 621:
⁴ offered.
 2 Cor. 9. 7.
⁶ offered
ⁿ ch. 3. 16.
 Ezra 6. 17.
^o Lev. 1. 5, 6
 Num. 18. 3,
 7.
 ch. 29. 22,
 24.
 ch. 30. 16.
 Heb. 9. 11,
 22.
^p ch. 29. 34.
^q Lev 3. 3-5.
 Lev. 11. 11,
 16.
 Ps 22. 14.
^r Ex. 12. 8,
 9.
 Dent 16. 7.
 Lam. 1. 12
 13.
^s Lev 6. 23.
 Num. 6. 19.
 1 Sam 2. 3-
 15.
 Eze 41. 50.
⁶ made
 them run.
⁷ station.
^t 1 Chr. 25. 1.
^u 1 Chr. 9. 17,
 18,
 1 Chr. 26. 14.

cessive days of the feast (see on v. 13). 8. his princes. They gave to the priests and Levites; as those of Hezekiah's princes (ch. xxx. 24). They were ecclesiastical princes—viz., Hilkiah the high priest (ch. xxiv. 9), Zechariah, probably the second priest of the Eleazar (2 Ki. xvi. 18), and Jehiel, of the Ithamar line. And as the Levitical tribes were not yet sufficiently provided (v. 9), some of their eminent brethren who had been distinguished in Hezekiah's time (ch. xxxi. 12-15), gave a large additional contribution for the use of the Levites exclusively.

10. So the service was prepared, &c. All the necessary preparations having been completed, and the appointed time arrived for the passover, the solemnity was celebrated. One remarkable feature in the account is the prominent part that was taken by the Levites in the preparation of the sacrifices—viz., the killing and stripping of the skins, which were properly the peculiar duties of the priests; but as those functionaries were not able to overtake the extraordinary amount of work, and the Levites had been duly sanctified for the service, they were enlisted for the time in this priestly employment. At the passover in Hezekiah's time, the Levites officiated in the same departments of duty, the reason assigned for that deviation from the established rule being the unprepared state of many of the people (ch. xxx. 17). But on this occasion the whole people had been duly sanctified, and therefore the exceptional enlistment of the Levites' service must have been rendered unavoidably necessary from the multitudes engaged in celebrating the passover. 12. they removed the burnt offerings. Some of the small cattle, being designed for burnt offerings, were put apart by themselves, that they might not be intermingled with the paschal lambs, which were carefully selected according to certain rules,

and intended to be sacramentally eaten; and the manner in which those burnt offerings were presented seems to have been the following:—'All the subdivisions of the different fathers' houses came one after another to the altar in solemn procession, to bring the priests the portions which had been cut off, and the priests laid these pieces upon the fire of the altar of burnt offering.' 13. they roasted the passover—(see Exod. xii. 7-9.) This mode of preparation was prescribed by the law exclusively for the paschal lamb; the other offerings and thank offerings were cooked in pots, kettles, and pans (1 Sam. ii. 14). divided them speedily among all the people. The haste was either owing to the multiplicity of the priests' business, or because the heat and flavour of the viands would have been otherwise diminished. Hence it appears that the meal consisted not of the paschal lambs alone, but of the meat of the thank offerings—for part of the flesh fell to the portion of the offerer, who, being in this instance the king and the princes, were by them made over to the people, who were recommended to eat them the day they were offered, though not absolutely forbidden to do so on the next (Lev. vii. 15-18).

14. afterward they made ready for themselves, and for the priests. The Levites rendered this aid to the priests solely from their being so engrossed the entire day, that they had no leisure to provide any refreshments for themselves. 15. And the singers . . . were in their place. While the priests and people were so much engaged, the choir were not idle. They had to sing certain Psalms—viz., cxliii. to cxviii. inclusive—once, twice, and even a third time, during the continuance of each company of offerers. As they could not leave their posts, therefore—for the singing was resumed as every fresh company entered—the Levites prepared for them also; for the

17 ment of king Josiah. And the children of Israel that were ^spresent kept the passover at that time, and the feast of ^vunleavened bread seven days.
 18 And ^wthere was no passover like to that kept in Israel from the days of Samuel the prophet; neither did all the kings of Israel keep such a passover as Josiah kept, and the priests, and the Levites, and all Judah
 19 and Israel that were present, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. In the eighteenth year of the reign of Josiah was this passover kept.
 20 After ^zall this, when Josiah had prepared the ⁹temple, Necho king of Egypt came up to fight against Carchemish by Euphrates: and Josiah
 21 went out against him. But he sent ambassadors to him, saying, What have I to do with thee, thou king of Judah? *I come* not against thee

B. C. 623.
⁸ found
⁹ Ex. 12. 16.
^v Ex. 13. 6.
^w Ex. 21. 15.
^x Ex. 21. 13.
^y Lev. 23. 6.
^z s.
 ch. 33. 21.
¹⁰ 2 Ki. 23. 22.
¹¹ 2'.
¹² 2 Ki. 23. 29.
¹³ Jer. 46. 2.
¹⁴ 9 house

various bands relieved each other in turns, and while the general choir were doing duty, a portion of the tuneful brethren, relieved for a time, partook of the viands that were brought them. 17. the children of Israel. . . kept the passover . . . and the feast of unleavened bread seven days—[פֶּסַח, a passing over]. At first the paschal lamb, and the paschal meal, came, from its intimate connection with the days of unleavened bread, to stand, especially in the usage of the later Hebrews, for the entire festival of seven days (cf. Matt. xxvi. 2; Mark xiv. 1; Luke ii. 41-43; xxii. 1; John ii. 13; Acts xii. 4).

18. there was no passover like to that kept in Israel, from the days of Samuel. One feature by which this passover was distinguished was the liberality of Josiah. But what distinguished it above all preceding solemnities was not the imposing grandeur of the ceremonies, nor the immensity of the assembled concourse of worshippers,—for these, with the exception of a few from the kingdom of Israel, were confined to two tribes; but it was the ardent devotion of the king and people, the disregard of purely traditional customs, and the unusually strict adherence, even in the smallest minutiae, to the forms of observance prescribed in the book of the law, the discovery of an original copy of which had produced so great a sensation. Instead of "from the days of Samuel," the author of the Book of Kings says, "from the days of the judges that judged Israel." The meaning is the same in both passages, for Samuel concluded the era of the judges. all. . . Israel that were present. The great majority of the people of the northern kingdom was in exile; but some of the remaining inhabitants performed the journey to Jerusalem on this occasion. 37,600 paschal lambs and kids were used, which, at 10 to a company, would make 376,000 persons attending the feast. 19. In the eighteenth year of the reign of Josiah was this passover kept. 'It is said (2 Ki. xxii. 3) that Josiah sent Shaphan to Hilkiah in the eighth month of that year.' If this statement rests upon a historical basis, all the events narrated here (from ch. xxxiv. 8 to ch. xxxv. 19) must have happened in about the space of five months and a half. We should then have a proof that the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign was reckoned from the autumn (cf. ch. xxix. 3). 'The eighth month' of the sacred year, in the eighteenth year of his reign, would be the *second* month of his eighteenth year; and the first month of the new year would be the *seventh* month (Bertheau).

20-27.—HIS DEATH.

20. After all this, when Josiah had prepared the temple. He most probably calculated that the restoration of the Divine worship, with the revival of vital religion in the land, would lead, according to God's promise, and the uniform experience of the Hebrew people, to a period of

settled peace and increased prosperity. His hopes were disappointed. The bright interval of tranquility that followed his re-establishment of the true religion was brief. But it must be observed that this interruption did not proceed from any unfaithfulness in the Divine promise, but from the state into which the kingdom of Judah had brought itself by the national apostasy, which was drawing down upon it the long-threatened, but long-deferred judgments of God. Necho king of Egypt came up to fight against Carchemish by Euphrates. Necho, son of Psammetichus, succeeded to the throne of Egypt in the twentieth year of Josiah. He was a bold and enterprising king, who entered with all his heart into the struggle which the two great powers of Egypt and Assyria had long carried on for the political ascendancy. Each, jealous of the aggressive movements of its rival, was desirous to maintain Palestine as a frontier barrier. After the overthrow of Israel the kingdom of Judah became in that respect doubly important; and although the king and people had a strong bias for alliance with Egypt, yet from the time of Manasseh it had become a vassal of Assyria; and although in the civil wars that were waged between Assyria and Babylon, Nineveh had fallen, and the Babylonian power was on the ascendant, Josiah, true to his political no less than his religious engagements, thought himself bound to support the interests of his northern liege-lord. Hence, when "Necho king of Egypt came up to fight against Carchemish . . . Josiah went out against him." Carchemish, on the eastern side of the Euphrates, was the key of Assyria on the west; and in going thither the king of Egypt would transport his troops by sea along the coast of Palestine, northwards. Josiah, as a faithful vassal, resolved to oppose Necho's march across the northern parts of that country. They met in the "valley of Megiddo"—i. e., the valley or plain of Esdraelon. The Egyptian king had come either by water or through the plains of Philistia, keeping constantly along the coast round the north-west corner of Carmel, and so to the great plain of Megiddo. This was not only his direct way to the Euphrates, but the only route fit for his chariots, while thereby also he left Judah and Jerusalem quite to his right. In this valley, however, the Egyptian army had necessarily to strike across the country; and it was on that occasion that Josiah could most conveniently intercept his passage. To avoid the difficulty of passing the river Kishon, Necho kept to the south of it, and must therefore have come past Megiddo. Josiah, in following with his chariots and horsemen from Jerusalem, had to march northwards along the highway through Samaria by Keft-*ku* (the ancient Caper-cotia) to Megiddo (*Van de Velde*). 21. But he sent ambassadors . . . What have I to do with thee, thou king of Judah? Not wishing to spend time or strength in vain, Necho

this day, but against ¹⁰the house wherewith I have war; for ⁹God commanded me to make haste: forbear thee from meddling with God, who is with me, that he destroy thee not. Nevertheless Josiah would not turn his face from him, but ²disguised himself, that he might fight with him, and hearkened not unto the words of Necho from the mouth of God, and came to fight in the valley of Megiddo: And the archers shot at king Josiah: and the king said to his servants, Have me away; for I am sore wounded. His ¹¹servants therefore took him out of that chariot, and put him in the second chariot that he had; and they brought him to Jerusalem, and he died, and was buried ¹²in one of the sepulchres of his fathers: and ⁶all Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah. And Jeremiah lamented for Josiah; and ⁴all the singing men and the singing women spake of Josiah in their lamentations to this day, ⁶and made them an ordinance in Israel: and, behold, they are written in the Lamentations.

Now the rest of the acts of Josiah, and his ¹³goodness, according to that which was written in the law of the LORD, and his deeds, first and last, behold, they are written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah.

THEN ¹⁴the people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, and made him king in his father's stead in Jerusalem. Jehoahaz was twenty and three years old when he began to reign, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. And the king of Egypt ¹put him down at Jerusalem, and

B. C. 610.

¹⁰the house of my war.
⁹Dan 4. 35.
¹1 Ki. 22. 30. ch. 18. 29.
¹¹made sick
¹1 Ki. 22. 34.
²2 Ki. 23. 30.
¹²(r.
among the sepulchres.
⁶Zech. 12. 11.
⁶Lam. 4. 10.
⁴Feccl. 12. 5.
Jer 9. 17.
Amos 7. 16.
Matt 9. 23.
⁶Jer 22. 10.
¹³kindnesses.

CHAP. 36.
²2 Ki. 23. 30.
1 removed him.

informed the king of Judah that he had no intention of molesting the Jews, that his expedition was directed solely against his old Assyrian enemy, and that he had undertaken it by an express commission from God. Commentators are not agreed whether it was really a Divine commission given him through Jeremiah, or whether he merely used the name of God as an authority that Josiah would not refuse to obey. As he could not know the truth of Necho's declaration, Josiah did not sin in opposing him; or if he sinned at all, it was a sin of ignorance. 22. Josiah would not turn his face from him, but disguised himself [שִׁמְשָׁם, disguised himself (cf. 1 Sam. xviii. 8; 1 Ki. xx. 38; xxii. 30; Job xxx. 18). The Septuagint has ἀλλ' ἢ πολεμῆν ἄνθρωπον ἐκτραυλῆν, but was rather strengthened, stimulated to fight; and in like manner other ancient versions render the words]. The engagement took place. Josiah was mortally wounded. 23. the archers shot at king Josiah—the Egyptian archers, whose accoutrements, array, and mode of shooting, are familiarly known from the representations on the monuments. 24. took him out of that chariot, and put him in the second chariot—the carriage he had for ordinary use, and which would be more comfortable for the royal sufferer than the war chariot. The death of this good king was the subject of universal and lasting regret. 25. Jeremiah lamented for Josiah, &c. The elegy of the prophet has not reached us; but it seems to have been long preserved among his countrymen, and chanted on certain public occasions by the professional singers, who probably got the dirges they sang from a collection of funeral odes, composed on the death of good and great men of the nation. The spot in the valley of Megiddo, where the battle was fought, was near the town of Hadad-rimmon, a name derived from that of a Syrian idol. Herodotus relates (b. ii. 159) that the scene of Josiah's defeat was Magdolum—i. e., most probably the Migdol, or tower in Jezreel (Megiddo), on the north-east of that town (Josephus, 'Antiquities,' b. x., ch. v., sec. 1). Hence the lamentation for the death of Josiah was called 'The lamentation of Hadad-rimmon in the valley of Megiddo,' which was so great and so long continued, that the lamentation of Hadad

passed afterwards into a proverbial phrase to express any great and extraordinary sorrow (Zech. xii. 11).

CHAP. XXXVI. 1-4.—JEHOHAZ SUCCEEDING, IS DEPOSED BY PHARAOH.

1. the people of the land took Jehoahaz. Immediately after Josiah's overthrow and death, the people raised to the throne Shallum (1 Chr. iii. 15), afterwards called Jehoahaz, in preference to his elder brother Eliakim, from whom they expected little good. Jehoahaz is said (2 Ki. xxiii. 30) to have received at Jerusalem the royal anointing—a ceremony not usually deemed necessary in circumstances of regular and undisputed succession. But in the case of Jehoahaz, it seems to have been resorted to in order to impart greater validity to the act of popular election, and, it may be, to render it less likely to be disturbed by Necho, who, like all Egyptians, would associate the idea of sanctity with the regal anointing. He was the youngest son of Josiah, but the popular favourite,—on account, probably, of his martial spirit (Ezek. xix. 3), and determined opposition to the aggressive views of Egypt. At his accession the land was free from idolatry; but this prince, instead of following the footsteps of his excellent father, adopted the criminal policy of his apostatizing predecessors, and through his influence, directly or indirectly used, idolatry rapidly increased (see on 2 Ki. xxiii. 32). 2. he reigned three months. His possession of sovereign power was of but very brief duration; for Necho determined to follow up the advantage he gained in Judah, and, deeming it expedient to have a king of his own nomination on the throne of that country, he deposed the popularly elected monarch, and placed his brother Eliakim (whom God hath appointed), or Jehoiakim (whom Jehovah sets up), on the throne, whom he anticipated to be a more obsequious vassal. The course of events seems to have been this: on receiving intelligence after the battle of the accession of Jehoahaz to the throne, and perhaps also in consequence of the complaint which Eliakim brought before him in regard to this matter, Necho set out with a part of his forces to Jerusalem, while the remainder of his troops pursued their way at leisure towards

- ²condemned the land in an hundred talents of silver and a talent of gold.
- 4 And the king of Egypt made Eliakim his brother king over Judah and Jerusalem, and turned his name to Jehoiakim. And Necho took ^bJehoahaz his brother, and carried him to Egypt.
- 5 Jehoiakim ^cwas twenty and five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem: and he did *that which was evil* in the sight of the LORD his God. Against ^ahim came up Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and bound him in ³fetters, to ^ccarry him to Babylon.
- 7 Nebuchadnezzar ^falso carried of the vessels of the house of the LORD to Babylon, and put them in his temple at Babylon.
- 8 Now the rest of the acts of Jehoiakim, and his abominations which he did, and that which was found in him, behold, they *are* written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah: and ⁴Jehoiachin his son reigned in his stead.
- 9 Jehoiachin ^gwas eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned three months and ten days in Jerusalem: and he did *that which was evil* in the sight of the LORD. And ⁵when the year was expired, king Nebuchadnezzar sent and brought him to Babylon, ^hwith the ⁶goodly vessels of the house of the LORD, and made Zedekiah his brother king over Judah and Jerusalem.
- 11 Zedekiah ⁱwas one and twenty years old when he began to reign, and

B. C. 610.

² muled.
^b Eze 19. 3.
^c 2 Ki. 23. 36, 37.
^d Jer. 22. 13-19.
^e Jer. 26. 21-23.
^f 2 Ki. 24. 1.
^g Eze. 19. 5-9.
^h Or, chains.
ⁱ Foretold.
^j Hab 1. 6, 10.
^k 2 Ki. 24. 6.
^l Dan. 1. 1.
^m Jeconiah,
ⁿ 1 Chr. 3. 16.
^o 2 Ki. 24. 8.
^p at the
^q return of
^r the year.
^s Dan. 1. 1.
^t vessels of
^u desire.
^v 2 Ki. 24. 17.
^w Jer. 52. 1.

Riblah, laid a tribute on the country, raised Eliakim (Jehoiakim) as his vassal to the throne, and, on his departure, brought Jehoahaz captive with him to Riblah. Riblah stood near "the entering in of Hamath," over the northern extremity of Anti-Lebanon' (*Porter's 'Damascus,'* ii., p. 336). The old expositors mostly assumed that Necho, after the battle of Megiddo, marched directly against Carchemish, and then on his return came to Jerusalem. The improbability, indeed the impossibility, of his doing so appears from this: that Carchemish was from 400 to 500 miles from Megiddo, so that within "three months" an army could not possibly make its way thither, conquer the fenced city Carchemish, and then march back a still greater distance to Jerusalem, and take that city (*Keil*). 3. an hundred talents of silver—£3,418, 15s. and a talent of gold—£5,475. Total amount of tribute, £8,893, 15s. 4. carried him (Jehoahaz) to Egypt—there he died (*Jer. xxii. 10-12*).

5-8.—JEHOIAKIM, REIGNING ILL, IS CARRIED INTO BABYLON.

5. Jehoiakim . . . did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord—*i.e.*, he followed the course of his idolatrous predecessors; and the people, to a great extent disinclined to the reforming policy of his father, eagerly availed themselves of the vicious licence which his lax administration restored. His character is portrayed with a masterly hand in the prophecy of Jeremiah (ch. xxii. 13-19). As the deputy of the king of Egypt, he departed further than his predecessor from the principles of Josiah's government; and in trying to meet the insatiable cupidity of his master by grinding exactions from his subjects, he recklessly plunged into all evil. 6. Against him came up Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon. This refers to the first expedition of Nebuchadnezzar against Palestine, in the lifetime of his father Nabolassar, who, being old and infirm, adopted his son as joint-sovereign, and despatched him, with the command of his army, against the Egyptian invaders of his empire (*Berosus*, in *Josephus contra Apion*, i., 19; also 'Antiquities,' b. x., ch. ii., 1). Nebuchadnezzar defeated them at Carchemish, and drove them out of Asia, and reduced

all the provinces west of the Euphrates to obedience,—among the rest the kingdom of Jehoiakim, who became a vassal of the Assyrian empire (2 Ki. xxiv. 1). Jehoiakim, at the end of three years, threw off the yoke, being influenced by the strong popular bias of his subjects towards Egypt, and at the same time being probably instigated to revolt by the solicitations of Pharaoh-Necho, who planned a new expedition against Carchemish. But he was completely vanquished by the Babylonian king, who stripped him of all his possessions between the Euphrates and the Nile (2 Ki. xxiv. 7). Then marching against the Egyptians' ally in Judah, he took Jerusalem, carried away a portion of the sacred vessels of the temple, perhaps in lieu of the unpaid tribute, and deposited them in the temple of his god, Belus, at Babylon (*Dan. i. 2; v. 2*). Though Jehoiakim had been taken prisoner, and it was designed at first to transport him in chains to Babylon, he was allowed to remain in his tributary kingdom. But having given, not long after, some new offence, Jerusalem was besieged by a host of Assyrian dependents, in a sally against whom Jehoiakim was killed (see on 2 Ki. xxiv. 2-7; also *Jer. xxii. 18, 19; xxxvi. 30*).

9. Jehoiachin was eight years old—called also Jeconiah or Coniah (*Jer. xxii. 23*). "Eight" should have been 'eighteen,' probably from a mistake in transcribing the numeral letters of the Hebrew text (*Kennicott*), as appears from 2 Ki. xxiv. 8, and also from the full development of his ungodly principles and habits (see *Ezek. xix. 5-7*). His reign being of so short duration cannot be considered at variance with the prophetic denunciation against his father (*Jer. xxxvi. 30*). But his appointment by the people gave umbrage to Nebuchadnezzar, who, "when the year was expired" (*v. 10*)—*i.e.*, in the spring, when campaigns usually began—came in person against Jerusalem, captured the city, and sent Jehoiachin in chains to Babylon, removing at the same time all the nobles and most skillful artisans, pillaging all the remaining treasures both of the temple and palace (see on 2 Ki. xxiv. 8-17).

11-21.—ZEDEKIAH'S REIGN.

11. Zedekiah. Nebuchadnezzar appointed him. His name, originally Mattaniah, was, according to

12 reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. And he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD his God, and humbled not himself before Jeremiah the prophet, *speaking* from the mouth of the LORD. And ^jhe also rebelled against king Nebuchadnezzar, who had made him swear by God: but he ^kstiffened his neck, and hardened his heart from turning unto the LORD God of Israel.

14 Moreover all the chief of the priests and the people transgressed very much after all the abominations of the heathen, and polluted the house of the LORD which he had hallowed in Jerusalem. And ^tthe LORD God of their fathers sent to them ^vby his messengers, rising up ^sbetimes, and sending; because he had compassion ^mon his people, and on his dwelling-place: but ⁿthey mocked the messengers of God, and ^odespised his words, and ^pmisused his prophets, until the ^qwrath of the LORD arose against his people, till *there was* no ^rremedy.

17 Therefore ^rhe brought upon them the king of the Chaldees, who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young man or maiden, old man, or him that stooped for age; he gave *them* all into his hand. And ^sall the vessels of the house of God, great and small, and the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king, and of his princes; all *these* he brought to Babylon. And ^tthey burnt the house of God, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem, and burnt all the palaces thereof with fire, and destroyed all the goodly vessels thereof. And ^uthem that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon; where ^vthey were servants to him and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia: 21 to fulfil the word of the LORD by the mouth of ^wJeremiah, until the land ^xhad enjoyed her sabbaths: *for* as long as she lay desolate ^yshe kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years.

B. C. 599.
 j Ex. 17. 15.
 2 Ki. 21. 20.
 Eze. 17. 11-20.
 k 2 Ki. 17. 14.
 Neh. 9. 16, 17.
 l Jer. 25. 3.
 m by the hand of his messengers.
 n That is, continually and circumspectly.
 o Hos. 11. 8.
 p Jer. 5. 12.
 q Pro. 1. 25.
 r Jer. 32. 3.
 s Ps. 74. 1.
 t healing.
 u Ezra 9. 7.
 v 2 Ki. 25. 13.
 w Ps. 74. 6, 7.
 x Jer. 7. 4, 14.
 y the remainder from the sword.
 z 2 Ki. 25. 11.
 aa Jer. 27. 7.
 ab Jer. 25. 9.
 ac Lev. 26. 34.
 ad Lev. 25. 4, 5.

the custom of Oriental conquerors, changed into Zedekiah; and though the son of Josiah (1 Chr. iii. 15; Jer. i. 2, 3; xxxvii. 1), he is called (v. 10) the brother of Jehoiachin, *i. e.*, according to the latitude of Hebrew style in words expressing affinity, his relative or kinsman (see on 2 Ki. xxiv. 18; xxvi. 1-21; cf. 1 Chr. iii. 15; Jer. xxxvii. 1, where he is described as uncle; also Gen. xiii. 8; xiv. 16; xxix. 12-15). 13. **who had made him swear.** Zedekiah received his crown on the express condition of taking a solemn oath of fealty to the king of Babylon (Ezek. xvii. 13), so that his revolt, by joining in a league with Pharaoh-Hophra, king of Egypt, involved the crime of perjury (see on 2 Ki. xxv. 1-7; also an account of the war between Nebuchadnezzar and Pharaoh-Hophra (*Aprics*); an account of Zedekiah in *Rauvlinson's* 'Herodotus,' ii., p. 386). His own pride and obdurate impiety, the incurable idolatry of the nation, and their reckless disregard of prophetic warnings, brought down on his already sadly reduced kingdom the long-threatened judgment of God. Nebuchadnezzar, the executioner of the divine vengeance, commenced a third siege of Jerusalem, which, after holding out for a year and a half, was taken in the eleventh year of the reign of Zedekiah, resulting in the burning of the temple, with, most probably, the ark, and in the overthrow of the kingdom of Judah (see on 2 Ki. xxv.; Ezek. xii. 13; xvii. 16).

15. **the Lord God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers.** So Haggai is styled. So is the priest (Mal. ii. 7), and the Baptist (Mal. iii. 1; Luke vii. 27). The word is used here as synonymous with "prophets."

20. **them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon.** The humiliating and destructive aggression of the Chaldeans on the

kingdom of Judah was followed by the removal of Jewish captives to Babylon, in accordance with the prophetic word of the Lord, announced first by Isaiah to Hezekiah privately (2 Ki. xx. 17, 18; also Isa. xliv. 28; xlv. 1-19), and afterwards by Jeremiah (xxix. 10) publicly with respect to the duration of the captivity. **servants to him and his sons.** The kings of Babylon, as of Persia, were ambitious of having a number of handsome, beautiful, well-formed, and accomplished youths in their royal retinue. Hence they took the royal princes and aristocratic young men of Judah to the court of Babylon, (Dan. i.) **until the reign of the kingdom of Persia—*lit.***, until the king of the kingdom of the Persians. 21. **until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths.** The return of every seventh was to be held as a sabbatic year, a season of rest to all classes, even to the land itself, which was to be fallow. This divine institution, however, was neglected—how soon and how long, appears from the prophecy of Moses (Lev. xxvi. 34), and of Jeremiah in this passage (see also marg. ref.), which told that for divine retribution it was now to remain desolate seventy years. As the Assyrian conquerors usually colonized their conquered provinces, so remarkable a deviation in Palestine from their customary policy must be ascribed to the overruling providence of God. **for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years.** Assuming that the Jewish people had neglected to allow their land the rest of the Sabbatic year, as the Mosaic law required, during the long period of 490 years, but tilled and cropped it without intermission during the whole time of the monarchy, the judgment of God was very striking in making their national punishment correspond to the continuous duration of their sin. For in the course of those

22 Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD *spoken* by the mouth of ²Jeremiah might be accomplished, the LORD stirred up the spirit of ³Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and *put it* also in writing, 23 saying, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath ^athe LORD God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which *is* in Judah: who *is* there among you of all his people? The LORD his God *be* with him, and let him go up.

B. C. 536.
 Jer. 29. 10.
 Jer. 25. 12,
 11.
 Jer. 32. 42,
 41.
 Jer. 33. 10,
 14.
 Heb. 10. 23.
 Isa 44. 23.
 Dan. 2. 21.

490 years, seventy years ought to have been kept as sabbaths, and this period of rest, of which it had been sinfully deprived, was to be compensated to it by the allotted term of their captivity in Babylon. This exact correspondence between the sin and the punishment of the Jews will appear still more remarkable from the circumstance,

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which, there is reason to believe, is historically true, that both the northern and the southern kingdoms of Israel and Judah were overthrown in a sabbatical year.

22, 23.—CYRUS'S PROCLAMATION.

22. the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus—(see on Ezra i. 1-3.)

- 1 **N**OW in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD "by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying,
 2 Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build

B. C. 536.
 CHAP. I.
 a 2 Chr 33, 22.
 b Lev. 26. 42.
 1 caused a voice to pass.

CHAP. I. 1-6.—PROCLAMATION OF CYRUS FOR BUILDING THE TEMPLE.

1. Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia [בְּרִשְׁתָּא שְׁנַת אֲדָרָה; Septuagint, κηρος]—the name which, on his ascending the Persian throne, this ruler assumed, instead of his original appellation Agradates (*Strabo*, xv. 3), Coresh being derived from a Persian word signifying the sun (*Photius*, 'Epitome,' *Ctesias*, ch. xlix.; also *Gesenius*, sub voce). He was, according to Herodotus and Xenophon, the son of Cambyses, a Persian prince of the royal house of Achæmenidæ, and Mandane, daughter of Astyages, king of the Medes. *Ctesias's* account is, that on the defeat of Astyages, to whom he stood in no previous relationship, he adopted that old sovereign as his grandfather, and afterwards married his daughter Amytis. His military courage and extraordinary bravery, in an age when feats of personal prowess were considered qualities of the highest importance, raised him to be the leader of the Persians, and eventually founder of the Persian empire, B. C. 536. His dominions, which were at first confined to the province of Persia, were successively augmented by the addition of Media, Bactria, Lydia, Elam, with Susiana, Asia Minor, Babylonia and Assyria, Samaria and Judea. He seems to have meditated an invasion of Egypt; and from several successful expeditions in Central Asia, it is probable that he contemplated the extension of his conquests to the Indus. These, without mentioning many smaller dependencies, constituted the wide-spread Persian empire of which Cyrus was the mighty ruler. He had been king of Persia for many years before the issuing of his remarkable edict concerning the emancipation and restoration of the Jews; and therefore the words "in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia," must, in accordance with ch. v. 13, be interpreted as meaning, not the beginning of his reign, but the first year of his acquisition of Babylon. that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled—(see Jer. xxv. 12; xxix. 10.) There is no discrepancy, as has been alleged by some writers, between this statement of Ezra, and that of *Josephus*, in reference to the origin of Cyrus's proclamation. The words of *Josephus* are these ('Antiquities,' b. xi., ch. i., secs. 1 and 2):—"This was known to Cyrus by his reading the book which Isaiah left behind him of his prophecies; for this prophet said, that God had spoken thus to him in a secret vision. "My will is that Cyrus, whom I have appointed to be king over many and great nations, send back my people to their own nation, and build my temple." This was foretold by Isaiah 140 years before the temple was demolished. No passage containing a divine declaration in these express terms is to be found in the writings of Isaiah. But there is an intimation (*Isa.* xlv. 25), of or to Cyrus, to the same purport: "He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, thy Foundation

shall be laid" (cf. *Isa.* xiii. 14; xlv. 1-4). These were the passages of Isaiah to which the attention of Cyrus was most probably directed by Daniel, and of which *Josephus* gives the general purport in the passage we have quoted. But Ezra, in referring to 'the fulfilment of the word of the Lord as spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah,' had in view, not the origin of the edict of Cyrus concerning the restoration of the Jews, but the fact of its being issued directly on the termination of the seventy years appointed for the captivity. It was to the duration of the exile that Ezra was pointing; and that there is no difference between the sacred and the Jewish historian in this matter, will appear from a full citation of the opening paragraph in the chapter of *Josephus*. 'In the first year of the reign of Cyrus, which was the seventieth from the day that our people were removed out of their own land into Babylon, God commiserated the captivity and calamity of these poor people, according as he had foretold to them by *Jeremiah the prophet*, before the destruction of the city, that after they had served Nebuchadnezzar and his posterity, and after they had undergone that servitude seventy years, he would restore them again to the land of their fathers, and they should build their temple and enjoy their ancient prosperity. And these things God did afford them; for he stirred up the mind of Cyrus, and made him write this throughout all Asia: "Thus saith Cyrus the king, Since God Almighty hath appointed me to be king of the habitable earth, I believe that he is that God which the nation of the Israelites worship; for, indeed, he foretold my name by the prophets, and that I should build him a house at Jerusalem in the country of Judea." This reference is a parenthetic statement of the historian, and did not form part of the proclamation. the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus. As Egypt was always a formidable rival to the great world-empires of ancient Asia, Cyrus might be desirous of possessing an advanced post in the south of Judea, either as a protection against the intrusions of the Egyptian sovereign, or from which he himself might make a rapid descent upon the lands of the Nile, and nothing must have appeared to a sagacious politician more conducive to promote such ends, as to restore to their native mountains a people who would occupy them with ardour and fidelity, as the custodiers of a sacred deposit. But a higher impulse than that of political considerations animated Cyrus.

2. The Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth. Though this is in the Oriental style of hyperbole (see also *Dan.* iv. 1), it was literally true that the Persian empire was the great ruling power in the world at that time, much greater in extent than the most potent of the empires that had preceded it; for the largest of these was included amongst its provinces (cf. *Rauwinson's* 'Herodotus,' i., pp. 401-403; and ii., p. 552; *Ritter's* 'Erdkunde,' viii., 1-8; *Rosenmüller's* 'Bib-

3 him an house at Jerusalem, which *is* in Judah. Who *is there* among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which *is* in Judah, and build the house of the LORD God of Israel (he *is* the God,) which *is* in Jerusalem. And whosoever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth, let the men of his place ² help him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts, besides the free-will offering for the house of God that *is* in Jerusalem.

5 Then rose up the chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests, and the Levites, with all *them* whose spirit God "had raised, to go up to build the house of the LORD which *is* in Jerusalem. And all they that *were* about them ³ strengthened their hands with vessels of silver, with gold, with goods, and with beasts, and with precious things, besides all *that* was willingly offered.

B. C. 536.
 c Deut. 3. 24.
 2 Sam. 22.
 32.
 1 Ki. 8. 23.
 1 Ki. 18. 39.
 Ps. 66. 10.
 Isa. 37. 16.
 Dan 6. 26.
 Mark 12. 32.
 2 lift Lim
 up.
 d Pro. 16. 1.
 Phil. 2. 13.
 3 That is,
 helped
 them

lical Geography,' i., p. 203). *Joseph Mede* remarks that, previous to the captivity, the divine Being was styled in the Scriptures "the Lord of Hosts." But after the residence in Babylon, he is called "the God of heaven." he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem. The phraseology of this proclamation, independently of the express testimony of *Josephus* ('Antiquities,' b. xi., ch. i., sec. 1), affords indisputable evidence that Cyrus had seen, probably through means of Daniel, his venerable prime minister and favourite (Dan. vi. 8; ix. 25), those prophecies, in which, 200 years before he was born, his name, his victorious career, and the important services he should render to the Jews, were distinctly foretold (Isa. xlv. 28; xlv. 1-4). The existence of predictions so remarkable, uttered at a time when the Babylonians, who had carried away the Jews into captivity, were themselves subject to the Assyrians, and fulfilled seventy years after, led him to acknowledge that all his kingdoms were gifts bestowed on him by "the Lord God of heaven," and prompted him to fulfil the duty which had been laid upon him long before his birth. This was the source and origin of the great favour he showed to the Jews; for it must be evident to every understanding that such language as is used in the proclamation of Cyrus betokens the inspiration of other teaching than that of the magi—that either it was drawn up by Daniel, or written under the influence of communications held with him. The whole tenor of the history, as well as our knowledge of the characters of Cyrus and of Daniel, warrants the conclusion that the prophet introduced his royal master to a full acquaintance with the divine revelations in which the name of Cyrus was mentioned. It must be added, however, that *Sir H. Rawlinson* has proved, from the cuneiform inscriptions, that the old Persians recognized one Supreme Deity, Ormazd, who held the direction of all worldly affairs. In all public records and documents of importance, the Persian king introduces an acknowledgment that 'Ormazd has bestowed on him his empire.' It was an easy transition, therefore, for Cyrus to perceive that the God of the Jews was the same Supreme Being as the Persians worshipped, while the peculiar title, "the Lord God of heaven," indicates the further influence of Daniel's teaching. The proclamation, though issued "in the first year of Cyrus," did not take effect till the year following. 3. Who is there among you of all his people? The purport of the edict was to grant full permission to those Jewish exiles, in every part of his kingdom, who chose to return to their own country, as well as to recommend those of their countrymen who remained, to aid the poor and feeble on their way, and contribute liberally towards the rebuilding of the

temple. he is the God [יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ]. The fact of his name and destiny having been predicted so long before his birth, seems to have impressed his mind with a conviction of the supremacy of Jehovah to all other gods. And to this conviction Cyrus would be the more easily led by the character of the Persian religion, which was so decidedly monotheistic, that it was an easy and short transition to the Jewish faith, the purity and simplicity of which had probably attracted the king's admiration, and led him apparently to identify the Persian Ormazd with the Jewish Jehovah (*Rawlinson's* 'Ancient Monarchies,' iv., 329, 339). His ready obedience to the command for the restoration of the house of God in Jerusalem was the more remarkable, that the old Persians were opposed to the erection of temples, as an unbecoming attempt to restrict the Deity. [The Septuagint entirely fritters away the meaning of this significant clause by rendering the words *αὐτός ὁ θεός ὁ ἐν Ἱερουσαλήμ*, this is the God who is in Jerusalem.]

5. Then rose up the chief of the fathers, &c. The paternal and ecclesiastical chiefs of the later captivity—those of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, with some also from other tribes (1 Chr. ix. 3) who retained their attachment to the pure worship of God—naturally took the lead in this movement; and their example was followed by all whose piety and patriotism were strong enough to brave the various discouragements attending the enterprise. They were liberally assisted by multitudes of their captive countrymen, who, born in Babylonia, or comfortably established in it by family connections, or the possession of property, chose to remain. Indeed, it is plainly stated that so strong were the ties that bound multitudes to Babylon, and so great the discouragements to undertake the journey to Palestine, that a Divine impulse was necessary to rouse the Jewish people at large to embrace the offered privilege. It seems that their Assyrian friends and neighbours, too, either from a favourable disposition towards the Jewish faith, or from imitation of the court policy, displayed hearty goodwill and great liberality in aiding and promoting the views of the emigrants. It is quite clear, from the general tenor of Cyrus's proclamation, that the Jews within his dominions were not in the house of bondage as their ancestors had been in Egypt. They were exiles, expatriated from their own land, but not slaves. There is no hint of any public or private right of property in them, but, on the contrary, they are spoken of as occupying a respectable position, only in a state of exile, and were probably treated, as *Jahn* thinks, as peaceful and industrious colonists ('Hebrew Commonwealth,' i., p. 161; *Cory's* 'Fragments,' p. 39; cf. *Esth.* vii. 4). Some, indeed, had to be

- 7 Also ^cCyrus the king brought forth the vessels of the house of the LORD, ^fwhich Nebuchadnezzar had brought forth out of Jerusalem, and
 8 had put them in the house of his gods; even those did Cyrus king of Persia bring forth by the hand of Mithredath the treasurer, and numbered
 9 them unto ^gSheshbazzar, the prince of Judah. And this *is* the number of them: thirty chargers of gold, a thousand chargers of silver, nine and
 10 twenty knives, thirty basins of gold, silver basins of a second *sort* four
 11 hundred and ten, and other vessels a thousand. All the vessels of gold and of silver *were* five thousand and four hundred. All *these* did Sheshbazzar bring up with *them* of ⁴the captivity that were brought up from Babylon unto Jerusalem.
- 2 NOW ^athese *are* the children of the ^bprovince that went up out of the captivity, of those which had been carried away, whom ^cNebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away unto Babylon, and came again

B. C. 39.
 * ch. 5. 14.
 ch. 5. 5.
 / 2 Ki. 24. 13.
 ° ch. 5. 14.
 Hag. 1. 1.
 Hag. 2. 2-4.
 Zech. 4. 6-10.
 4 the transportation.
 CHAP. 2.
 ° Neb. 7. 6.
 ° ch. 5. 8.
 ° 2 Ki. 24. 14-16.
 2 Ki. 25. 11.
 2 Chr. 36. 20.

redeemed ere they could be at liberty to depart (Neh. v. 8), but those persons had reduced themselves to servitude by causes which would probably have led to the same degradation in their own land.

7-11.—CYRUS RESTORES THE VESSELS.

7. Cyrus . . . brought forth the vessels of the house of the Lord. Though it is said (see on 2 Ki. xxiv. 13) that these were *cut in pieces*, that would not be done to the large and magnificent vases, and, if they had been divided, the parts could be re-joined. But it may be doubted whether the Hebrew word rendered *cut in pieces* does not signify merely *cut off*—*i. e.*, from further use in the temple. 8. by the hand of Mithredath [מִיְתְרֹדָתַיִם, Mithra, the genius of the sun; Septuagint, Μιθραδατοῦ, Mithridates—*i. e.*, given to or by Mithra]. Rawlinson ('Ancient Monarchies,' iv., 330, 334) distinguishes two forms of Iranic or Persian faith:—one, a pure and spiritual one, held by the old Persians, and long after by the more intelligent classes; and the other a coarse or more material one. Hence, though none of the early kings mention the name of Mithra, his emblem appears on all the known royal tombs except that of Cyrus. In sculptures, where the emblems of Ormazd and Mithra occur together, the position of the former (the Supreme God) is central, that of the latter towards the right hand of the tablet. The solar emblem (a disk or orb) is upon almost all sculptured tombs, but is otherwise of rare occurrence. and numbered them unto Sheshbazzar, the prince of Judah [שֶׁשֶׁבַצְבָּזָר]—a name bestowed in Persia on Zerubbabel (cf. ch. vii. with ii. 2; v. 14), signifying, according to *Gesenius*, from a Persian root, fire-worshipper; but the etymology is uncertain. [Septuagint, Σαράβαζαρ. סִשְׁבָּזַר, the phylarch or head of the tribe of Judah (Num. vii. 2, 10, 11; xxxiv. 18).] 9. thirty chargers of gold [לְשָׁלֹשִׁים]—large basins, slaughter basins; but, according to some, fruit baskets. [Septuagint, ψακκῆρες.] nine and twenty knives [כַּלְמָיִם]—slaughter knives. 10. Thirty basins [לְשָׁלֹשִׁים]—goblets, probably covered with a lid (*Gesenius*) (cf. 1 Chr. xxviii. 17). 11. All the vessels of gold and of silver were five thousand and four hundred. The vessels here specified amount only to the number of 2,499. Hence it is probable that the larger vases only are mentioned, while the inventory of the whole, including great and small, came to the gross sum stated in the text. Sheshbazzar—*i. e.*, Zerubbabel, son of Salathiel (cf. ch. iii. 8; v. 16; cf. 1 Chr. iii. 17). He was born in Babylon, and called by his family Zerubbabel—*i. e.*, sown in

Babylon. Sheshbazzar, signifying 'fire-worshippers,' was the name given him at court, as other names were given to Daniel and his friends. He was recognized among the exiles as hereditary prince of Judah. *them of the captivity that were brought up from Babylon unto Jerusalem.* All the Jewish exiles did not embrace the privilege which the Persian king granted them. The great proportion, born in Babylon, preferred continuing in their comfortable homes to undertaking a distant, expensive, and hazardous journey to a desolate land. For it must be remembered that it was not the fertile regions of Central Palestine the returning exiles were to go to. These were already colonized; and there was no intention to dispossess the colonists. 'It was only the bare, ungenial territory that lay between this and the fertile vales around Hebron, also occupied upon the south, that was contemplated in the proclamation. This must be distinctly borne in mind when, in order to understand the spirit in which the decree was received, we transfer ourselves to the provinces around Babylon, and picture, in comparison with their circumstances there, the position which the Hebrews were invited to occupy' (*Drew's 'Scripture Lands,' pp. 215, 216*). Nor did the returning exiles all go at once. The first band went with Zerubbabel, others afterwards with Ezra, and a large number with Nehemiah at a still later period.

CHAP. II. 1-70.—NUMBER OF THE PEOPLE THAT RETURNED.

1. children of the province—*i. e.*, Judea (ch. v. 8), so called as being now reduced from an illustrious, independent, and powerful kingdom to an obscure, servile, tributary province of the Persian empire. This name is applied by the sacred historian to intimate that the Jewish exiles, though now released from captivity and allowed to return into their own land, were still the subjects of Cyrus, inhabiting a province dependent upon Persia [בְּנֵי הַיְהוּדָה, sons of the province]—*i. e.*, according to *Gesenius*, Israelitish exiles dwelling in the Persian provinces, Medinah meaning a province or district, or satrapy, under the jurisdiction of a Persian prefect or viceroy (Neh. vii. 6; Esth. i. 23; xii. 12, 14; Dan. viii. 2). those which had been carried away—*i. e.*, the descendants, including children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren of those whom Nebuchadnezzar had carried away unto Babylon. Those who are mentioned in the following catalogue, then, were not the ten tribes, who were dispersed into various and scattered districts of Assyria, but the Jewish exiles resident in or around Babylon. Zerubbabel, the prince of Judah, himself resided there; and thither flocked around

2 unto Jerusalem and Judah, every one unto his city; which came with Zerubbabel: Jeshua, Nehemiah, ¹Seraiah, ²Reelaiah, Mordecai, Bilshan, ³Mispar, Bigvai, ⁴Rehum, Baanah.

3 The number of the men of the people of Israel: The children of Parosh, 4 two thousand an hundred seventy and two. The children of Shephatiah, 5 three hundred seventy and two. The children of Arah, ⁶seven hundred 6 seventy and five. The children of ⁷Pahath-moab, of the children of 7 Jeshua and Joab, two thousand eight hundred and twelve. The children 8 of Elam, a thousand two hundred fifty and four. The children of Zattu, 9 nine hundred forty and five. The children of Zaccai, seven hundred and 10 threescore. The children of ⁵Bani, six hundred forty and two. The 12 children of Bebai, six hundred twenty and three. The children of Azgad, 13 a thousand two hundred twenty and two. The children of Adonikam, 14 six hundred sixty and six. The children of Bigvai, two thousand fifty 15 and six. The children of Adin, four hundred fifty and four. The 17 children of Ater of Hezekiah, ninety and eight. The children of Bezai, 18 three hundred twenty and three. The children of ⁶Jorah, an hundred 19 and twelve. The children of Hashum, two hundred twenty and three. 20 The children of ⁷Gibbar, ninety and five. The children of ⁸Beth-lehem,

B. C. 526.

1 Or, Azariah, Neh 7. 7.

2 Cr. Raamiah.

3 Or. Misp reth.

4 Or. Nehum.

5 Neh 7. 10.

6 Neh 7. 11.

5 Or. Binnui, Neh 7. 15.

7 ch 8. 13.

6 Cr. Hariph, Neh. 7. 21.

7 Or. Gibeon, Josh 9. 17.

2 Sam. 21. 2.

Neh 7. 25.

8 Gen 35. 19.

his standard those Jews who formed the first caravan, comprising chiefly or exclusively those of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin who took the initiative in the journey to the land of their fathers, both from their location in Babylon, and from their greater interest in the work of rebuilding Jerusalem and the temple. came again unto Jerusalem and Judah, every one unto his city—either the city that had been occupied by his ancestors, or, as most parts of Judea were then either desolate or possessed by others, the city that was rebuilt and allotted to him now. 2. Which came with Zerubbabel. He was the chief or leader of the first band of returning exiles. The names of other influential persons who were associated in the conducting of the caravan are also mentioned, being extracted probably from the Persian archives, in which the register was preserved. Conspicuous in the number are Joshua, the high priest, and Nehemiah; not, however, the Tirshatha (Neh. vii. 7).

3. The children. This word, as used throughout this catalogue, means posterity or descendants. of Parosh [פָּרוֹשׁ]; Septuagint, Vatican, Φαρές; Alexandrine, Φορές]. Besides the 2,172 exiles belonging to this chief house, who returned to Palestine with the first caravan under Zerubbabel (Sheshbazzar), a second detachment of 130 males came with Ezra (ch. vii. 3) (see as to their labour on the public work, Neh. iii. 25; x. 14; and the unlawful marriages of some of them, ch. x. 25). 4. The children of Shephatiah—[Septuagint, Σαφατία]. In addition to this first band of 372 (cf. Neh. vii. 9), a second detachment of eighty males accompanied Ezra (ch. vii. 8). 5. The children of Arah, seven hundred seventy and five. The number is stated in Neh. vii. to have been only 652. It is probable that all mentioned as belonging to this family repaired to the general place of rendezvous, or had enrolled their names at first as intending to go; but in the interval of preparation some died, others were prevented by sickness or insurmountable obstacles, so that ultimately no more than 652 came to Jerusalem. 6. The children of Pahath-moab [פַּהַת מוֹאָב], prefect of Moab; Septuagint, Φαδμοάβ]. 'The origin of this singular name is perhaps traceable to an ancestor who had dominion in Moab (1 Chr. iv. 22: cf. 1 Chr. ii. 54; iv. 14), and from him it con-

tinued to be traditionally bestowed upon his family. Their high rank in the tribe of Judah is indicated by their being placed fourth in the order of this catalogue, and second in the signing (Neh. x. 14). 7. The children of Elam—[Septuagint, Ἀλάμ]. The Bene-Elam, who went with the first caravan, under Zerubbabel, to the number of 1,254, were followed by a second body of seventy-one men, with Ezra (ch. viii. 7) (see as to their zeal in the affair of the foreign marriages, ch. x. 2, 26; and of the covenant-signing, Neh. x. 14). 8. The children of Zattu—[Septuagint, Vatican, Ζαττωά; Alexandrine, Ζαττωά]. In addition to the 945, another division of this family afterwards went with Ezra (see on ch. viii. 5). 9. The children of Zaccai. The number of this family accompanying Zerubbabel amounted to 700 (cf. Neh. vii. 14). The name is identical with Zaccheus (Luko xix. 2). 10. The children of Bani—Or Binnui, (Neh. vii. 15) [Septuagint, Βανού]. 11. The children of Bebai—[Septuagint, Βαβαί]. Besides those who went in the first, twenty-eight of this family enrolled themselves in the second under Ezra (ch. viii. 11) (see as to their implication in the matter of marrying heathen wives, ch. x. 28; and to their signing the covenant, Neh. x. 15). 12. The children of Azgad [אַזְגָּד, strong in fortune; Septuagint, Ἀσγάδ (cf. Neh. vii. 17; x. 16)]. 13. The children of Adonikam [אַדוֹנִיקָם, lord of the enemy] (cf. ch. viii. 13; Neh. vii. 18)—the same as Adonijah, my lord is Jehovah (Neh. x. 17). 14. The children of Bigvai—[Septuagint, Vatican, Βιγούε; Alexandrine, Βιγούαι]. Whether this was the person mentioned as one of the influential ten (v. 2), or another chief, is unknown. 15. The children of Adin—[Septuagint, Ἀδίν]. 16. The children of Ater of Hezekiah [אַתֵּר, shut up, perhaps dumb, Gesenius; Septuagint, Ἀτήρ τῶν Ἐζεκία, probably son of Hezekiah, a person of note, but not the king]. 17. The children of Bezai—[Septuagint, Βασσαί]. 18. The children of Jorah—[Septuagint, Ἰωράι—called Hariph in the parallel passage, Neh. vii. 24; and Harim, Ezra x. 31. 19. The children of Hashum—[Septuagint Ἀσούμ]. Hitherto the different divisions of the returning exiles under Zerubbabel are distinguished by the name of their ancestor; those that follow, down to v. 35, are denoted by the city or village which was the head-quarters of their family, 20. The chil-

- 22 an hundred twenty and three. The men of Netophah, fifty and six.
 23 The men of Anathoth, an hundred twenty and eight. The children of
 25 ⁸Azmaveth, forty and two. The children of Kirjath-arim, Chephirah, and
 26 Beeroth, seven hundred and forty and three. The children of ^hRamah
 27 and Gaba, six hundred twenty and one. The men of Michmas, an
 28 hundred twenty and two. The men of Beth-el and Ai, two hundred
 29 twenty and three. The children of Nebo, fifty and two. The children
 31 of Magbish, an hundred fifty and six. The children of the other ⁱElam,
 32 a thousand two hundred fifty and four. The children of Harim, three
 33 hundred and twenty. The children of Lod, ⁹Hadid, and Ono, seven
 34 hundred twenty and five. The children of ^jJericho, three hundred forty
 35 and five. The children of Senaah, three thousand and six hundred and
 thirty.
 36 The priests: the children of ^kJedaiah, of the house of Jeshua, nine
 37 hundred seventy and three. The children of ^lImmer, a thousand fifty

B. C. 536.

- ⁸ Or, Beth-azmaveth, Neh. 7. 23.
⁹ Josh. 18. 23.
ⁱ ver. 7.
^j Neh. 7. 34.
^k Or, Harid, as it is in some copies.
^l Deut. 34. 3.
 1 Ki. 16. 34.
 2 Chr. 25. 15.
 Neh. 7. 28.
^m 1 Chr. 24. 7.
 1 Chr. 24. 14.
 ch. 10. 20.
 Neh. 7. 40.

dren of Gibbar—[Septuagint, Γαβέρ]—called (Neh. vii. 25) Gibeon. 21. The children of Beth-lehem—[Septuagint, Βηθλαέμ]. 22. The men of Netophah—[Septuagint, Νετοφά; Alexandrine, Νεφωτά]—probably near Beth-lehem (cf. Neh. viii. 26 with 1 Chr. ii. 54; also 1 Chr. ix. 16; xxvii. 13, 15). 23. The men of Anathoth—[Septuagint, Ἀναθωθ]—Anata, about three miles north of Jerusalem. It is pleasant to see so many of this Jewish town returning. It was a city of the Levites; but the people spurned the prophetic warning, and called forth against themselves one of his severest predictions (Jer. xxxii. 27-55). This prophecy was fulfilled in the Assyrian conquest. Anathoth was laid and continued a heap of ruins. But the people having been brought during the captivity to a better state of mind, returned, and their city was rebuilt. 24. The children of Azmaveth—[Septuagint, Ἀζμώθ]—a town of Benjamin, near Anathoth. 25. The children of Kirjath-arim. The name occurs in this form here only; in Neh. vii. 29 it is mentioned by the common appellation Kirjath-jearim. [Septuagint, Vatican, Καριαθιαρίμ; Alexandrine, Καριαθιραίμ; Kuriet-el-Enab.] Chephirah—the hamlet [Septuagint, Vatican, Χαφίρα; Alexandrine, Καφίρα]—one of the Gibeonite towns within the territory of Benjamin. and Beeroth—wells [Septuagint, Βηροθ]. Along with the preceding places it formed the fourth city of the Gibeonites. 26. The children of Ramah and Gaba—the Ramah of Benjamin (Er-râm), on the east of the Nâbulâs road. Gaba = Geba—a little east of Gibeah (now Fela), which is half an hour east from Ramah (Reland, 'Palestine,' pp. 801, 810; Robinson's 'Biblical Researches,' ii., pp. 331-334; Handbook of Syria and Palestine, pp. 215, 326, 346). 27. The men of Michmas—or Michmash [שׁ in later Hebrew was softened into ס; Septuagint, Μαχμας] (Mûkmas), situated in a north-easterly direction, right opposite Jeba (Robinson's 'Biblical Researches,' ii., p. 113; 'Handbook of Syria and Palestine,' pp. 214, 215). 28. The men of Beth-el and Ai—(see on Josh. viii.) 29. The children of Nebo—[Septuagint, Vatican, Ναβόν; Alexandrine, Ναβω]—the Bethoannaba of Eusebius and Jerome ('Onomast.,' article 'Anob;,' Reland, 'Palästina,' p. 661); supposed to be identified in Beit-nâbah, which lies between Beth-el and Ai on one side, and Lydda (the ancient Diospolis) on the other, about twelve miles north-west of Jerusalem, and a little to the right of Yâlo (Aijalon) (Robinson's 'Biblical Researches,' iii., 64). 30. The children of Magbish—(gathering) [Septuagint, Μαγβίσις]. Most probably the name of a place, though some regard it as that of a man.

31. The children of the other Elam [עַלְמַי אֲחֵרִים—a second or another Elam—Ἡλαμῶς]. This is the name of a chief. The identity of name, and the number of his descendants, with those of the former Elam, might excite a suspicion of the notice being inserted through a clerical error, were it not repeated in Neh. vii. 34. 32. The children of Harim—[Septuagint, Vatican, Ἡράμ; Alexandrine, Ἡρόμα]. This, if the name of a person, was probably taken from a place. 33. The children of Lod, Hadid, and Ono—[Septuagint, Vatican, Λοδαί; Alexandrine, Λοδαίῶ;—Lydda; Ludd (1 Chr. viii. 12: cf. Acts ix. 32-38). "Hadid" (sharp), a Benjamite town on a craggy mountain. Eusebius ('Onomast.,' 'Adithaim') mentions it under the name of Aditha, as lying to the east of Lydda (Diospolis) (*Van de Velde*, 'Syria and Palestine,' i., p. 444). "Ono" [Septuagint, Ὀνώ] (now Beit Unia), according to *Winer* ('Realwörterbuch'), about three miles from Lydda. These three towns are commonly associated in the post-exilic history. 34. The children of Jericho—[Septuagint, Vatican, Ἰεριχῶ; Alexandrine, Ἰερεχῶ] (see on Josh. vi.; also 1 Ki. xvi. 34). 35. The children of Senaah—(cf. Neh. ii. 3, where the article is prefixed.) It is probably the name of a place, Magdal-senna, the great Senna (*Jerome*, 'Onomast.,' voce 'Senna'), seven miles north of Jericho. The number recorded in connection with Senna being greatly in excess of other towns mentioned in the catalogue, suggested to *Bertheau* the probability of its being the name of a district.

36. The priests. Each of their families was ranged under its prince or head, like those of the other tribes. It will be remembered that the whole body was divided into twenty-four courses, one of which, in rotation, discharged the sacerdotal duties every week, and each division was called after the name of its first prince or chief. It appears from this passage that only four of the courses of the priests returned from the Babylonian captivity; but these four courses were afterwards, as the families increased, divided into twenty-four, which were distinguished by the names of the original courses appointed by David. Hence we find the course of Abijah or Abia (1 Chr. xxiv. 10) subsisting at the commencement of the Christian era (Luke i. 5). the children of Jedaiah, of the house of Jeshua—appointed by lot head of the second priestly course (1 Chr. xxiv. 7), distinguished here by his family connection with Jeshua from another sacerdotal family of the name of Jedaiah (Neh. xii. 6, 7, 19). 37. The children of Immer—head of

- 38 and two. The children of ^mPashur, a thousand two hundred forty and
 39 seven. The children of ⁿHarim, a thousand and seventeen.
 40 The Levites: the children of Jeshua, and Kadmiel, of the children of
 41 ¹⁰Hodaviah, seventy and four. The singers: the children of Asaph, an
 42 hundred twenty and eight. The children of the porters: the children of
 Shallum, the children of Ater, the children of Talmon, the children of
 Akkub, the children of Hatita, the children of Shobai, *in* all an hundred
 thirty and nine.
 43 The ^oNethinims: the children of Ziha, the children of Hasupha, the
 44 children of Tabbaoth, the children of Keros, the children of ¹¹Siaha, the
 45 children of Padon, the children of Lebanah, the children of Hagabah, the
 46 children of Akkub, the children of Hagab, the children of ¹²Shalmal, the
 47 children of Hanan, the children of Giddel, the children of Gahar, the
 48 children of Reaiah, the children of Rezin, the children of Nekoda, the
 49 children of Gazzam, the children of Uzza, the children of Paseah, the
 50 children of Besai, the children of Asnah, the children of Mehumim, the
 51 children of ¹³Nephusim, the children of Bakbuk, the children of Hakupha,
 52 the children of Harhur, the children of ¹⁴Bazluth, the children of Mehida,
 53 the children of Harsha, the children of Barkos, the children of Sisera, the
 54 children of Thamah, the children of Neziah, the children of Hatipha.
 55 The children of ^pSolomon's servants: the children of Sotai, the children
 56 of Sophereth, the children of ¹⁵Peruda, the children of Jaalah, the
 57 children of Darkon, the children of Giddel, the children of Shephatiah,
 the children of Hattil, the children of Pochereth of Zebaim, the children
 58 of ¹⁶Ami. All the ^qNethinims, and the children of ^rSolomon's servants,
were three hundred ninety and two.
 59 And these *were* they which went up from Tel-melah, Tel-harsa, Cherub,
¹⁷Addan, and Immer; but they could not show their father's house, and
 60 their ¹⁸seed, whether they *were* of Israel: the children of Delaiah, the
 children of Tobiah, the children of Nekoda, six hundred fifty and two.
 61 And of the children of the priests: the children of Habaiiah, the children

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^m 1 Chr. 9. 13
ch. 10. 22.
Neh. 7. 41.
ⁿ 1 Chr. 24. 8.
ch. 10. 21.
Neh. 7. 42.
¹⁰ Or, Judah,
ch. 3. 9.
Called also
Hodevah,
Neh. 7. 43.
^o 1 Chr. 9. 2.
Neh. 7. 46-
56.
Neh. 10. 28.
¹¹ Or, Sia.
¹² Or,
Shamial.
¹³ Or, Nephi-
shesim.
¹⁴ Or,
Bazlith,
Neh. 7. 54.
^p 1 Ki. 9. 21.
¹⁵ Or, Perida,
Neh. 7. 57.
¹⁶ Or, Amon,
Neh. 7. 59.
^q Deut. 29. 11.
Josh. 9. 21.
27.
^r 1 Chr. 9. 2.
ch. 7. 7.
Neh. 7. 60.
^r 1 Ki. 9. 21.
¹⁷ Or,
Addon,
Neh. 7. 61.
¹⁸ Or,
pedigree.

the sixteenth course (1 Chr. xxiv. 14: cf. Neh. vii. 40 with Ezra x. 20). 38. The children of Pashur—the son of Malchijah (Jer. xxxviii. 1). The chief of this family had, at the time of the restoration, become the head of a priestly course. 39. The children of Harim. He was the head of the third division of the priests (1 Chr. xxiv. 8).

40. the children of Jeshua and Kadmiel. Jeshua had assigned him the presidency of the ninth course (1 Chr. xxiv. 11). "Kadmiel"—the existing head of the chief house of Hodariah or Judah (ch. iii. 9). Jeshua and Kadmiel were associated as overseers of the workmen (ch. iii. 9; Neh. ix. 4, 5; x. 9). 41. The singers: the children of Asaph. He was a leader in the temple choir (1 Chr. vi. 39), and this office seems to have continued hereditary in his family (1 Chr. xxv. 1; 2 Chr. xx. 14). 42. The children of the porters: the children of Shallum—(see on 1 Chr. ix. 17.)

43. The Nethinims—[Septuagint, Vatican, *Ναζωιτι*; Alexandrine, *Ναζωριται*. The same version calls them (1 Chr. ix. 2) *βι δεδομμενοι*, given to God (see on Num. iii. 9; viii. 19; xxxi. 47; Josh. ix. 27)]. They were the descendants of the Gibeonites, to whom, as devoted in a humble sphere to the divine service, the name of Nethinim, originally applied to the Levites, came in process of time to be assigned as their exclusive title. They were divided into several distinctive families (*Winer*, 'Handwörterbuch,' ii., sec. 175). 50. Mehumim . . . Nephusim (a branch of Ishmael, 1 Chr. v. 19) . . . 53. Sisera—are other samples of non-Israelite names. 55. The children of Solo-

mon's servants—the strangers, Canaanites, or original inhabitants of the land, whom that monarch enlisted in the building of the temple (1 Ki. ix. 20; 2 Chr. viii. 7). From their association with the Nethinim it may be inferred that, after having been reduced to a servile condition, they continued to assist the former in their services. It appears from the small number (*v.* 55) who returned, that most of the Nethinims, as well as of Solomon's servants, preferred to remain in Babylon to resume their former course of laborious servitude; and it was probably owing to this circumstance that the comparatively few of this humble class who did return are recorded as carefully and honourably as the priests and Levites. Ziha. They had dwelt separately (Neh. iii. 31), as well as had their own superintendents (Neh. xi. 21); and, judging by this Canaanite name and others which follow, they were selected from their own body (cf. Neh. vii. 46).

59. these were they which went up from Tel-melah. [מלח signifies a hill or mound, and hence, from the frequent mounds that formed a marked feature in Babylonia, it was prefixed to the names of many cities in that country. "Tel-melah"—i. e., hill of salt.] Tel-harsa—or Tel-haresah (Neh. vii. 61), hill of the forest. Cherub, Addan (or Addon, Neh. vii. 61) and Immer—places unknown in Babylonia. The returned exiles from these five Babylonian towns, as well as the descendants of the persons mentioned in *v.* 60, were unable, from want of an accurate genealogical register, to establish their Israelitish pedigree. 61. the children of

of Koz, the children of Barzillai; (which took a wife of the daughters of
62 ⁶Barzillai the Gilcadite, and was called after their name:) these sought
their register *among* those that were reckoned by genealogy, but they
were not found; ⁷therefore ¹⁹were they, as polluted, put from the priest-
63 hood. And the ²⁰Tirshatha said unto them, that they ²¹should not eat
of the most holy things, till there stood up a priest with Urim ²²and with
Thummim.

64 The ²³whole congregation together *was* forty and two thousand three
65 hundred *and* threescore, besides their servants and their maids, of whom
there were seven thousand three hundred thirty and seven: and *there*
66 *were* among them two hundred singing men and singing women. Their
horses *were* seven hundred thirty and six; their mules, two hundred forty
67 and five; their camels, four hundred thirty and five; *their asses*, six
thousand seven hundred and twenty.

68 And ²⁴some of the chief of the fathers, when they came to the house of
the LORD which *is* at Jerusalem, offered freely for the house of God to set
69 it up in his place: they gave ²⁵after their ability unto the treasure of the
work threescore and one thousand drams of gold, and five thousand pound
of silver, and one hundred priests' garments.

70 So ²⁶the priests, and the Levites, and *some* of the people, and the singers,
and the porters, and the Nethinims, dwelt in their cities, and all Israel in
their cities.

3 AND when the seventh month was come, and the children of Israel
were in the cities, the people gathered themselves together as one man to

Barzillai. He preferred that name to that of his own family, deeming it a greater distinction to be connected with so noble a family than to be of the house of Levi. But by this worldly ambition he forfeited the dignity and advantages of the priesthood. 63. And the Tirshatha said unto them [תְּרִשְׁתָּה]—a title borne by the Persian governors of Judea (see also Neh. vii. 65-70; viii. 9; x. 1). It is derived from the Persic *torsh*, severe, and is equivalent to 'your severity,' 'your awfulness,' that they should not eat of the most holy things, till there stood up a priest with Urim and with Thummim. Zerubbabel, apparently perplexed about such cases as those of priests being unable to prove their Aaronic descent, deferred his decision until God might be pleased to restore the divinely instituted and long-established method of ascertaining His will, and in the meantime excluded them from performing their sacred functions. His language seems to imply that the Urim and Thummim had been continued till the captivity, and the re-establishment of that means of consulting God was eagerly and confidently anticipated. But a very different view is taken by some of the Tirshatha's words. They are of opinion that, 'as Joshua, the high priest, already officiated, and might have been employed for consultation, just as Phinehas or Abiathar had formerly been, the reference in this passage is not to the Jewish pontiff, but to the Messiah, of whom he was an illustrious type. Though now excluded from all participation with their brethren in the rights and functions of their sacerdotal office, the time would come when all ceremonial distinctions should be abrogated by the introduction of the clear and perfect dispensation of the gospel, and all the members of the Church be on an equality with respect to the enjoyment of her immunities. This interpretation receives some degree of support from the declaration of Moses (Deut. xxxiii. 8) (see *Henderson*, 'On Inspiration,' p. 123).

64. The whole congregation together was forty and two thousand three hundred and threescore.

This gross amount is 12,000 more than the particular numbers given in the catalogue, when added together, come to. Reckoning up the smaller numbers, we shall find that they amount to 29,818 in this chapter, and to 31,089 in the parallel chapter of Nehemiah. Ezra also mentions 494 persons omitted by Nehemiah, and Nehemiah mentions 1,765 not noticed by Ezra. If, therefore, Ezra's surplus be added to the sum in Nehemiah, and Nehemiah's surplus to the number in Ezra, they will both become 31,583. Subtracting this from 42,360, there will be a deficiency of 10,777. These are omitted because they did not belong to Judah and Benjamin, or to the priests, but to the other tribes. The servants and singers, male and female, are reckoned separately (v. 65), so that putting all these items together, the number of all who went with Zerubbabel amounted to 50,000, with 8,000 beasts of burden, (*Altiny*, quoted in *Davidson's* 'Hermeutics') (see further on Neh. vii.)

63. some of the chief of the fathers, when they came to the house of the Lord . . . offered freely, &c. The sight of a place hallowed by the most endearing and sacred associations, but now lying in desolation and ruins, made the well-springs of their piety and patriotism gush out afresh; and before taking any active measures for providing accommodation to themselves and their families, the chief among them raised a large sum by voluntary contributions towards the restoration of the temple. 69. drams of gold—rather darics, a Persian coin (see on 1 Chr. xxix. 7). priests' garments—(cf. Neh. vii. 70.) This, in the circumstances, was a very appropriate gift. In general, it may be remarked that presents of garments, or of any other useable commodities, however singular it may seem to us, are in unison with the established notions and customs of the East.

CHAP. III. 1-3.—THE ALTAR SET UP.

1. when the seventh month was come. The departure of "the children of the province" (ch. ii. 1: cf. Neh. viii. 6)—the returning exiles of

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⁶ 1 Ki. 2. 7.
⁷ 2 Ki. 17. 27.
⁸ 2 Ki. 19. 31-33.
⁹ Lev. 21. 21-22.
¹⁰ Num. 3. 10.
¹¹ they were polluted from the priesthood.
¹² Or, governor. See Neh. 8. 9.
¹³ Lev. 22. 2.
¹⁴ 10, 15, 16.
¹⁵ Ex. 28. 30.
¹⁶ Num. 27. 21.
¹⁷ Deut. 33. 8.
¹⁸ 1 Sam. 23. 6.
¹⁹ Isa. 10. 22.
²⁰ Ex. 25. 2.
²¹ Deut. 16. 16.
²² 1 Cor. 13. 2.
²³ 2 Cor. 9. 7.
²⁴ ch. 6. 16.
²⁵ Neh. 7. 73.
²⁶ Neh. 11. 3.

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CHAP. 3.

^a Hag. 1. 1.

Hag. 2. 2.

Zech. 3. 1.

Joshua.

^b Matt. 1. 12

Zorobabel.

^c Luke 3. 27.

Salathiel.

^d Deut. 12. 5^e Num. 23. 3^f Neh. 8. 14

Zech. 14. 16

^g Ex. 23. 16.^h Num. 29. 12ⁱ the matter

of the day

in his day.

^k Ex. 29. 33.

Num. 28. 3.

Num. 29. 2.

^l the temple

of the

LORD was

not yet

founded

^m Or,

workmen.

ⁿ 1 Ki. 5. 6.^o Ac ts 9. 16.^p ch. 6. 3.^q 1 Chr. 3. 24.^r ch. 2. 40.^s ch. 2. 0.

Hodaviah.

^t as one.

2 Jerusalem. Then stood up ^aJeshua the son of Jozadak, and his brethren the priests, and Zerubbabel ^bthe son of ^cShealtiel, and his brethren, and builded the altar of the God of Israel, to offer burnt offerings thereon, as *it is* ^dwritten in the law of Moses the man of God.

3 And they set the altar upon his bases; for fear *was* upon them because of the people of those countries: and they offered burnt offerings thereon

4 unto the LORD, *even* ^eburnt offerings morning and evening. They ^fkept also the feast of tabernacles, as ^g*it is* written, and ^hoffered the daily burnt offerings by number, according to the custom, ⁱas the duty of

5 every day required; and afterward *offered* the ^jcontinual burnt offering, both of the new moons, and of all the set feasts of the LORD that were consecrated, and of every one that willingly offered a free-will offering

6 unto the LORD. From the first day of the seventh month began they to offer burnt offerings unto the LORD. But ^kthe foundation of the temple of

7 the LORD was *not yet* laid. They gave money also unto the masons, and to the ^lcarpenters; and ^mmeat, and drink, and oil, unto them of Zidon, and to them of Tyre, to bring cedar trees from Lebanon to the sea of ⁿJoppa, ^oaccording to the grant that they had of Cyrus king of Persia.

8 Now in the second year of their coming unto the house of God at Jerusalem, in the second month, began Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and the remnant of their brethren the priests and the Levites, and all they that were come out of the captivity unto Jerusalem; ^pand appointed the Levites, from twenty years old

9 and upward, to set forward the work of the house of the LORD. Then stood ^qJeshua *with* his sons and his brethren, Kadmiel and his sons, the sons of ^rJudah, ^stogether, to set forward the workmen in the house of God; the sons of Henadad, *with* their sons and their brethren the Levites.

Judah and Benjamin—from Babylon—took place in spring; and for some time after their arrival they were occupied in the necessary work of rearing habitations to themselves amid the ruins of Jerusalem and its neighbourhood, for there were neither streets, gates, nor fortified walls, nor commodious houses, for their reception and protection. This preliminary work being completed, they addressed themselves to rebuild the altar of burnt offering; and, as the seventh month of the sacred year was at hand—corresponding to the latter end of our September—when the feast of tabernacles (Lev. xxiii.) fell to be observed, they resolved to celebrate that religious festival just as if the temple had been fully restored.

2. Jeshua—was the grandson of Seraiah, the high priest put to death by Nebuchadnezzar at Riblah (2 Ki. xxv. 18-21). His father, Josedech, had been carried captive to Babylon, and died there, sometime before this. Zerubbabel—was, according to the order of nature, son of Pedaiah (1 Chr. iii. 17-19), but having been brought up by Salathiel, was called his son. builded the altar of the God of Israel, to offer burnt offerings thereon. This was of urgent and immediate necessity—in order, *first*, to make atonement for their sins; *secondly*, to obtain the Divine blessing on their preparations for the temple, as well as to animate their feelings of piety and patriotism for the prosecution of that national work.

3. they set the altar upon his bases—*i. e.*, they reared it upon its old foundation, so that it occupied as nearly as possible the site on which it had formerly stood. they offered burnt offerings . . . morning and evening. Deeming it their duty to perform the public rites of religion, they did not wait till the temple should be rebuilt and dedicated; but, at the outset, resumed the daily

service prescribed by the law (Exod. xxix. 38, 39; Lev. vi. 9, 11), as well as kept the annual seasons of solemn observance.

4.7.—OFFERINGS RENEWED.

4. They kept also the feast of tabernacles . . . 6. From the first day of the seventh month. They revived at that time the daily oblation, and it was on the fifteenth day of that month the feast of tabernacles was held. But the fact is simply stated; for while, in their zeal to honour that national festival at the time and in the manner prescribed by law, they did not wish the season to pass unobserved, they could not possibly, in their desolate condition, celebrate it with any adequate demonstration of the joy and hilarity by which the feast of tabernacles was usually distinguished. 7. They gave . . . meat . . . drink, and oil, unto them of Zidon. They opened negotiations with the Tyrians for workmen, as well as for timber, on the same terms, and with the same views, as Solomon had done (1 Ki. v. 11; 2 Chr. ii. 15, 16), according to the grant that they had of Cyrus king of Persia. This grant does not refer to cedar wood, which Cyrus could not give—for the Phœnicians, taking advantage of the revolution at Babylonia, to which they had been tributary, had at this time asserted their national freedom—but to a money allowance given from the exchequer to the Jews, to help forward the rebuilding of the temple (cf. ch. vi. 4).

8-13.—THE FOUNDATION OF THE TEMPLE LAID.

8. appointed the Levites . . . to set forward the work—*i. e.*, to act as overseers of the workmen, and to direct and animate the labourers in the various departments. 9. Jeshua with his sons—not the high priest, but a Levite (ch. ii. 40). To these, as probably distinguished for their mechanical skill and taste, the duty of acting as overseers was particularly committed.

- 10 And when the builders laid the foundation ^p of the temple of the LORD, ^q they set the priests in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites, the sons of Asaph, with cymbals, to praise the LORD, after the ^r ordinance of
- 11 David king of Israel. And ^s they sang together by course in praising and giving thanks unto the LORD; because ^t he is good, ^u for his mercy endureth for ever toward Israel. And all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the LORD, because the foundation of the house
- 12 of the LORD was laid. But many of the priests and Levites, and chief of the fathers, *who were* ancient men, that had seen the first house, when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, wept with a loud
- 13 voice; and many shouted aloud for joy: so that the people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people: for the people shouted with a loud shout, and the noise was heard afar off.
- 4 NOW when the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that ^v the children of the captivity builded the temple unto the LORD God of Israel; ^w then they came to Zerubbabel, and to the chief of the fathers, and said unto them, Let ^x us build with you: for we seek your God, as ye *do*; and we do sacrifice unto him ^y since the days of Esar-haddon king of Assur, ^z which brought us up hither. But Zerubbabel, and Jeshua, and the rest of the chief of the fathers of Israel, said unto them, ^{aa} Ye have nothing to

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^p Zech. 4. 6-10.^q Ex. 28. 40-42.

1 Sam. 22. 15.

1 Chr. 15. 27.

1 Chr. 16. 5.

^r 1 Chr. 6. 31.^s Ex. 15. 21.

2 Chr. 7. 23.

Neh. 12. 31.

Jer. 33. 11.

Luke 1. 50.

^t 1's 136. 1.^u Jer. 31. 11.

CHAP. 4.

1 the sons of the trans-

portation.

^a Esth. 8. 17.^b 2 Ki. 17. 24.

3', 33.

^c 2 Ki. 19. 37.^d Neh. 2. 20.

John 4. 9.

10. And when the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the Lord, &c. The foundation of the new temple was laid with all due honour as a sacred ceremonial, by the officials of the Lord's house. V. 11 contains a quotation of the 1st and 2d verses of Psalm cxviii., whence it is reasonably concluded that this sacred song was sung on the occasion. It was composed for public use, and in name of the congregation of Israel, who is the ideal speaker throughout. It was sung in a solemn procession to the temple, and by the Levitical band, in responsive chorus. 12. But many of the priests and Levites, and chief of the fathers . . . wept with a loud voice. Those painful emotions were excited by the sad contrast between the prosperous circumstances in which the foundations of the first temple had been laid, and the desolate, reduced state of the country and city when the second was begun; between the inferior size and costliness of the stones used in the foundations of the second (1 Ki. vii. 9, 10), and the much smaller extent of the foundation itself, including all the appurtenances of the building (Hag. ii. 3); between the comparative smallness of their present means and the immense resources of David and Solomon. Perhaps, however, the chief cause of grief was, that the second temple would be destitute of those things which formed the great and distinguishing glory of the first, viz., the Ark, the Shechinah, the Urim and Thummim, &c. Not that this second temple was not a very grand and beautiful structure. But how great soever its material splendour, it was inferior in this respect to that of Solomon. Yet, however inferior in metals and gems, the glory of the second far outshone that of the first temple in another and more important point of view, viz., the receiving within its walls the incarnate Saviour (Hag. ii. 9). 13. could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping. Among Eastern people, expressions of sorrow are always very loud and vehement. It is indicated by wailing, the howl of which is sometimes not easily distinguishable from joyful acclamations.

CHAP. IV. 1-6.—THE BUILDING HINDERED.

1. the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin—i.e., strangers settled in the land of Israel. 2. we seek

your God, as ye do; and we do sacrifice unto him since the days of Esar-haddon . . . which brought us up hither. A very interesting explanation of this passage has been recently obtained from the Assyrian sculptures. On a large cylinder, deposited in the British Museum, there is inscribed a long and perfect copy of the annals of Esar-haddon, in which the details are given of a large deportation of Israelites from Palestine, and a consequent settlement of Babylonian colonists in their place. It is a striking confirmation of the statement made in this passage. The Assyrian monarchs, like the ancient and modern sovereigns of Egypt, employed their captives principally in hard labour on their public works about the capital. But sometimes, when circumstances required it, they were transported to conquered and depopulated regions, where, under the strict surveillance of Assyrian governors, they were settled, to maintain the provincial power of their masters. Thus, while Sargon placed his Samaritan captives in Gauganitis or Macedonia, and the "cities of the Medes" (2 Ki. xviii. 11), Esar-haddon removed Babylonians, &c. (v. 9), to Samaria. Those Assyrian settlers intermarried with the remnant of Israelite women, and their descendants, a mongrel race, went under the name of Samaritans. Though originally idolaters, they were instructed in the knowledge of God, so that they could say, "We seek your God;" but they served Him in a superstitious way of their own (see on 2 Ki. xvii. 26-34, 41). In further confirmation of the fact that the new colonists of Judea were introduced by Esar-haddon, it may be expedient to remind the reader that although the kingdom of Israel had been greatly devastated by Shalmanezzer, and a large deportation of the people had been made to the country of that conqueror, it was not wholly depopulated. The complete overthrow of the Israelitish kingdom did not take place till Esar-haddon made invasion of Judea, carried Manasseh prisoner to Babylon, and made a conquest of the whole northern portion of Judea by those military followers from Babylon, Cutha, &c., whom, on returning to Assyria, he left behind to colonize the cities in Samaria formerly occupied by the children of Israel, (cf. 2 Ki. xvii. 24, &c.) 3. But Zerubbabel, and Jeshua . . . said . . . Ye have

do with us to build an house unto our God; but we ourselves together will build unto the LORD God of Israel, as ^aking Cyrus the king of Persia hath commanded us.

4 Then ^cthe people of the land weakened the hands of the people of 5 Judah, and troubled them in building, and hired counsellors against them, to frustrate their purpose, all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius king of Persia.

6 And in the reign of ²Ahasuerus, in the beginning of his reign, wrote they unto him an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and

7 Jerusalem. And in the days of Artaxerxes wrote ³Bishlam, Mithredath, Tabeel, and the rest of their ⁴companions, unto Artaxerxes king of Persia; and the writing of the letter was written in the Syrian tongue, 8 and interpreted in the Syrian tongue. Rehum the chanceller and Shimshai the ⁵scribe wrote a letter ^fagainst Jerusalem to Artaxerxes

9 the king in this sort: then wrote Rehum the chancellor, and Shimshai the scribe, and the rest of their ⁶companions; ^gthe Dinaites, the

B. C. 678.
^d ch. 1. 1-3.
 ch. 6. 2-5.
 Isa. 44. 23.
^e ch. 3. 3.
 Neh. 6. 9.
 Isa. 35. 3, 4.
² Ahas-verosh.
³ Or, in peace.
⁴ societies.
⁵ Or, secretary.
^f Ps. 112. 6.
 Ps. 119. 69.
 Zech. 1. 14.
 Rom. 8. 28.
⁶ societies.
^g 2 Ki. 17. 30.
 31.

nothing to do with us to build an house unto our God. This refusal to co-operate with the Samaritans, from whatever motives it sprang, was overruled by Providence to ultimate good; for had the two peoples worked together, familiar acquaintanceship and intermarriages would have ensued, and the result might have been a relapse of the Jews into idolatry, and most certainly confusion and obscurity in the genealogical evidence that proved the descent of the Messiah, whereas in their hostile and separate condition they were jealous observers of each other's proceedings, watching with mutual care over the preservation and integrity of the sacred books, guarding the purity and honour of the Mosaic worship, and thus contributing to the maintenance of religious knowledge and truth.

4. Then the people of the land weakened the hands of the people of Judah, &c. Exasperated by this repulse, the Samaritans endeavoured by every means to molest the workmen as well as obstruct the progress of the decree; and though they could not alter the decree which Cyrus had issued regarding it, yet by bribes and clandestine arts indefatigably plied at court, they laboured to frustrate the effects of the edict. Their success in those underhand dealings was great; for Cyrus, being frequently absent, and much absorbed in his warlike expeditions, left the government in the hands of his son, who afterwards succeeded him on the throne, but with whom, as he followed the religious policy of his father, their artful and malignant representations had no effect. The same arts were assiduously practised during the reign of Cambyses's successor, Smerdis, down to the time of Darius Hystaspes. In consequence of the difficulties and obstacles thus interposed for a period of twenty years, the progress of the work was very slow. But this interruption was not occasioned by any obstacles thrown in the way of the undertaking by unfavourable edicts from Cyrus and his court. It was owing entirely to the dilatory conduct of the Jewish immigrants themselves, for which they were severely rebuked by Haggai (ch. i. 1-6).

6. in the reign of Ahasuerus, in the beginning of his reign, wrote they . . . an accusation [שְׂמֵרְדִּיָּם; Septuagint, ἐν βασιλείᾳ Ἀσσουερου]. Ahasuerus was a regal title, and the king referred to was successor of Cyrus, his son Cambyses (see Rawlinson's 'Bampton Lectures,' pp. 183, 454).

7. in the days of Artaxerxes wrote Bishlam, &c. The three officers named are supposed to have been deputy-governors appointed by the king of Persia over all the provinces subject to his empire west of the Euphrates. the Syrian tongue—or Aramæan language, called sometimes in our version Chaldee. This was made use of by the Persians in their decrees and communications relative to the Jews (cf. 2 Ki. xviii. 26; Isa. xxxvi. 11). The object of their letter was to press upon the royal notice the inexpediency and danger of rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem. They laboured hard to prejudice the king's mind against that measure. 8. Rehum the chancellor [רְהוּם שֵׁרֵף, lord of judgment]. and Shimshai the scribe [שִׁמְשַׁי, secretary to the governor of a province]. Artaxerxes [אַרְטַחְשַׁתְרֵשְׁתָּא; Septuagint, Ἀρταξαρσῆς]—Smerdis (Rosenmüller, in hoc loco; Jahn, 'Archæol.,' ii., 1, p. 244; Rawlinson's 'Bampton Lectures,' p. 455). The united reigns of Cambyses and Smerdis amounted in duration to a little above eight years. Hengstenberg ('Christology,' iii., 203) maintains, in opposition to these, that Artachshasta denotes not Smerdis, but Artaxerxes in every other passage of the Bible (see Winer, 'Realwörterbuch,' 'Ahasuerus and Artuchasta,' Ewald's 'Geschichte,' pt. ii., p. 118).

9. and the rest of their companions [שְׂמֵרְדִּיָּם וְרֵעֵיהֶם, and the rest of their colleagues; Septuagint, καὶ οἱ κατάλοιποι σύνδουλοι ἡμῶν]. the Dinaites [דִּנַּיִתַּיִם; Septuagint, Δεῦναιοί]. Junius ('Poli Synopsis,' in loco) calls them *Dennani*; Ewald ('Geschichte,' iii., 375) considers the people referred to as connected with Deinaver, a city of the Medes. Rawlinson ('Ancient Monarchies,' ii., p. 477) derives them from *Dagan*, a country frequently mentioned in the inscriptions, and bordering on Cilicia. The people named were the colonists sent by the Babylonian monarch to occupy the territory of the ten tribes ("The great and noble Assuapper" [Septuagint, Ἀσσυαφάρ] was an Assyrian satrap or general, to whom was committed the immediate command of the new colonists. Immediately after the murder of Sennacherib, the Babylonians, Medes, Armenians, and other tributary people, seized the opportunity of throwing off the Assyrian yoke. But Esar-haddon having in the thirtieth year of his reign recovered Babylon, and subdued the other rebellious dependents, transported numbers of them into the waste cities of Samaria, most probably as a pun-

Apharsathchites, the Tarpelites, the Apharsites, the Archevites, the
 10 Babylonians, the Susanchites, the Dehavites, and the Elamites, and the
 rest of the nations whom the great and noble Asnapper brought over,
 and set in the cities of Samaria, and the rest that are on this side the
 river, ^h and ⁱ at such a time.
 11 This is the copy of the letter that they sent unto him, even unto
 Artaxerxes the king; Thy servants the men on this side the river, and
 12 at such a time. Be it known unto the king, that the Jews which came
 up from thee to us are come unto Jerusalem, building ⁱ the rebellious
 and the bad city, and have ^s set up the walls thereof, and ^o joined the
 13 foundations. Be it known now unto the king, that if this city be
 builded, and the walls set up again, then will they not ¹⁰ pay ^j toll,
 tribute, and custom, and so thou shalt endamage the ¹¹ revenue of the
 14 kings. Now because ¹² we have maintenance from the king's palace, and
 it was not meet for us to see the king's dishonour, therefore have we sent
 15 and certified the king, that search may be made in the book of the
 records of thy fathers: so shalt thou find in the book of the records, and
 know, that this city is a rebellious city, and ^k hurtful unto kings and
 provinces, and that they have ¹³ moved sedition ¹⁴ within the same of old
 16 time: for which cause was this city destroyed. We certify the king,
 that if this city be builded again, and the walls thereof set up, by this
 means thou shalt have no portion on this side the river.
 17 Then sent the king an answer unto Rehum the chancellor, and to
 Shimshai the scribe, and to the rest of their ¹⁵ companions that dwell
 in Samaria, and unto the rest beyond the river, Peace, and at such a
 18 time. The letter which ye sent unto us hath been plainly read before
 19 me. And ¹⁶ I commanded, and search hath been made, and it is found
 that this city of old time hath ¹⁷ made insurrection against kings, and
 20 that rebellion and sedition have been made therein. There have been
 mighty kings also over Jerusalem, which have ^l ruled over all countries

B. C. 678.
 h ch. 7. 12.
 i Cheeneth.
 j Amos 7. 10.
 Luke 23. 2.
 Acts 24. 5.
 1 Thes. 5. 23.
 1 Pet. 2. 13-15.
 Or, finished.
 Or, finished together.
 o give.
 j ch. 7. 24. Matt. 9. 9.
 Or, strength.
 12 we are salted with the salt of the palace.
 k Esth. 3. 5. Acts 17. 6. 7.
 13 made.
 14 in the midst thereof.
 15 societies.
 16 by me a decree is set.
 17 lifted up itself.
 2 Ki. 18. 7. 2 Ki. 24. 20. 1 Ki. 4. 21. 1 Chr. 18. 3. Ps. 72. 8.

ishment of their revolt. the Apharsathchites—or Aspharsachites (ch. v. 6) [Septuagint, Ἀφασαθαχαιοί]—supposed to be the Paracetani (the initial ^k being prosthetic), a highland tribe on the confines of Media and Persia. the Tarpelites. This tribe has not been ascertained. the Apharsites [אֲפָרְסָיִם; Septuagint, Ἀφάρσαιοι]—Persians. the Archevites [אֲרַחְוִיִּם; Septuagint, Ἀρχυαῖοι]—inhabitants of Evech (Gen. x. 10) or Orchoe (passing the Babylonians). the Susanchites [סוּסַנְיָחָיִם; Septuagint, Σουσαναχαιοί]—people from Susa or Susiana. the Dehavites [דְּהַוִּיִּם, villagers; Septuagint, Δαυαῖοι]—the Dai or Dahi, a tribe of Persian nomads, who were spread far and wide (Rawlinson's 'Herodotus,' b. i., ch. cxxv.; Strabo, b. xi., ch. viii., sec. 2; Pliny, 'Natural History,' b. vi., 17). and the Elamites [אֱלָמִיִּם]—inhabitants of the province called Elam (Gen. x. 22). They are omitted in the Septuagint. This colonization by Asnapper, under Esarhaddon, was an entirely different one from that mentioned, 2 Ki. xvii. 24 (Rawlinson's 'Ancient Monarchies,' ii., 423, 477, 520).

12. Be it known unto the king, that the Jews which came up from thee to us are come unto Jerusalem, building the rebellious and the bad city. Cambyses, it is known, was inimical to the Jews, and it may be presumed that the usurper Smerdis would not be more favourable: so that as neither of these kings supported the policy of Cyrus, it was an artful trick of the adversaries at Jerusalem to foment the indisposition of the court by adverting to the numerous at-

tempts of the Jews in former times to throw off the yoke of their foreign masters, and on account of which attempts they styled it "the rebellious and the bad city." have set up the walls thereof, and joined the foundations [בָּנִי אֶת־הַיְדִיבֵי]—and sewed together; i. e., joined the turrets [Septuagint, Σειμηλίου ἀπὸ τῆς ἀνὸψωσαν]. The name "Jews" was generally used after the return from the captivity, because the returning exiles belonged chiefly to the tribes of Judah and Benjamin; and although the edict of Cyrus permitted all who chose to return—a permission of which some of the Israelites availed themselves—the great body who went to settle in Judea were the men of Judah. 13. toll, tribute, and custom—the first [בְּקִרְתָּא] or בְּקִרְתָּא (v. 20), Chaldee, tribute as if measured to each person) was a poll-tax; the second [בְּלִי, Chaldee], an impost on articles of trade and merchandise: excise; the third [בְּלִי, Chaldee], a road tax, a toll. Their letter, and the edict that followed, commanding an immediate cessation of the work at the city walls, form the exclusive subject of narrative from v. 7 to v. 23. And now from this digression he returns, at v. 24, to resume the thread of his narrative concerning the building of the temple. 14. we have maintenance from the king's palace—lit., we are salted with the king's salt. 'Eating a prince's salt' is an Oriental phrase equivalent to 'receiving a maintenance from him.'

17. Then sent the king an answer. It was unfavourable to the rebuilding of Jerusalem as a fortified city. This hostile decree is given here

- ^m beyond the river; and toll, tribute, and custom, was paid unto them.
- 21 ¹⁸ Give ye now commandment to cause these men to cease, and that this city be not builded, until *another* commandment shall be given from me. Take heed now that ye fail not to do this: why should damage grow to the hurt of the kings?
- 22 Now when the copy of king Artaxerxes' letter *was* read before Rehum, and Shimshai the scribe, and their companions, they went up in ⁿ haste to Jerusalem unto the Jews, and made them to cease ¹⁹ by force and power. Then ceased the work of the house of God which *is* at Jerusalem. So it ceased unto ^o the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia.
- 5 THEN the prophets, ^a Haggai the prophet, and ^b Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophesied unto the Jews that *were* in Judah and Jerusalem in the name of the God of Israel, *even* unto them. Then rose up ^c Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and began to build the house of God which *is* at Jerusalem: and with them *were* the prophets of God ^d helping them.
- 3 At the same time came to them ^e Tatnai, governor on ¹ this side the river, and Shethar-boznai, and their companions, and said thus unto them, Who hath commanded you to build this house, and to make up this wall?
- 4 Then said we unto them after this manner, What are the names of the

B C 5 ²
^m Gen. 15 15.
Josh. 1. 4.
¹⁸ Make a decree.
ⁿ Fro 4. 16.
Mic 2. 1.
Rom 3. 15.
¹⁹ by arm and power.
^o Neh. 6 3.
Job 20. 5.
1 Thes 2 18.
CHAP. 5.
^a Hag 1. 1.
^b Zech. 1. 1.
^c ch. 3. 2.
Hag. 1. 12-15.
^d ch. 6. 14.
Ecd. 12. 11.
Hag 2 4-9.
2 Cor. 1, 24.
^e ch. 6. 6.
1 Westward of Euphrates.

prophetically, and it clearly shows that the first permission of the Persian kings was limited to the restoration of the temple.

24. Then ceased the work of the house of God—*i. e.*, in consequence of the letter of Smerdis, who, it appears, being a usurper and a Magian, changed the old religion of Persia, and, consistently enough, arrested the progress of a religious revival in Judea which Cyrus had begun. It was this occurrence that first gave rise to the strong religious antipathy between the Jews and the Samaritans, which was afterwards greatly aggravated by the erection of a rival temple on mount Gerizim. Besides the order of Smerdis for the cessation of the work at the temple, the returned exiles were subjected to various harassing circumstances which obstructed and discouraged their progress in the restoration of Jerusalem. Not the least of these annoyances were the frequent expeditions for the conquest of Egypt by the Persian monarchs, who, of course, marched their armies through Palestine as the high road to the land of the Nile, and levied recruits from their Jewish subjects there. Between the arrival of the first caravan under Zerubbabel, and that of Nehemiah, no less than three such expeditions passed through Palestine. By the last—that of Artaxerxes—the Persian army was detained a whole year in that country (*Diodorus Siculus*, xi., 71-74).

CHAP. V. 1-17.—ZERUBBABEL AND JESHUA SET FORWARD THE BUILDING OF THE TEMPLE IN THE REIGN OF DARIUS.

1. Then the prophets . . . prophesied . . . in the name of the God of Israel. From the recorded writings of Haggai and Zechariah, it appears that the difficulties experienced, and the many obstacles thrown in the way, had first cooled the Jews in the building of the temple, and then led to an abandonment of the work, under a pretended belief that the time for rebuilding it had not yet come (Hagg. i. 2-11). For fifteen years the work was completely suspended. These two prophets upbraided them with severe reproaches for their sloth, negligence, and worldly selfishness (Hagg. i. 4), threatened them with severe judgments if they continued backward, and

promised that they would be blessed with great national prosperity if they resumed and prosecuted the work with alacrity and vigour. "Zechariah the son of Iddo"—*i. e.*, grandson (Zech. i. 1). 2. Then rose up Zerubbabel . . . and Jeshua . . . and began to build the house of God. The strong appeals and animating exhortations of these prophets gave a new impulse to the building of the temple. Darius, one of the seven Persian nobles or chiefs of the great Persian clans, who conspired against the usurper Smerdis, ascended the throne with a royal authority somewhat limited (*Herodotus*, b. iii., ch. lxxvii.), and proceeded, amongst the first acts of his government, to rebuild the Zoroastrian temples which Smerdis had destroyed, and restored the old religious rites which that Magian predecessor had abolished. As a matter of course he sympathized, like Cyrus, with the monotheism of the Jews; and as his zeal for the restoration of the pure and spiritual worship soon became known through the distant provinces of his far-extending empire, the Jews—the Jewish authorities in Jerusalem—availed themselves of the changed temper of the court to resume the works at the temple. The Behistun inscriptions contain an autobiography of Darius Hystaspes—the liberal patron of the Jews, and restorer of their fallen nationality after the captivity (see in *Ravlinson's* 'Herodotus,' ii., p. 590-616). It was in the second year of the reign of Darius Hystaspes that the work, after a long interruption, was resumed. This recommencement of the building took place "in the four and twentieth day of the sixth month, in the second year of Darius the king" (Hagg. i. 14, 15)—*i. e.*, in September, b. c. 521, about eight and a half months after Darius's accession (*Ravlinson's* 'Ancient Monarchies,' ii., p. 405).

3. At the same time came to them Tatnai, governor on this side the river. The Persian empire west of the Euphrates included at this time Syria, Arabia, Egypt, Phœnicia, and other provinces subject to Darius, surnamed Hystaspes. The empire was divided into twenty provinces, called satrapies. Syria formed one satrapy, inclusive of Palestine, Phœnicia, and Cyprus, and furnished an annual revenue of 350 talents. It was presided over by a satrap or

5 men ²that make this building? But ¹the eye of their God was upon the elders of the Jews, that they could not cause them to cease, till the matter came to Darius: and then they returned ⁹answer by letter concerning this matter.

6 The copy of the letter that Tatnai, governor on this side the river, and Shethar-boznai, and ⁴his companions the Apharsachites, which were on this side the river, sent unto Darius the king: they sent a letter unto him, ³wherein was written thus;

8 Unto Darius the king, all peace. Be it known unto the king, that we went into the province of Judea, to the house of the great God, which is builded with ⁴great stones, and timber is laid in the walls, and this work goeth fast on, and prospereth in their hands. Then asked we those elders, and said unto them thus, Who commanded you to build this house, and to make up these walls? We asked their names also, to certify thee, that we might write the names of the men that were the chief of them. And thus they returned us answer, saying, We are the ¹servants of the God of heaven and earth, and build the house that was builded these many years ago, which a great king of Israel builded ⁵and set up. But ⁶after that our fathers had provoked the God of heaven unto wrath, he gave them into the hand of ¹Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, the Chaldean, who destroyed this house, and carried the people away into Babylon.

13 But in the first year of ^mCyrus the king of Babylon, the same king Cyrus

B. C. 529.

² that build this building?

¹ 2 Chr. 16. 9.
ch. 7. 6, 23.
ch. 8. 12.
Ps. 33. 18.
Isa. 41. 10.

⁹ ch. 6. 8.

⁴ ch. 4. 9.

³ in the midst whereof.

⁴ stones of rolling.

¹ 1 s 119. 46.
Matt. 10. 52.
Luke 12. 8.
Ac's 27. 23.
Rom. 1. 16.
Gal. 6. 14.

¹ 1 Ki. 6. 1.

² 2 Chr. 33, 16.
17.
¹ 2 Ki. 24. 2.
² 2 Ki. 25. 8.
9. 11.
^m ch. 1. 1.

viceroy, who at this time resided at Damascus, and though superior to the native governors of the Jews appointed by the Persian king, never interfered with their internal government, except when there was a threatened disturbance of order and tranquillity. Tatnai, the governor (whether this was a personal name or an official title is unknown), had probably been incited by the complaints and turbulent outrages of the Samaritans against the Jews; but he suspended his judgment, and he prudently resolved to repair to Jerusalem, that he might ascertain the real state of matters by personal inspection and enquiry, in company with another dignified officer and his provincial council. 5. But the eye of their God was upon the elders of the Jews, &c. The unusual presence, the imposing suite, the authoritative enquiries of the satrap appeared formidable, and might have produced a paralyzing influence, or led to disastrous consequences, if he had been a partial and corrupt judge, or actuated by unfriendly feelings toward the Jewish cause. The historian, therefore, with characteristic piety, throws in this parenthetical verse to intimate that God averted the threatening cloud, and procured favour for the elders or leaders of the Jews, so that they were not interrupted in their proceedings till communications with the court should be made and received. Not a word was uttered to dispirit the Jews or afford cause of triumph to their opponents. Matters were to go on till contrary orders arrived from Babylon. After surveying the work in progress, he enquired, first, by what authority this national temple was undertaken; and, secondly, the names of the principal promoters and directors of the undertaking. To these two heads of enquiry, the Jews returned ready and distinct replies. Then, having learned that it originated in a decree of Cyrus, who had not only released the Jewish exiles from captivity, and permitted them to return to their own land for the express purpose of rebuilding the house of God, but, by an act of royal grace, had restored to them the sacred vessels which Nebuchadnezzar had carried off as trophies from the former temple, Tatnai transmitted all this information in an official report to his imperial

master, accompanying it with a recommendatory suggestion that search should be made among the national archives at Babylon for the original decree of Cyrus, that the truth of the Jews' statement might be verified. The whole conduct of Tatnai, as well as the general tone of his despatch, is marked by a sound discretion and prudent moderation, free from any party bias, and evincing a desire only to do his duty. In all respects he appears in favourable contrast with his predecessor Rehum (ch. iv. 9).

8. the house of the great God . . . builded with great stones [בָּנִי אֲבָנִים]—'stones of rolling;' i. e., stones of such extraordinary size that they could not be carried—they had to be rolled or dragged along the ground. [The Septuagint has λιθοίς ἐκλεκτοῖς, choice stones.] When mention is made of "the great God," the application of such an epithet implies a recognition at least to some extent of his true character; and that although the motley mass of colouists (ch. iv. 9), although still adhering to their native idols, were constrained to acknowledge the supremacy of the God whom the Jews worshipped, while, from motives of jealous rivalry, they endeavoured to prevent the rebuilding of His temple. 13. in the first year of Cyrus the king of Babylon—i. e., the first year in which he began to reign in Babylon. Cyrus styles himself, in his famous proclamation, king of Persia (see on ch. i. 1). But it was the Jewish exiles in and around Babylon who went in the first caravan to Jerusalem after the promulgation of the edict, and as it was published shortly after the Medo-Persian conquest of Babylouia, these Jews thought and spoke of Cyrus very naturally as king of Babylon. Accordingly, it will be observed that it was the elders of these first emigrants who spoke of Cyrus by a name which was familiar to them, the same king Cyrus. The Jews were perfectly warranted, according to the principles of the Persian government, to proceed with the building in virtue of Cyrus's edict. For everywhere a public decree is considered as remaining in force until it is revoked; but the laws of the Medes and Persians changed not.' 14.

14 made a decree to build this house of God. And ⁿthe vessels also of gold and silver of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took out of the temple that *was* in Jerusalem, and brought them into the temple of Babylon, those did Cyrus the king take out of the temple of Babylon, and they were delivered unto *one*, ^owhose name *was* Sheshbazzar, whom he

15 had made ⁵governor; and said unto him, Take these vessels, go, carry them into the temple that *is* in Jerusalem, and let the house of God be

16 builded in his place. Then came the same Sheshbazzar, and laid ^pthe foundation of the house of God which *is* in Jerusalem: and since that time even until now hath it been in building, and *yet* ^qit is not finished.

17 Now therefore, if *it seem* good to the king, ^rlet there be search made in the king's treasure house, which *is* there at Babylon, whether it be *so*, that a decree was made of Cyrus the king to build this house of God at Jerusalem, and let the king send his pleasure to us concerning this matter.

6 THEN Darius the king made a decree, and ^asearch was made in the 2 house of the ¹rolls, where the treasures were ²laid up in Babylon. And there was found at ³Achmetha, in the palace that *is* in the province of the Medes, a roll, and therein *was* a record thus written:

B. C. 536
ⁿ ch. 1. 7. 8.
 ch. 6. 5.
^o Hag. 1. 14.
 Hag. 2. 2.
 21.
⁵ Or.
 deputy.
^p ch. 3. 8. 10.
^q ch. 6. 15.
^r ch. 6. 1. 2.
 Pro. 25. 2.
 CHAP. 6.
^a ch. 5. 17.
¹ books.
² made to descend.
³ Or,
 Ecbatana,
 the chief
 city of
 Media, or,
 in a coffer.

Sheshbazzar, whom he had made governor. This was the Chaldean or Persian name of Zerubabel (see on ch. i. 8, 11). "Governor" [שֹׁרֵט]—a prefect or governor in the Assyrian (2 Ki. xviii. 24), Babylonian (Jer. li. 57), Median (Jer. li. 28), and particularly the Persian, empires (Esth. viii. 9; ix. 3), inferior in dignity and power to a satrap. The name, after the captivity, was applied to the governor of Judea (cf. Hagg. i. 1-14; Mal. i. 8), but seldom in earlier times (cf. 1 Ki. x. 15; 2 Chr. ix. 14). 16. Then came . . . Sheshbazzar . . . since that time even until now hath it been in building. This was not a part of the Jews' answer—they could not have said this, knowing the building had long ceased. But Tatnai used these expressions in his report, either looking on the stoppage as a temporary interruption, or supposing that the Jews were always working a little, as they had means and opportunities.

CHAP. VI. 1-12.—DARIUS'S DECREE FOR ADVANCING THE BUILDING.

1. Darius the king. This was Darius Hystaspes. Great and interesting light has been thrown on the history of this monarch and the transactions of his reign by the decipherment of the cuneitic inscriptions on the rocks at Behistān. in the house of the rolls, where the treasures were laid up in Babylon [בְּבֵית הַסֵּפֶר, in the house of books; Septuagint, ἐν ταῖς βιβλιοθήκαις, in the libraries]. An idea of the form of this Babylonian register house, as well as the manner of preserving public records within its repositories, can be obtained from the recent discoveries at Nineveh. Two small chambers were discovered in the palace of Kouyunjik, which, from the fragments found in them, Mr. Layard considers as a "house of the rolls." After reminding his readers, that the historical records and public documents of the Assyrians were kept on terra cotta tablets and cylinders of baked clay, many specimens of which have been brought to this country, he goes on to say, "The chambers I am describing appear to have been a depository in the palace of Nineveh for such documents. To the height of a foot or more from the floor they were completely filled with them; some entire, but the greater part broken into many fragments, probably by the falling in of the upper part of the building. They were of different sizes; the largest tablets were flat, and measured about 9 inches by 6½ inches; the smaller were slightly

convex, and some were not more than an inch long, with but one or two lines of writing. The cuneiform characters on most of them were singularly sharp and well defined, but so minute in some instances as to be almost illegible without a magnifying-glass. These documents appear to be of various kinds. The documents that have thus been discovered "in the house of rolls" at Nineveh probably exceed all that have yet been afforded by the monuments of Egypt, and when the innumerable fragments are put together and transcribed, the publication of these records will be of the greatest importance to the history of the ancient world' ('Nineveh and Babylon,' appendix, 344, 345; cf. 'Nineveh and its Remains,' ii., p. 185). The record referred to in this passage at Ecbatana was probably written on similar materials; and that a character employed for cursive purposes was in use under the Achæmenidæ, there is clear and abundant evidence (see 'Royal Asiatic Journal,' vol. x., p. 42; also 'Primeval Language,' part iii., p. 63, note). 2. there was found at Achmetha [Ἀχμεθα]. The margin of our English Bible has 'in a coffer.' But it is expressly said by the Septuagint, ἐν πολει, in a city]—the Ecbatana, or Agbatana, of classical, the Hamādan of modern times, at the foot of mount Orontes, the Elwend range of hills, where, for its coolness and salubrity, Cyrus and his successors on the Persian throne established their summer residence. It was an unwall'd town (Polybius, b. x., ch. xxvii., sec. 10), like most of the towns of the Medes and Persians, which were clustered round a citadel, instead of being surrounded by walls. Ecbatana, besides a magnificent palace, said to have been built by Semiramis, had an ἀκρᾶ, a tower (Polybius, b. x., ch. xxvii., sec. 6) of vast strength. There was another city, however, of this name, the Ecbatana of Atropatene, and the most ancient capital of northern Media, and recently identified by Colonel Rawlinson in the remarkable ruins of Takht-i-Soleiman. Yet as everything tends to show the attachment of Cyrus to his native city, the Atropatenian Ecbatana, rather than to the stronger capital of Greater Media, Colonel Rawlinson is inclined to think that he deposited there, in his vár or fortress, the famous decree relating to the Jews, along with the other records and treasures of his empire ('Nineveh and Persepolis'). [This conjecture is confirmed by the Septuagint, which has ἐν τῇ βάρει, in the citadel.]

- 3 In the first year of Cyrus the king, *the same* Cyrus the king made a decree concerning the house of God at Jerusalem, Let the house be builded, the place where they offered sacrifices, and let the foundations thereof be strongly laid; the height thereof threescore cubits, and the
- 4 breadth thereof threescore cubits; with ^bthree rows of great stones, and a row of new timber: and ^clet the expences be given out of the king's
- 5 house: and also let ^athe golden and silver vessels of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took forth out of the temple which *is* at Jerusalem, and brought unto Babylon, be restored, and ^dbrought again unto the temple which *is* at Jerusalem, *every one* to his place, and place *them* in
- 6 the house of God. Now ^etherefore, Tatnai, governor beyond the river, Shethar-boznai, and ^fyour companions the Apharsachites, which *are*
- 7 beyond the river, be ye far from thence: let the work of this house of God alone; let the governor of the Jews, and the elders of the Jews,
- 8 build this house of God in his place. Moreover ^gI make a decree what ye shall do to the elders of these Jews for the building of this house of God; that of the king's goods, *even* of the tribute beyond the river, forthwith expences be given unto these men, that they be not ^hhindered.
- 9 And that which they have need of, both young bullocks, and rams, and lambs, for the burnt offerings of the God of heaven, wheat, salt, wine, and oil, according to the appointment of the priests which *are* at Jerusalem, let it be given them day by day without fail: that ⁱthey may offer sacrifices ^jof sweet savours unto the God of heaven, and pray ^kfor the
- 10 life of the king, and of his sons. Also I have made a decree, that whosoever shall alter this word, let timber be pulled down from his house, and, being set up, ^llet him be hanged thereon; ^mand let his house be
- 11 made a dunghill for this. And the God that hath caused his name ⁿto dwell there destroy all kings and people that shall put to their hand to alter *and* to destroy this house of God which *is* at Jerusalem. I Darius have made a decree; let it be done with speed.
- 12 Then Tatnai, governor on this side the river, Shethar-boznai, and their companions, according to that which Darius the king had sent, so they ^odid speedily.
- 13 And ^pthe elders of the Jews builded, and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo: and

B. C. 519.
^a 1 Ki. 6. 37.
^b Ps. 23. 10.
 Ps. 68. 29.
 Isa. 49. 23.
 Isa. 60. 6.
 Rev. 12. 10.
^c ch. 1. 7. 8.
 ch. 5. 14.
 Jer. 27. 16,
 15-22.
 Dan. 1. 2.
 Dan. 5. 2.
^d go.
^e ch. 5. 3.
^f their societies,
^g by me a decree is made,
^h made to cease.
 ch. 4. 21, 23.
 ch. 5. 6.
ⁱ ch. 7. 13.
 Jer. 24. 7.
^j of rest,
 Gen. 8. 21.
 Lev. 1. 9.
 1 Ph. 5. 2.
^k 1 Tim. 2. 1, 2.
^l let him be destroyed.
^m Dan. 2. 5.
 Dan. 3. 29.
ⁿ Ex. 20. 21.
 Leut. 12. 5, 11.
 1 Ki. 9. 3.
 2 Chr. 7. 16
 Ps. 132. 13.
^o Job 5. 12.
 Ps. 9. 16.
 1 Cor. 3. 19.
^p ch. 5. 1, 2.

8. of the king's goods, even of the tribute beyond the river . . . expences be given. The decree granted them the privilege of drawing from his provincial treasury of Syria, to the amount of whatever they required for the furthering of the work, and providing sacrifice for the service of the temple, that the priests might daily pray for the health of the king and the prosperity of the empire. 11. whosoever shall alter this word. The warning was specially directed against the turbulent and fanatical Samaritans. The extremely favourable purport of this edict, which was issued about sixteen or seventeen years after that of Cyrus, was no doubt owing in some measure to the influence of Cyrus, of whom Darius entertained a high admiration, and whose two daughters he had married. But it proceeded still more from the deep impressions made even on the idolatrous people of that country and that age, as to the Being and Providence of the God of Israel. It may tend to throw additional light and illustration on the motives that influenced Darius, to mention what is asserted by *Josephus* ('Antiquities,' b. xi., ch. iii., secs. 1-9), that Darius, who was warmly attached to the Jews, had made a vow that if ever he became king, as he had a legitimate claim to that dignity, he would restore the sacred vessels and rebuild the house of Jeho-

vah at Jerusalem; that Zerubbabel, who had been his familiar friend in private life, on learning of Darius's elevation to the throne, set out expressly to remind the king of his vow, and obtained from his majesty the most liberal grants. He sent letters to those rulers who were in Syria and Phœnicia, to cut down and carry cedar trees from Lebanon to Jerusalem, and to assist him in building the city. He further commanded all captives to be made free; no king's taxes to be levied upon the Jews; no tribute to be exacted upon any land they should possess; and fifty talents to be given for the building of the temple, and in connection with those acts which had for their object to restore the services of the temple.

13-15.—THE TEMPLE FINISHED.

13. Then Tatnai, . . . did speedily. A concurrence of favourable events is mentioned as accelerating the restoration of the temple, and infusing a new spirit and energy into the workmen, who now laboured with unabating assiduity till it was brought to a completion. Its foundation was laid in April, 536 B.C. (ch. iii. 8-10), and it was completed on 21st February, 515 B.C., being twenty-one years after it was begun (*Lightfoot*). The building having been stopped, was resumed on the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, in the second year of Darius, and finished on the

they builded, and finished *it*, according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the ¹⁰ commandment of ¹ Cyrus, and ^m Darius, 15 and ⁿ Artaxerxes king of Persia. And this house was finished on the third day of the month Adar, which was in the sixth year of the reign of Darius the king.

16 And the children of Israel, the priests, and the Levites, and the rest of ¹¹ the children of the captivity, kept ^o the dedication of this house of God with joy, and ^p offered at the dedication of this house of God an hundred bullocks, two hundred rams, four hundred lambs; and for a sin offering for all Israel, twelve he-goats, according to the number of the tribes of 18 Israel. And they set the priests in their ^q divisions, and the Levites in their ^r courses, for the service of God, which *is* at Jerusalem; ¹² as it is written in the book of Moses.

19 And the children of the captivity kept the passover ^s upon the fourteenth 20 *day* of the first month. For the priests and the Levites were purified ^t together, all of them *were* pure, and ^u killed the passover for all the children of the captivity, and for their brethren the priests, and for themselves. And the children of Israel, which were come again out of captivity, and all such as had ^v separated themselves unto them from the filthiness of the heathen of the land, to seek the LORD God of Israel, did 22 eat, and kept the ^w feast of unleavened bread seven days with joy: for the LORD had made them joyful, and ^x turned the heart of the king of Assyria unto them, to strengthen their hands in the work of the house of God, the God of Israel.

7 NOW after these things, in the reign of ¹ Artaxerxes king of Persia, 2 Ezra ^a the son of Seraiah, the son of Azariah, the son of Hilkiah, the son

B. C. 519.
¹⁰ decree.
¹ ch. 1. 1.
 ch. 5. 13.
^m ch. 4. 21.
ⁿ ch. 7. 1.
¹¹ the sons of the transportation.
^o 1 Ki. 8. 63.
 Neh. 8. 10.
 2 Chr. 7. 5.
^p ch. 8. 35.
^q 1 Chr. 24. 1.
^r 1 Chr. 23. 6.
 according to writi^g.
 Num. 3. 6.
 Num. 8. 9.
^s Ex. 12. 6.
^t 2 Chr. 35. 11.
^u 2 Chr. 35. 11.
^v Ex. 12. 48.
 ch. 9. 11.
 Ps. 93. 5.
^w Ex. 12. 15.
 Ex. 13. 6.
 2 Chr. 30. 21.
^x Pro. 21. 1.
 CHAP. 7.
¹ Longimanus.
^a 1 Chr. 6. 14.

third day of the twelfth month, in the sixth year of his reign. Four years and a quarter were occupied from the recommencement to the completion of the work.

16-18.—FEASTS OF THE DEDICATION.
 16. the children of Israel . . . kept the dedication . . . with joy. The ceremonial was gone through with demonstrations of the liveliest joy. The aged, who had wept at the laying of the foundation, were most, if not all of them, now dead; and all rejoiced at the completion of this national undertaking. 17. twelve he-goats—as at the dedication of the tabernacle (Num. viii. 17). according to the number of the tribes of Israel. Although the returned exiles belonged chiefly to Judah and Benjamin, some connected with the other tribes joined the caravan of travellers to Jerusalem, and these few considered themselves as representing the whole Jewish nation. 18. they set the priests in their divisions, and the Levites in their courses . . . as it is written in the book of Moses. Although David arranged the priests and Levites in courses according to their families, it was Moses who assigned to the priests and Levites their rights and privileges, their station and several duties.

19-22.—AND OF THE PASSOVER.
 21. all such as had separated themselves . . . from the filthiness of the heathen—*i. e.*, who had given satisfactory evidence of being true proselytes by not only renouncing the impure worship of idolatry, but by undergoing the rite of circumcision—a condition indispensable to a participation of the passover. 22. kept the feast . . . with joy: for the Lord . . . turned the heart of the king of Assyria unto them—*i. e.*, king of the Persian empire, which now included the possessions, and had surpassed the glory, of Assyria as well as of Babylon and Media (*D'Herbelot*, 'Bibliothèque Orientale,' sub voce 'Noah'). The three

great ancient empires were frequently viewed and spoken of as the same under different dynasties. The use of this title has been accounted for on a different ground—viz., that this chapter, along with the preceding five, was written by Haggai or Zechariah, who, in common with the older Jewish exiles, were accustomed to apply it to the kings that carried them captive (*Hervey*, 'Genealogy,' p. 318; see Introduction to Ezra). The favourable disposition which Darius had evinced toward the Jews secured them peace and prosperity, and the privileges of their own religion during the rest of his reign. The religious joy that so remarkably characterized the celebration of this feast was testified by expressions of lively gratitude to God, whose overruling power and converting grace had produced so marvellous a change on the hearts of the mighty potentates, and disposed them, heathens though they were, to aid the cause and provide for the worship of the true God.

CHAP. VII. 1-10.—EZRA GOES UP TO JERUSALEM.

1. in the reign of Artaxerxes—*i. e.*, him who was surnamed Longimanus. An interval of fifty years intervenes between the close of the last chapter and this; *i. e.*, between the dedication of the temple and the journey of Ezra to Palestine. A number of stirring events occurred during that period—viz., the expedition of Xerxes into Greece, the battles of Marathon, Thermopylae, and Salamis, with the deeds of Miltiades, Leonidas, and Cimon, which brought such humiliating disasters on the Persian empire. Then, after the return of Xerxes from this unfortunate expedition, there was the episode of Esther and the exaltation of Mordecai, both of which produced a happy change on the condition and prospects of the Jews, a short time before the mission of Ezra. Ezra the son of Seraiah [עֲזָרָה, help; Septuagint, 'Εσδρας]. A period of 130 years had elapsed between that

3 of Shallum, the son of Zadok, the son of Ahitub, the son of Amariah, the
 4 son of Azariah, the son of Meraioth, the son of Zerabiah, the son of Uzzi,
 5 the son of Bukki, the son of Abishua, the son of Phinehas, the son of
 6 Eleazar, the son of Aaron the chief priest: this Ezra went up from
 Babylon; and he *was* a ready scribe in the law of Moses, which the
 LORD God of Israel had given: and the king granted him all his request,
 7 according ^b to the hand of the LORD his God upon him. And ^c there went
 up *some* of the children of Israel, and of the priests, and the Levites, and
 the singers, and the porters, and the ^d Nethinims, unto Jerusalem, in the
 8 seventh year of Artaxerxes the king. And he came to Jerusalem in the
 9 fifth month, which *was* in the seventh year of the king. For upon the
 first *day* of the first month ^e began he to go up from Babylon, and on the
 first *day* of the fifth month came he to Jerusalem, ^f according to the good
 10 hand of his God upon him. For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek
 the law of the LORD, and to do *it*, and to ^g teach in Israel statutes and
 judgments.
 11 Now *this is* the copy of the letter that the king Artaxerxes gave unto
 Ezra the priest, the scribe, *even* a scribe of the words of the command-
 ments of the LORD, and of his statutes to Israel.
 12 Artaxerxes, ^h king of kings, ⁱ unto Ezra the priest, a scribe of the law of
 13 the God of heaven, perfect *peace*, ^j and at such a time. I make a decree,
 that all they of the people of Israel, and *of* his priests and Levites, in my
 realm, which are minded of their own free will to go up to Jerusalem, go
 14 with thee. Forasmuch as thou art sent ^k of the king, and of his ^l seven
 counsellors, to enquire concerning Judah and Jerusalem, according to the

R. C. 457.
 b ch. 8. 22.
 Neh. 1. 10.
 11.
 Neh. 2. 8,
 12, 13.
 Neh. 4. 15.
 c ch. 8. 1.
 d ch. 2. 43.
 e was the
 foundation
 of the
 going up.
 f Neh. 2. 8.
 g Ps. 119. 45.
 h Deut. 33. 10.
 i Neh. 8. 1.
 j Mal. 2. 7.
 k Eze. 26. 7.
 l Dan. 2. 37.
 m Or, to Ezra
 the priest,
 a perfect
 scribe of
 the law of
 the God of
 heaven.
 peace, etc.
 n ch. 4. 10.
 o from be-
 fore the
 king.
 p Esth. 1. 14.

catastrophe and the journey of Ezra to Jerusalem; and as a grandson of Seraiah—viz., Jeshua, who held the office of high priest—had accompanied Zerubbabel in the first caravan of returning exiles, Ezra must have been in all probability a grandson, descended too from a younger son, the elder branch being in possession of the pontificate. 6. This Ezra . . . was a ready scribe in the law of Moses. The term "scribe" does not mean a penman, nor even an attorney well versant in forms of law, and skilled in the method of preparing public or private deeds. He was a rabbi, or doctor, learned in the Mosaic law, and in all that related to the civil and ecclesiastical polity and customs of the Hebrew people. Scribes of this description possessed great authority and influence (cf. Matt. xxiii. 25; Mark xii. 28). the king granted him all his request. Nothing is said as to the ground or channel of Ezra's influence with the king. But *Josephus* ('Antiquities,' b. xi., ch. v., sec. 1) says that he enjoyed a reputation in society for the integrity and high qualities of his character. He left Babylon entrusted with an important commission to be executed in Jerusalem. The manner in which he obtained this office is minutely related in a subsequent passage. Here it is noticed, but with a pious acknowledgment of the Divine grace and goodness which disposed the royal mind in favour of Ezra's patriotic objects. The Levites, &c., did not go at that time, and are mentioned here by anticipation. 8. came to Jerusalem in the fifth month—i.e., corresponding to the end of our July or beginning of our August. As he left Babylon on New-Year's day (v. 9), the journey must have occupied not less than four months—a long period; but it was necessary to move at a slow pace, and by short, easy stages, as he had to conduct a large caravan of poor people, including women, children, and all their household gear, (see on ch. viii.) 10. Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord, &c. His reigning desire had been to study the Divine law,

its principles, institutions, privileges, and requirements; and now, from love and zeal, he devoted himself, as the business of his life, to the work of instructing, reforming, and edifying others.

11. 26.—GRACIOUS COMMISSION OF ARTAXERXES. 11. this is the copy of the letter that the king Artaxerxes gave. The measure which this document authorized, and the remarkable interest in the Jews displayed in it, was most probably owing to the influence of Esther, the king's mother, who had imbued her son with favourable dispositions towards the Jews.

12. Artaxerxes, king of kings. That title might have been assumed as, with literal truth, applicable to him, since many of the tributary princes of his empire still retained the name and authority of kings. But it was as probably a mere Orientalism, denoting a great and powerful prince, as the heaven of heavens signified the highest heaven, and vanity of vanities the greatest vanity. This vain-glorious title was assumed by the kings of Assyria, from whom it passed to the sovereigns of Persia. unto Ezra the priest, a scribe of the law of the God of heaven. The appointment of Ezra, which was in the seventh year of Artaxerxes' reign, to this influential mission, was of the highest importance to the Hebrew people, as a large proportion of them were become, in a great measure, strangers both to the language and the institutions of their forefathers. 14. sent of the king, and of his seven counsellors. This was the fixed number of the privy council of the kings of Persia (see on ch. v. 2: cf. Esth. i. 10, 14). The document describes, with great clearness and precision, the nature of Ezra's commission, and the extent of power and prerogatives with which he was invested. It gave him authority, in the first place, to organise the colony in Judæa, and institute a regular government, according to the laws of the Hebrew people, and by magistrates and rulers of their own nation (v. 25, 26), with power to punish offenders by fines, imprisonment, exile, or death,

15 law of thy God which *is* in thine hand; and to carry the silver and gold, which the king and his counsellors have freely offered unto the God of
 16 Israel, ^kwhose habitation *is* in Jerusalem, and ^lall the silver and gold that thou canst find in all the province of Babylon, with the free-will offering of the people, and of the priests, ^moffering willingly for the house of their
 17 God which *is* in Jerusalem; that thou mayest buy speedily with this money bullocks, rams, lambs, with their ⁿmeat offerings and their drink offerings, and ^ooffer them upon the altar of the house of your God which
 18 *is* in Jerusalem. And whatsoever shall seem good to thee, and to thy brethren, to do with the rest of the silver and the gold, that do after the
 19 will of your God. The vessels also that are given thee for the service of the house of thy God, *those* deliver thou before the God of Jerusalem.
 20 And ^pwhatsoever more shall be needful for the house of thy God, which thou shalt have occasion to bestow, bestow *it* out of the king's treasure
 21 house. And I, *even* I Artaxerxes the king, do make a decree to all ^qthe treasurers which *are* beyond the river, that whatsoever Ezra the priest, the scribe of the law of the God of heaven, shall require of you, it be done
 22 speedily, unto an hundred talents of silver, and to an hundred ^rmeasures of wheat, and to an hundred baths of wine, and to an hundred baths of
 23 oil, and salt without prescribing *how much*. ^sWhatsoever is commanded by the God of heaven, let it be diligently done for the house of the God of heaven: ^tfor why should there be wrath against the realm of the king
 24 and his sons? Also we certify you, that, touching any of the priests and Levites, singers, porters, Nethinims, or ministers of this house of God, it
 25 shall not be lawful to impose toll, tribute, or custom, upon them. And thou, Ezra, after the wisdom of thy God that *is* in thine hand, ^uset magistrates and judges, which may judge all the people that *are* beyond the river, all such as know the laws of thy God; and ^vteach ye them that
 26 know *them* not. And whosoever will not do the law of thy God, and the law of the king, let judgment be executed speedily upon him, whether *it be* unto death, or ^wto banishment, or to confiscation of goods, or to imprisonment.
 27 Blessed ^x*be* the LORD God of our fathers, ^ywhich hath put *such a thing* as this in the king's heart, to beautify the house of the LORD which *is*
 28 in Jerusalem; and ^zhath extended mercy unto me before the king, and his counsellors, and before all the king's mighty princes: and I was strengthened as ^{aa}the hand of the LORD my God *was* upon me; and I gathered together out of Israel chief men to go up with me.
 8 THESE *are* now the chief of their fathers, and *this is* the genealogy of them that went up with me from Babylon, in the reign of Artaxerxes

B. C. 457.
 k 2 Chr 6 2.
 Ps. 135. 21.
 l ch 8 26.
 m 1 Chr 29. 6.
 n Num. 15. 4-13.
 o Deut. 12. 5.
 p 1 Cor 4. 1. 2.
 q ch. 5. 3, 6. Neh. 2. 7.
 r 5 cors.
 s Whatsoever is of the decree.
 t ch 6. 10.
 Ps. 68. 29.
 Isa 60. 12.
 Jer. 12. 14.
 Jer. 29. 17.
 Amos 7. 12. 13.
 1 Tim. 2. 1, 2.
 Ex. 13. 21.
 Deut. 16. 13.
 1 Kl. 3. 38.
 Ps. 19. 7.
 Pro. 2. 6.
 Jas. 1. 5.
 2 Chr. 17. 7.
 Mal 2. 7.
 Matt. 13. 5.
 Matt 23 2.
 Col 1. 28.
 7 to rooting out
 u 1 Chr. 29. 6.
 ch 6. 22.
 Phil. 4. 10.
 v ch. 6. 22.
 Neh. 2. 12.
 Pro. 16. 7.
 Pro. 21. 1.
 John 19. 11.
 2 Cor. 8. 16.
 Heb. 8. 10.
 Rev. 17. 17.
 w ch 9. 9.
 Neh. 1. 11.
 Neh. 2. 8.
 x ch 5. 5.

according to the degree of their criminality. *Secondly*, he was empowered to carry a large donation of money, partly from the royal treasury, and partly raised by voluntary contributions among his countrymen, to create a fund out of which to make suitable provision for maintaining the regular worship of God in Jerusalem (vs. 16, 17). *Thirdly*, the Persian officers in Syria were commanded to afford him every assistance by gifts of money, within a certain specified limit, in carrying out the objects of his patriotic mission (v. 21). 22. an hundred talents of silver—£22,000, according to the rate of the silver talent of Babylon. *Fourthly*, Artaxerxes gave his royal sanction in establishment of the Divine law which exempted priests and Levites from taxation or tribute, and confirmed to them the exclusive right to officiate in the sacred services of the sanctuary. And, finally, in the expression of the king's desire for the divine blessing upon the king and his government (v. 23), we see the strong persuasion which pervaded the Persian court, and had been

produced by the captivity of the Hebrew people, as to the Being and Directing Providence of the God they worshipped. It will be observed, however, that the commission related exclusively to the rebuilding of the temple—not of the walls. The Samaritans (ch. iv. 20-22) had succeeded in alarming the Persian court by their representations of the danger to the empire of fortifying a city notorious for the turbulent character of its inhabitants and the prowess of its kings.
 27, 28.—EZRA BLESSES GOD FOR THIS FAVOUR.
 27. Blessed be the Lord God of our fathers. This devout thanksgiving is in unison with the whole character of Ezra, who discerns the hand of God in every event, and is always ready to express a pious acknowledgment for the Divine goodness.
 CHAP. VIII. 1-14.—EZRA'S COMPANIONS FROM BABYLON.
 1. this is the genealogy of them that went up with me from Babylon. The number given here amounts to 1,754. But this is the register of adult

2 the king. Of the sons of Phinehas; Gershom: of the sons of Ithamar;
 3 Daniel: of the sons of David; ^aHattush. Of the sons of Shechaniah;
 of the sons of ^bPharosh; Zechariah: and with him were reckoned by
 4 genealogy of the males an hundred and fifty. Of the sons of Pahath-
 moab; Elihoenai the son of Zerariah, and with him two hundred males.
 5 Of the sons of Shechaniah; the son of Jahaziel, and with him three
 6 hundred males. Of the sons also of ^cAdin; Ebed the son of Jonathan,
 7 and with him fifty males. And of the sons of Elam; Jeshaiiah the son
 8 of Athaliah, and with him seventy males. And of the sons of Shephatiah;
 9 Zebadiah the son of Michael, and with him fourscore males. Of the sons
 of Joab; Obadiah the son of Jehiel, and with him two hundred and
 10 eighteen males. And of the sons of Shelomith; the son of Josiphiah,
 11 and with him an hundred and threescore males. And of the sons of
 Bebai; Zechariah the son of Bebai, and with him twenty and eight
 12 males. And of the sons of Azgad; Johanan ¹the son of Haakkatan, and
 13 with him an hundred and ten males. And of the last sons of Adonikam,
 whose names *are* these, Eliphelet, Jeiel, and Shemaiah, and with them
 14 threescore males. Of the sons also of Bigvai; Uthai, and ²Zabbud, and
 with them seventy males.
 15 And I gathered them together to the river ^dthat runneth to Ahava;
 and there ³abode we in tents three days: and I viewed ^ethe people and
 16 the priests, and found there none of the ^fsons of Levi. Then sent I for
 Eliezer, for Ariel, for Shemaiah, and for Elnathan, and for Jarib, and for
 Elnathan, and for Nathan, and for Zechariah, and for Meshullam, chief
 17 men; also for Joiarib, and for Elnathan, men of understanding. And I
 sent them with commandment unto Iddo the chief at the place Casiphia,
 and ⁴I told them what they should say unto Iddo, *and* to his brethren
 the Nethinims, at the place Casiphia, that they should bring unto us
 18 ministers for the house of our God. And, by the ^ggood hand of our God
 upon us, they ^hbrought us a man of understanding, of the sons of Mahli,
 the son of Levi, the son of Israel; and Sherebiah, with his sons and his
 19 brethren, eighteen; and Hashabiah, and with him Jeshaiiah of the sons
 20 of Merari, his brethren, and their sons, twenty; also ⁱof the Nethinims,
 whom David and the princes had appointed for the service of the Levites,
 two hundred and twenty Nethinims: all of them were expressed by
 name.

E. C. 457.
 CHAP. 8.
^a 1 Chr. 3. 22.
^b ch. 2. 3.
 Neh. 7. 8.
 Neh. 10. 14.
^c ch. 2. 15.
 Neh. 7. 27.
 Neh. 10. 10.
¹ Or, the
 youngest
 son.
² Or, Zaccur,
 as some
 read.
^d Ps. 137. 1.
 Eze. 1. 1.
 Eze. 3. 15.
 Acts 16. 13.
³ Or,
 pitched.
^e Pro. 27. 23.
 Acts 20. 53.
 Heb. 13. 17.
^f ch. 7. 7,
 24.
 Num. 8. 1.
⁴ I put
 words in
 their
 mouth.
 Ex. 4. 15.
 Deut. 18. 18.
 2 Sam. 14. 3.
 19.
 Jer. 1. 9.
 Jer. 15. 19.
^g ch. 7. 28.
 Neh. 2. 8.
 1 ro 3. 6.
 Rom. 8. 23.
^h Lev. 10. 10,
 11.
 2 Chr. 50. 2.
 Neh. 8. 7.
 Neh. 9. 4, 5.
 Jer. 3. 15.
ⁱ ch. 2. 43.

males only, and as there were women and children also (v. 21), the whole caravan may be considered as comprising between 6,000 and 7,000. The name of Zathi, some of whose descendants accompanied Ezra, is omitted in this list, though it is inserted in the catalogue of the first caravan (see ch. ii. 8; Neh. vii. 13: cf. ch. x. 27).

15-20.—HE SENDS TO IDDO FOR MINISTERS FOR THE TEMPLE SERVICE.

15. I gathered them together to the river that runneth to Ahava [שֵׁטָן; Septuagint, ὁ Εὐδῖ; Alexandrine, Εὐσε]—called in later times Ibi. Ezra here speaks in the first person. In general the sacred historians write of their own doings in the third person, as did Xenophon, Cesar, and many other eminent historians of antiquity. But the present is an exceptional case, and the reason why Ezra relates this narrative in the first person seems to be that he is giving a report of the execution of his public commission—he is not here relating the procedure of God to His people, but the performance of a responsible trust committed to him by the king. This river has not been ascertained. The probability is that the Ahava was one of the streams or numerous canals of Mesopotamia communicating with the Euphrates

(‘Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature’). But it was certainly in Babylonia, on the banks of that stream; and perhaps in the neighbourhood of a town of the same name was the place appointed for general rendezvous, generally believed to be identical with the modern Hit, direct east of Damascus (see *Winer*, ‘Realwörterbuch’; also *Rosenmüller*, ‘Biblical Geography,’ ii., p. 121). The emigrants encamped there for three days, according to Oriental custom, while the preparations for the departure were being completed, and Ezra was arranging the order of the caravan. I . . . found there none of the sons of Levi—i. e., the ordinary Levites. Notwithstanding the privilege of exemption from all taxes granted to persons engaged to the temple service, none of the Levitical tribes were induced to join the settlement in Jerusalem; and it was even not without difficulty Ezra persuaded some of the priestly families to accompany him. 16. Then sent I for Eliezer . . . 17. with commandment unto Iddo the chief. Ezra sent this deputation, either by virtue of authority, which by his priestly character he had over the Levites, or of the royal commission with which he was invested. The deputation were despatched to Iddo, who was a prince or chief of the Nethinims—for the Persian

21 Then I ^jproclaimed a fast there, at the river of Ahava, that we might ^kafflict ourselves before our God, to seek of him a right ^lway for us, and
 22 for our little ones, and for all our substance. For I ^mwas ashamed to require of the king a band of soldiers and horsemen to help us against the enemy in the way: because we had spoken unto the king, saying, The ⁿhand of our God *is* upon all them for ^ogood that seek him; but
 23 his power and his wrath *is* ^pagainst all them ^qthat forsake him. So we fasted, and besought our God for this; and he was ^rentreated of us.
 24 Then I separated twelve of the chief of the priests, Sherebiah, Hash-
 25 abiah, and ten of their brethren with them, and weighed unto them ^sthe silver, and the gold, and the vessels, *even* the offering of the house of our God, which the king, and his counsellors, and his lords, and all Israel *there*
 26 present, had offered: I even weighed unto their hand six hundred and fifty talents of silver, and silver vessels an hundred talents, *and* of gold an
 27 hundred talents; also twenty basins of gold of a thousand drams; and
 28 two vessels of ^tfine copper, ^uprecious as gold. And I said unto them, Ye *are* ^vholy unto the LORD; the vessels *are* ^wholy also; and the silver and the gold *are* a free-will offering unto the LORD God of your fathers.
 29 Watch ^xye, and keep *them*, until ye weigh *them* before the chief of the priests and the Levites, and chief of the fathers of Israel, at Jerusalem, in the chambers of the house of the LORD. So took the priests and the Levites the weight of the silver, and the gold, and the vessels, to bring *them* to Jerusalem, unto the house of our God.
 31 Then we departed from the river of Ahava on the twelfth *day* of the first month, to go unto Jerusalem: and ^ythe hand of our God was upon us, and he delivered us from the hand of the enemy, and of such as lay in
 32 wait by the way. And we ^zcame to Jerusalem, and abode there three
 33 days. Now on the fourth day was the silver and the gold and the vessels

B. C. 457.
 j 2 Chr. 20. 3.
 k Lev. 16. 29.
 l Isa. 23. 21.
 m Isa. 55. 3, 5.
 n Ps. 5. 8.
 o 1 Cor. 9. 15.
 p ch. 7. 6, 9, 23.
 q Ps. 23. 18.
 r Ps. 34. 15.
 Rom. 8. 28.
 s Ps. 34. 16.
 t 2 Chr. 15. 2.
 u 1 Chr. 5. 20.
 v 2 Chr. 31. 13.
 Isa. 19. 22.
 w Matt. 7. 7.
 Matt. 21. 2.
 x Mark 11 24.
 y Jas. 1. 5, 6.
 z ch. 7. 15. 16.
 aa yellow, or shining brass.
 ab desirable.
 ac Lev. 21. 6-3.
 ad Deut. 32. 3.
 ae Lev. 22. 2, 3.
 af Num. 4. 4, 15, 19, 20.
 ag 1 Chr. 26. 20-26.
 ah ch. 7. 6, 9, 28.
 ai Neh. 2. 11.

government allowed the Hebrews, during their exile, to retain their ecclesiastical government by their own chiefs, as well as to enjoy the privilege of free worship. Iddo's influence procured and brought to the camp at Ahava thirty-eight Levites and 220 Nethinims, and descendants of the Gibeonites, who performed the servile duties of the temple.

21-36.—A FAST PROCLAIMED.

21. Then I proclaimed a fast there. The dangers to travelling caravans from the Bedouin Arabs that prowl through the desert were in ancient times as great as they still are; and it seems that travellers usually sought the protection of a military escort. But Ezra had spoken so much to the king of the sufficiency of the divine care of his people that he would have blushed to apply for a guard of soldiers; and therefore he resolved that his followers should, by a solemn act of fasting and prayer, commit themselves to the Keeper of Israel. Their faith, considering the many and constant perils of a journey across the Bedouin regions, must have been great, and it was rewarded by the enjoyment of perfect safety during the whole way.

24. Then I separated twelve of the chief of the priests . . . 5. And weighed unto them the silver, &c. The custody of the contributions and of the sacred vessels was, during the journey, committed to twelve of the chief priests, who, with the assistance of ten of their brethren, were to watch closely over them by the way, and deliver them into the house of the Lord in Jerusalem. The treasures in silver and gold, according to the value of the Babylonian talent, amounted to about £515,000 sterling. 27. also twenty basins of gold, of a thousand drams [לְאֵרֵבָיִם]

darics, a Persian coin, familiar to the Jews while resident within the Persian dominions. two vessels of fine copper, precious as gold [תְּבִינִים]

of good yellow [glittering] brass. Almost all commentators agree in maintaining that the vessels referred to were not made of copper, but of an alloy capable of taking on a bright polish, which we think highly probable, as copper was then in common use amongst the Babylonians, and would not be as precious as gold. This alloy, much esteemed amongst the Jews, was composed of gold and other metals, which took on a high polish, and was not subject to tarnish (*Noyes*; see also note from *Chardin's 'Travels,'* quoted by *Harmer*, iv., p. 419).

31. we departed from the river of Ahava on the twelfth day of the first month. Computing from the time of their setting out to the period of their arrival, they occupied about four months on the way. Their health and security were marvellous during so long a journey. The pilgrim-caravans of the present day perform long journeys through the wildest deserts of the East under the protection of a firman from the Porte, and an escort of soldiers. But for a large body—composed, as that of Ezra, of some thousands of men, women, and children, unaccustomed to travel, undisciplined to order, and without military strength, and with so large an amount of treasure tempting the cupidity of the marauding, plundering tribes of the desert,—to accomplish a journey so long and so arduous in perfect safety, is one of the most astonishing events recorded in history. Nothing but the vigilant care of a superintending Providence could have brought them securely to their destination. 33. Now on the fourth day was the silver . . . weighed in the house of

weighed in the house of our God by the hand of Meremoth the son of Uriah the priest; and with him *was* Eleazar the son of Phinehas; and with them *was* Jozabab the son of Jeshua, and Noadiah the son of Binui, 34 Levites; by number *and* by weight of every one: and all the weight was written at that time.

35 *Also* the children of those that had been carried away, which were come out of the captivity, ^yoffered burnt offerings unto the God of Israel, twelve bullocks for all Israel, ninety and six rams, seventy and seven lambs, twelve he-goats *for* a sin offering; all *this was* a burnt offering 36 unto the LORD. And they delivered the king's ^zcommissions unto the king's lieutenants, and to the governors on this side the river; and they ^afurthered the people, and the house of God.

9 NOW when these things were done, the princes came to me, saying, The people of Israel, and the priests, and the Levites, have not ^aseparated themselves from the people of the lands, ^bdoing according to their abominations, *even* of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, 2 the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites. For they have ^ctaken of their daughters for themselves, and for their sons; so that the ^dholy seed have ^emingled themselves with the people of *those* lands: yea, the hand of the princes and rulers hath been chief in this 3 trespass. And when I heard this thing, ^fI rent my garment and my mantle, and plucked off the hair of my head and of my beard, and sat 4 down ^gastonied. Then were assembled unto me every one that ^htrembled

B. C. 457.
^y 2 Chr 29. 31.
 ch. 6. 17.
 1's. 66. 10.
 15.
 Ps 116. 12.
 19.
 Luke 1, 74.
 75.
^z ch. 7. 21.
^a Isa. 56. 6.
 Isa. 14. 1.
 Isa. 61. 5.
 Zech. 8. 1-
 23.
 CHAP. 9.
^a Ex. 33. 16.
 ch. 6. 21, 22.
 ch. 10. 10,
 11.
 Neh. 9. 2.
^b Deut. 12. 30.
^c Deut. 7. 3.
^d Ex. 22. 31.
 Deut. 14. 2.
^e 2 Cor. 6. 14.
^f Isa. 15. 2.
^g 1's. 143. 4.
^h ch. 10. 3.
 Isa. 67. 2.

our God. They devoted the first three days after their arrival in Jerusalem to repose; on the next, the treasures were weighed and handed over to the custody of the officiating priests of the temple. The returned exiles offered burnt offerings, and Ezra delivered the royal commission to the satraps and [מִשְׁפָּטִים] (cf. ch. v. 3; vi. 6; Neh. iii. 7) inferior magistrates westward of the Euphrates—i. e., between that river and Judea, apparently the very locality where this provincial term is first found in use (1 Ki. x. 15; xx. 24; 2 Ki. xviii. 24, 34; 2 Chr. ix. 14); while the Levitical portion of them lent all the assistance they could in performing the additional work, which the arrival of so many new worshippers occasioned.

CHAP. IX. 1-4.—EZRA MOURNS FOR THE AFFINITY OF THE PEOPLE WITH STRANGERS.

1. Now when these things were done. The first days after Ezra's arrival in Jerusalem were occupied in executing the different trusts committed to him. The nature and design of the office, with which the royal authority had invested him, was publicly made known to his own people by the formal delivery of the contribution, and the sacred vessels brought from Babylon to the priests to be deposited in the temple. Then his credentials were privately presented to the provincial governors; and, by this prudent orderly proceeding, he put himself in the best position to avail himself of all the advantages guaranteed him by the king. On a superficial view, everything contributed to gratify his patriotic feelings in the apparently flourishing state of the church and country. But a further acquaintance discovered the existence of great corruptions, which demanded immediate correction; and one was particularly brought under his notice as being the source and origin of all others—viz., a serious abuse that was practised respecting the law of marriage. **the princes came to me, saying.** The information they lodged with him was to the effect that numbers of the people, in violation of the Divine law (Deut. vii. 2, 3), had contracted marriages with Gentile women, and that the guilt

of the disorderly practice, far from being confined to the lower classes, was shared in by several of the priests and Levites, as well as of the leading men in the country. This great irregularity would inevitably bring many evils in its train; it would encourage and increase idolatry, as well as break down the barriers of distinction which, for important purposes, God had raised between the Israelites and all other people. Ezra foresaw these dangerous consequences; but was overwhelmed with a sense of the difficulty of correcting the evil, when matrimonial alliances had been formed, families had been reared, affections engaged, and important interests established. **3. when I heard this . . . I rent my garment and my mantle, &c.**—the outer and inner garment, which was a token not only of great grief, but of dread at the same time of the Divine wrath; "plucked off the hair of my head and my beard," which was a still more significant sign of overpowering grief. In order to enter into the causes of this intense sorrow and disappointment, we must endeavour to realize the position of a devout patriot like Ezra, and remember that, though he anticipated many irregularities and disorders in Jerusalem, he was not at all prepared for the awful extent of their prevalence. **That which a pious pilgrim to Rome, in the time of its most shameless corruptions, would experience, will illustrate the experience of this earnest and faithful Jew.** The lamentations of such a pilgrim, when he witnessed that senselessness and profligacy which too plainly betokened the utter absence of any consciousness of their high and privileged position, in the persons who dealt at the earthly centre of Divine worship, and which, when actually present to him, was so much greater than anything for which rumour had prepared him, would, however, only faintly represent the disappointment and suffering on hearing and seeing what he did hear and see on arriving in Jerusalem' (Drew, 'Scripture Studies,' p. 207). **4. Then were assembled unto me every one that trembled, &c.** All the pious people who revered God's word, and

at the words of the God of Israel, because of the transgression of those that had been carried away; and I sat astonished until the evening sacrifice.

B. C. 457.

Ex. 29. 29.

1 Or,

affliction.

j Ex 9. 29.

k Dan 9. 7.

2 Or, guiltiness.

l 1's 105. 6.

m Deut 28. 36.

3 moment.

4 Or, a pin:

that is, a

constant

and sure

abode.

n Ps. 13. 3.

o Neh 9. 26.

p 1's. 136. 23.

q ch 7. 23.

r to set up.

s Isa. 5. 2.

t by the

hand of

thy ser-

vants.

7 from

mouth to

mouth.

2 Kl. 21. 16

Ex 23 32.

Ex. 34. 12,

15, 17.

Deut. 7. 3.

t Deut 23 6

2 (hr. 19. 2.

John 0 11.

u Fro 14. 22.

Fro. 20 7.

5 And at the evening sacrifice I arose up from my heaviness; and, having rent my garment and my mantle, I fell upon my knees, and

6 spread out my hands unto the LORD my God, and said,
O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to thee, my

God: for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespass

7 is grown up unto the heavens. Since the days of our fathers have we

been in a great trespass unto this day; and for our iniquities have we,

our kings, and our priests, been delivered into the hand of the kings of

the lands, to the sword, to captivity, and to a spoil, and to confusion of

8 face, as it is this day. And now for a little space grace hath been

showed from the LORD our God, to leave us a remnant to escape, and to

give us a nail in his holy place, that our God may lighten our eyes,

9 and give us a little reviving in our bondage. For we were bondmen;

yet our God hath not forsaken us in our bondage, but hath extended

mercy unto us in the sight of the kings of Persia, to give us a reviving,

to set up the house of our God, and to repair the desolations thereof,

10 and to give us a wall in Judah and in Jerusalem. And now, O our

God, what shall we say after this? for we have forsaken thy command-

11 ments, which thou hast commanded by thy servants the prophets, saying,

The land, unto which ye go to possess it, is an unclean land with the

filthiness of the people of the lands, with their abominations, which have

12 filled it from one end to another with their uncleanness. Now therefore

give not your daughters unto their sons, neither take their daughters

unto your sons, nor seek their peace or their wealth for ever: that

ye may be strong, and eat the good of the land, and leave it for an

13 inheritance to your children for ever. And after all that is come upon

us for our evil deeds, and for our great trespass, seeing that thou our

dreaded its threatenings and judgments, joined with Ezra in bewailing the public sin, and devising the means of redressing it. I sat astonished until the evening sacrifice [אֶשְׂרָף]—the primary idea being that of silence, this participle signifies *stupidified, struck dumb*. The intelligence of so gross a violation of God's law by those who had been carried into captivity on account of their sins, and who, though restored, were yet unreformed, produced such a stunning effect on the mind of Ezra, that he remained for awhile incapable either of speech or of action. The hour of the evening sacrifice was the usual time of the people assembling, and at that season, having again rent his hair and garments, he made public prayer and confession of sin.

5-15.—PRAYS TO GOD.

5. at the evening sacrifice I arose up from my heaviness [אֶשְׂרָף]—I rose up from my humiliation. When fasting, as associated with mourning, the Jews were wont to sit on the ground. I fell upon my knees, and spread out my hands unto the Lord my God. The burden of his prayer, which was dictated by a deep sense of the emergency, was, that he was overwhelmed at the flagrant enormity of this sin, and the bold impiety of continuing in it, after having, as a people, so recently experienced the heavy marks of the Divine displeasure. God had begun to show returning favour to Israel by the restoration of some. But this only aggravated their sin, that so soon after their re-establishment in their native land, they openly violated the express and repeated precepts which commanded them to extirpate the

Canaanites. Such conduct, he exclaimed, could issue only in drawing down some great punishment from offended heaven, and ensuring the destruction of the small remnant of us that is left, unless, by the help of Divine grace, we repent, and bring forth the fruits of repentance in an immediate and thorough reformation.

8. to give us a nail in his holy place. Edifices in ancient times, and in Eastern countries, were much more simple in construction than ours. Nor were they furnished with that variety of accommodation and furniture within of which ours can boast. Hence one essential requisite was to fix spikes, or large pins, in the walls, on which to hang moveables and utensils of common use. These immense nails were fastened in the walls of the apartment in the process of building, and placed in parts which were strong and durable (cf. Isa. xxii. 23; Ezek. xv. 3; Zech. x. 4). that our God may lighten our eyes—i. e., invigorate us, as the phrase is used to signify, 1 Sam. xiv. 27-29. 9. and to give us a wall in Judah and in Jerusalem [חָוֶה]—a walled place, an enclosure for sheepfolds, or a fence for vineyards (Isa. v. 5). The expression is peculiarly appropriate and beautiful, considering that Jehovah is frequently represented as "the Shepherd of Israel," and that, having re-collected his dispersed flock, he had, through the subordinate agency of the Persian monarch, placed them securely in their ancient folds in Palestine. *Auberlin, Hävernick*, and others, refer this term to the re-establishment of the city walls (cf. Mic. vii. 11), but *Hengstenberg* ('*Christology*,' iii., p. 204) limits it to the temple alone.

God ^s hast punished us less than our iniquities *deserve*, and hast given us
 14 *such* deliverance as this; should we ^v again break thy commandments,
 and ^v join in affinity with the people of these abominations, wouldest
 not thou be angry with us till thou hadst consumed *us*, so that *there*
 15 *should be* no remnant nor escaping? O LORD God of Israel, thou *art*
 righteous; for we remain yet escaped, as *it is* this day: behold, we *are*
^v before thee in our trespasses; for we cannot stand before thee because
 of this.

10 NOW ^a when Ezra had prayed, and when he had confessed, weeping and
 casting himself down ^b before the house of God, there assembled unto him
 out of Israel a very great congregation of men and women and children:
 2 for the people ¹ wept very sore. And Shechaniah the son of Jehiel, *one*
 of the sons of Elam, answered and said unto Ezra, We have ^c trespassed
 against our God, and have taken strange wives of the people of the land:
 3 yet now there is hope in Israel concerning this thing. Now therefore let
 us make a covenant with our God ² to put away all the wives, and such
 as are born of them, according to the counsel of my lord, and of those
^a that tremble at ^c the commandment of our God; and let it be done
 4 according to the law. Arise; for *this matter belongeth* unto thee: we also
will be with thee: ^f be of good courage, and do *it*.

5 Then arose Ezra, and made the chief priests, the Levites, and all Israel,
^g to swear that they should do according to this word. And they swear.

6 Then Ezra rose up from before the house of God, and went into the
 chamber of Johanan the son of Eliashib: and *when* he came thither,
 he ^h did eat no bread, nor drink water: for he mourned because of the
 7 transgression of them that had been carried away. And they made
 proclamation throughout Judah and Jerusalem unto all the children of
 the captivity, that they should gather themselves together unto Jerusalem;
 8 and that whosoever would not come within three days, according to the
 counsel of the princes and the elders, all his substance should be ³ forfeited,
 and himself separated from the congregation of those that had been
 carried away.

9 Then all the men of Judah and Benjamin gathered themselves together
 unto Jerusalem within three days. *It was* the ninth month, and the

B C 457.
^s hast with-
 he'd be-
 neath our
 iniquities.
 Ps. 103. 10.
^v Ex. 23. 32,
 33.
 Judg 2 2.
 Neh 13. 23-
 27.
 John 5. 14.
 2 Pet. 2. 20.
^w 2 Cor. 6. 14.
^z Neh. 9. 33.
 Dan. 9. 14.
 Rom. 3. 19.

CHAP. 10.
¹ Dan. 9. 20.
² 2 Ki. 8. 30.
³ 2 Chr. 20. 9.
¹ wept a
 great
 weeping.
^c Ex. 34. 12.
 Neh. 13. 27.
² to bring
 forth.
^d ch. 9. 4.
 Ps. 119. 53,
 1 0.
 Isa. 66. 2.
 Eze 9. 4.
^e Deut 7. 2, 3.
 Josh. 23. 12,
 13.
^f 1 Chr. 28. 10.
 Isa. 35. 3, 4.
^g Neh 5. 12.
^h Deut. 9. 18.
 Job 23. 12
³ devoted.
 Lev. 27. 27.
 Josh. 6. 19.

CHAP. X. 1-17.—EZRA REFORMS THE STRANGE MARRIAGES.

1. Now when Ezra had prayed. As this prayer was uttered in public, while there was a general concourse of the people at the time of the evening sacrifice, and as it was accompanied with all the demonstrations of poignant sorrow and anguish, it is not surprising that the spectacle of a man so respected, a priest so holy, a governor so dignified, as Ezra, appearing distressed and filled with fear at the sad state of things, should produce a deep sensation; and the report of his passionate grief and expressions in the court of the temple having rapidly spread through the city, a great multitude flocked to the spot. 2. Shechaniah . . . answered and said unto Ezra, We have trespassed. This was one of the leading men, who was not himself a delinquent in the matter, for his name does not occur in the following list. He spoke in the general name of the people, and his conduct evinced a tender conscience as well as no small fortitude in making such a proposal; for as his father and five paternal uncles (v. 26) were involved in the guilt of unlawful marriages, he showed, by the measure he recommended, that he deemed it better to obey God than to please his nearest relatives. yet now there is hope in Israel concerning this thing. This hope, however, depended on timely measures of reformation, and,

therefore, instead of surrendering themselves to despair or despondency, he counselled them to amend their error without delay, relying on God's mercy for the past. Though the proposal may seem harsh and cruel, yet, in the peculiar circumstances of the Jews, it was just as well as necessary; and he urged the duty of seeing it executed on Ezra, as the only person competent to carry it into effect,—being possessed of skill and address for so delicate and difficult a work, and invested by God, and, under Him, by the Persian king (ch. vii. 23-28), with the requisite authority to enforce it.

6. Then Ezra . . . went into the chamber of Johanan. At a private council of the princes and elders held there, under the presidency of Ezra, it was resolved to enter into a general covenant to put away their foreign wives and children—that a proclamation should be made for all who had returned from Babylon to repair within three days to Jerusalem, under pain of excommunication and confiscation of their property.

9. Then all the men of Judah and Benjamin. The returned captives belonged chiefly to these tribes; but other Israelites are also included under these names, as they were all then occupying the territory formerly assigned to those two tribes. It was the ninth month—i. e., between the end of December and the beginning of January, which is

twentieth *day* of the month; and ²all the people sat in the street of the house of God, trembling because of *this* matter, and for ⁴the great rain. 10 And Ezra the priest stood up, and said unto them, Ye have transgressed, 11 and ⁵have taken strange wives, to increase the trespass of Israel. Now therefore ³make confession unto the LORD God of your fathers, and ⁶do his pleasure; and separate yourselves from the people of the land, and from the strange wives.

12 Then all the congregation answered and said with a loud voice, As thou 13 hast said, so must we do. But the people *are* many, and *it is* a time of much rain, and we are not able to stand without, neither *is this* a work of one day or two: for ⁶we are many that have transgressed in this thing. 14 Let now our rulers of all the congregation stand, and let all them which have taken strange wives in our cities come at appointed times, and with them the elders of every city, and the judges thereof, until the ⁷fierce wrath of our God ⁷for this matter be turned from us. Only Jonathan the son of Asahel and Jahaziah the son of Tikvah ⁸were employed about this 16 *matter*; and Meshullam and Shabbethai the Levite helped them. And the children of the captivity did so.

And Ezra the priest, *with* certain chief of the fathers, after the house of their fathers, and all of them by *their* names, were separated, and sat 17 down in the first day of the tenth month to examine the matter. And they made an end with all the men that had taken strange wives by the 18 first day of the first month. And among the sons of the priests there were found that had taken strange wives; *namely*, of the sons of ⁹Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and his brethren; Maaseiah, and Eliezer, and Jarib, 19 and Gedaliah. And they ⁹gave their hands that they would put away their wives; and, ⁹*being* guilty, *they offered* a ram of the flock for their 20 trespass. And of the sons of Immer; Hanani and Zebadiah. And of 21 the sons of Harim; Maaseiah, and Elijah, and Shemaiah, and Jehiel, and 22 Uzziah. And of the sons of Pashur; Elioenai, Maaseiah, Ishmael, Ne- 23 thaneel, Jozabad, and Elasa. Also of the Levites; Jozabad, and Shimei, 24 and Kelaiah, (the same *is* Kelita,) Pethahiah, Judah, and Eliezer. Of the singers also; Eliashib: and of the porters; Shallum, and Telem, and 25 Uri. Moreover of Israel: of the sons ¹⁰of Parosh; Ramiah, and Jeziah, and Malchiah, and Miamin, and Eleazar, and Malchijah, and Benaiah. 26 And of the sons of Elam; Mattaniah, Zechariah, and Jehiel, and Abdi, 27 and Jeremoth, and Eliah. And of the sons of ¹¹Zattu; Elioenai, Eliashib, 28 Mattaniah, and Jeremoth, and Zabad, and Aziza. Of the sons also of 29 Bebai; Jehohanan, Hananiah, Zabbai, and Athlai. And of the sons of Bani; Meshullam, Malluch, and Adaiah, Jashub, and Sheal, and Ramoth. 30 And of the sons of Pahath-moab; Adna, and Chelal, Benaiah, Maaseiah, 31 Mattaniah, Bezaleel, and Binnui, and Manasseh. And of the sons of

the coldest and most rainy season of the year in Palestine. all the people sat in the street—*i. e.*, the court or area "of the house of God," in which the people stood as worshippers. 10. Ezra the priest stood up and said. Having fully represented the enormity of their sin, and urged them to dissolve their unlawful connections, he was gratified by receiving a prompt acknowledgment of the justice of his reproof, and a promise of compliance with his recommendation. But as the weather was ungenial, and the defaulters were too numerous to be passed in review at one time, it was resolved that a commission should be appointed to examine into the whole matter. These commissioners, assisted by the judges and elders of the respective cities, made a minute investigation into every case, and, after three months' labour, completely removed all traces of the abuse. Doubtless an adequate provision was

made for the repudiated wives and children, according to the means and circumstances of the husbands.

13. But the people are many, and it is a time of much rain [עֵשָׂה רֶגֶז]—the season of rains, the rainy season, December (see *Robinson's* 'Biblical Researches,' ii., pp. 96-100). 15. Shabbethai—Sabbath-born: cf. Neh. viii. 7, 11, 16 (in margin).

18-44.—THOSE THAT HAD TAKEN STRANGE WIVES.

18. among the sons of the priests. From the names of so many men of rank appearing in the following list, some idea may be formed of the great and complicated difficulties attending the reformatory work. 19. they gave their hands—*i. e.*, came under a solemn engagement, which was usually ratified by pledging the right hand (Prov. vi. 1; Ezek. xvii. 18). The delinquents of the

B. C. 477.

1 Sam. 12.

18.

Isa. 10 10,

13.

4 the

showers.

5 have

caused to

dwell, or,

have

brought

back.

j Lev. 26. 40-

42.

Pro. 29. 13.

Jer. 3. 13.

k Isa. 1. 16,

17.

Rom. 12. 2.

6 Or. we

have

greatly

offended,

in this

thing.

l 2 Ki. 23 26.

2 Chr 28.11-

13.

2 Chr. 29.10.

2 Chr. 30. 5.

Ps. 78. 38.

Isa. 12. 1.

7 Or, till this

matter be

despatched.

8 stood.

m ch. 5. 2.

Hag. 1. 1,

12.

Hag. 2. 4.

Zech. 3. 1.

n 2 Ki. 10.15.

1 Chr 29.21.

2 Chr. 30. 8.

Pro. 6. 1.

Pro. 22. 26.

Gal. 2. 9.

o Lev. 6. 4.

p ch. 2. 3.

ch. 8. 3.

Neh. 7. 8.

Neh. 8. 3.

q ch. 2. 8.

Neh 7. 13.

32 Harim; Eliezer, Ishijah, ^rMalchiah, Shemaiah, Shimeon, Benjamin,
 33 Malluch, and Shemariah. Of the sons of Hashum; Mattenai, Matta-
 34 thah, Zabad, Eliphelet, Jeremai, Manasseh, and Shimei. Of the sons of
 35 Bani; Maadai, Amram, and Uel, Benaiah, Bedeiah, Chelluh, Vaniah,
 37 Meremoth, Eliashib, Mattaniah, Mattenai, and Jaasau, and Bani, and
 39 Binnui, Shimei, and Shelemiah, and Nathan, and Adaiah, ⁹Machnadebai,
 41 Shashai, Sharai, Azareel, and Shelemiah, Shemariah, Shallum, Ama-
 43 riah, and Joseph. Of the sons of ⁸Nebo; Jeiel, Mattithiah, Zabad,
 44 Zebina, Jadau, and Joel, Benaiah. All ⁶these had taken strange wives:
 and *some* of them had wives by whom they had children.

B. C. 456.

^r Neh. 3. 11.
Malchijah.⁹ Or, Machnadebai.
according to some copies.⁸ Num. 32. 33.
ch. 2. 29.⁶ Neh. 7. 33.⁴ Ex. 23. 2.¹ Ki. 11. 1.

priestly order bound themselves to do like the common Israelites (v. 25), and sought to expiate their sin by sacrificing a ram as a trespass offering. According to the opinion of the Jews at Yemen—all of whom speak beautifully the Hebrew lan-

guage, and are thought to be descendants of the ten tribes—the Affghans are the progeny of the strange and repudiated wives referred to in this chapter (*Joseph Wolff*, 'Researches and Missionary Labours,' p. 200).

THE
BOOK OF NEHEMIAH.

R. C. 446.

1 **T**HE words of ^aNehemiah the son of Hachaliah.
 2 as I was in ^cShushan the palace, that Hanani, one of my brethren, came, he and *certain* men of Judah; and I asked them concerning the Jews that had escaped, which were left of the captivity, and concerning Jerusalem.
 3 And they said unto me, The remnant that are left of the captivity there in the province *are* in great affliction and reproach: "the wall of Jerusalem also *'is* broken down, and the gates thereof are burnt with fire.
 4 And it came to pass, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned *certain* days, and fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven, and said, I beseech thee, ^{'O}LORD God of heaven, the great and terrible God, ^gthat keepeth covenant and mercy for them that love him
 6 and observe his commandments: let thine ear now be attentive, and thine ^heyes open, that thou mayest hear the prayer of thy servant, which I pray before thee now, day and night, for the children of Israel thy servants, and ^{'i}confess the sins of the children of Israel, which we have sinned against
 7 thee: both I and my father's house have sinned. We ^jhave dealt very corruptly against thee, and have ^knot kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the judgments, which thou commandedst thy servant Moses.
 8 Remember, I beseech thee, the word that thou commandedst thy servant Moses, saying, *If* ^{'l}ye transgress, I will scatter you abroad among the nations: but ^mif ye turn unto me, and keep my commandments, and do them, ⁿthough there were of you cast out unto the uttermost part of the heaven, *yet* will I gather them from thence, and will bring them unto the
 10 place that I have chosen to set my name there. Now ^othese *are* thy servants and thy people, whom thou hast redeemed by thy great power,
 11 and by thy strong hand. O LORD, I beseech thee, let now thine ear be attentive to the prayer of thy servant, and to the prayer of thy servants, who desire ^pto fear thy name; and prosper, I pray thee, thy servant this day, and ^qgrant him mercy in the sight of this man. For I was the king's ^rcup-bearer.

CHAP. 1.
^a ch. 10. 1.
^b Ezra 7. 8, ch. 2. 1.
^c Esth. 1. 2.
^d Dan. 9. 2.
^e ch. 2. 17.
^f 2 Ki. 25. 10.
^g Dan. 9. 4.
^h Ex. 20. 6.
ⁱ Ps. 83. 2.
^k 1 Ki. 8. 23.
^l 2 Chr. 6. 30.
^m Ezra 9. 6, 7.
ⁿ Ezra 10. 11.
^o Isa. 61. 6, 7.
^p Dan. 9. 20.
^q Dan. 9. 5.
^r Ps. 103. 6.
^s Deut. 28. 15.
^t Lev. 26. 33.
^u Deut. 4. 5.
^v Deut. 28. 64.
^w Lev. 26. 39.
^x Deut. 4. 29.
^y Deut. 30. 2.
^z Deut. 30. 4.
^{aa} Deut. 9. 29.
^{ab} Dan. 9. 15.
^{ac} Ps. 119. 4.
^{ad} Isa. 26. 8.
^{ae} Heb. 13. 18.
^{af} Gen. 32. 11.
^{ag} Gen. 39. 21.
^{ah} Ezra 7. 23.
^{ai} Ps. 37. 5.
^{aj} Ps. 55. 22.
^{ak} 1 ro. 16. 3.
^{al} ch. 2. 1.

[Hebrew, נְחֵמְיָהּ; Septuagint, NEEMIAS.]

CHAP. I. 1-3.—NEHEMIAH, UNDERSTANDING BY HANANI THE AFFLICTED STATE OF JERUSALEM, MOURNS, FASTS, AND PRAYS.

1. **Nehemiah** (comforted of Jehovah) the son of **Hachaliah** (whose eyes Jehovah enlivens). This eminently pious and patriotic Jew is to be carefully distinguished from two other persons of the same name—one of whom is mentioned as helping to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem (ch. iii. 16), and the other is noticed in the list of those who accompanied Zerubbabel in the first detachment of returning exiles (Ezra ii. 2; ch. vii. 7). Though little is known of his genealogy, it is highly probable that he was a descendant of the tribe of Judah and royal family of David.

in the month **Chisleu**—answering to the close of November and the larger part of December. **Shushan the palace**—the capital of ancient Susiana, east of the Tigris, a province of Persia. From the time of Cyrus it was the favourite winter residence of the Persian kings. 2. **Hanani**, one of my brethren, came, he and certain men of Judah. Hanani is called (ch. vii. 2) his brother. But as that term was used loosely by Jews as well as other Orientals, it is probable that no more is meant than that he was of the same family.

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According to *Josephus*, Nehemiah, while walking around the palace walls, overheard some persons conversing in the Hebrew language, and having ascertained that they had lately returned from Judea, was informed by them, in answer to his eager enquiries, of the unfinished and desolate condition of Jerusalem, as well as the defenceless state of the returned exiles. The commissions previously given to Zerubbabel and Ezra extending only to the repair of the temple and of private dwellings, the walls and gates of the city had been allowed to remain a mass of shattered ruins, as they had been laid by the Chaldean siege.

4-11.—HIS PRAYER.

4. **when I heard these words . . . I sat down . . . and mourned . . . and fasted, and prayed.** The recital deeply affected the patriotic feelings of this good man, and no comfort could he find but in earnest and protracted prayer, that God would favour the purpose, which he seems to have secretly formed, of asking the royal permission to go to Jerusalem. 11. **I was the king's cup-bearer** [כַּוְנָן]—butler (cf. Isa. xxxix. 7; Dan. i. 1-7). This officer, in the ancient Oriental courts, was always a person of rank and importance, and, from the confidential nature of his duties, and his frequent access to the royal presence, possessed of great influence.

- 2 AND it came to pass in the month Nisan, in the twentieth year of
 "Artaxerxes the king, *that wine was before him*: and ^bI took up the
 wine, and gave it unto the king. Now I had not been *beforetime* sad in
 2 his presence. Wherefore the king said unto me, Why *is* thy countenance
 sad, seeing thou *art* not sick? this *is* nothing *else* but 'sorrow of heart.
 3 Then I was very sore afraid, and said unto the king, ^aLet the king live
 for ever: why should not my countenance be sad, when 'the city, the
 place of my fathers' sepulchres, *lieth waste*, and the gates thereof are con-
 4 sumed with fire?
 4 Then the king said unto me, For what dost thou make request? So
 5 I prayed to the God of heaven. And I said unto the king, If it please
 the king, and if thy servant have found favour in thy sight, that thou
 wouldest send me unto Judah, unto the city of my fathers' sepulchres,
 that I may build it.
 6 And the king said unto me, (the ¹queen also sitting by him.) For how
 long shall thy journey be? and when wilt thou return? So it pleased the
 7 king to send me; and I set him ^oa time. Moreover I said unto the
 king, If it please the king, let letters be given me to the governors beyond
 8 the river, that they may convey me over till I come into Judah; and a
 letter unto Asaph the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give me
 timber to make beams for the gates of the palace which *appertained* ^h
 to the house, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall
 enter into. And the king granted me, 'according to the good hand of
 my God upon me.
 9 Then I came to the governors beyond the river, and gave them the

B. C. 445.

CHAP. 2

^a Ezra 7. 1.

That is of

Artaxerxes

Longi-

manus.

^b ch. 1. 11.^c Pro. 15. 13.^d 1 Ki 1. 31.

Dan. 2. 4.

Dan. 5. 10.

Dan 6. 6.

21.

^e ch. 1. 3.

Is. 137. 5.

^f 1 Sam 1. 13.

ch. 1. 11.

Pro. 3. 6.

1 wife.

Probably

Esther.

Esth. 8. 1.

^g ch. 5. 14.

ch. 13. 6.

^h Ezra 10. 6.

9.

ch. 3. 7.

That is, the

temple.

ⁱ Ezra 5. 5.

Ezra 7. 6, 9,

28.

CHAP. II. 1-20.—ARTAXERXES, UNDERSTANDING THE CAUSE OF NEHEMIAH'S SADNESS, SENDS HIM WITH LETTERS AND A COMMISSION TO BUILD AGAIN THE WALLS OF JERUSALEM.

1. it came to pass in the month Nisan. This was nearly four months after he had learned the desolate and ruinous state of Jerusalem (ch. i. 1). The reasons of so long a delay cannot be ascertained. I took up the wine, and gave it unto the king. Xenophon has particularly remarked the polished and graceful manner in which the cup-bearers of the Median, and consequently the Persian, monarchs performed their duty of presenting the wine to their royal master. Having washed the cup in the king's presence, and poured into their left hand a little of the wine, which they drank off in his presence, they then handed the cup to him, not grasped, but lightly held with the tips of their thumb and fingers. This description has received some curious illustrations from the monuments of Assyria and Persia, on which the cup-bearers are frequently represented in the act of handing wine to the king. 2. the king said unto me, Why is thy countenance sad? It was deemed highly unbecoming to appear in the royal presence with any weeds or signs of sorrow (Esth. iv. 2), and hence it was no wonder that the king was struck with the dejected air of his cup-bearer; while that attendant, on his part, felt his agitation increased by his deep anxiety about the issue of the conversation so abruptly begun. But the piety and intense earnestness of the man immediately restored him to calm self-possession, and enabled him to communicate, first, the cause of his sadness, and, next, the patriotic wish of his heart to be the honoured instrument of reviving the ancient glory of the city of his fathers.

6. the queen also sitting by him. As the Persian monarchs did not admit their wives to be present at their state festivals, this must have been a private occasion. The queen referred to was probably Esther, whose presence would tend

greatly to embolden Nehemiah in stating his request; and through her influence, powerfully exerted, it may be supposed, also by her sympathy with the patriotic design, his petition was granted, to go as deputy-governor of Judea, accompanied by a military guard, and invested with full powers to obtain materials for the building in Jerusalem, as well as to get all requisite aid in promoting his enterprise. I set him a time. Considering the great despatch made in raising the walls, it is probable that this leave of absence was limited at first to a year or six months, after which he returned to his duties in Shushan. The circumstance of fixing a set time for his return, as well as entrusting so important a work as the re-fortification of Jerusalem to his care, proves the high favour and confidence Nehemiah enjoyed at the Persian court, and the great estimation in which his services were held. At a later period he received a new commission for the better settlement of the affairs of Judea, and remained governor of that province for twelve years (ch. v. 14). 7. let letters be given me to the governors beyond the river. The Persian empire at this time was of vast extent, reaching from the Indus to the Mediterranean, and the Euphrates was considered as naturally dividing it into two parts, eastern and western (see Ezra v. 3, 4). 8. timber to make beams for the gates of the palace which appertained to the house [בְּיָרְדֵן]—of the fortress, which was close to the temple. This word was changed into the Greek Baris, which, as we learn from Josephus, was the name of the tower, afterwards called Antonia, on the north side of the temple area ('Jewish Wars,' b. v., ch. v., sec. 8). according to the good hand of my God upon me. The piety of Nehemiah appears in every circumstance. The conception of this patriotic design, the favourable disposition of the king, and the success of the undertaking, are all ascribed to God.

king's letters. Now the king had sent captains of the army and horse-
 10 men with me. When Sanballat the ²Horonite, and Tobiah the servant,
 the Ammonite, heard of it, it grieved them exceedingly that there was
 come a man to seek the welfare of the children of Israel.
 11. So I came to Jerusalem, and was there three days. And I arose in
 12 the night, I and some few men with me; neither told I any man what
 my God had put in my heart to do at Jerusalem: neither was there any
 13 beast with me, save the beast that I rode upon. And I went out by
 night ^kby the gate of the valley, even before the dragon well, and to the
 dung port, and viewed the walls of Jerusalem, which were ^lbroken down,
 14 and the gates thereof were consumed with fire. Then I went on to the
^mgate of the fountain, and to the king's pool: but there was no place for
 15 the beast that was under me to pass. Then went I up in the night by
ⁿthe brook, and viewed the wall, and turned back, and entered by the
 gate of the valley, and so returned.
 16 And the rulers knew not whither I went, or what I did; neither had I
 as yet told it to the Jews, nor to the priests, nor to the nobles, nor
 17 to the rulers, nor to the rest that did the work. Then said I unto
 them, Ye see the distress that we are in, how Jerusalem lieth waste,
 and the gates thereof are burnt with fire: come, and let us build up
 18 the wall of Jerusalem, that we be no more ^oa reproach. Then I told
 them of the hand of my God which was good upon me; as also the king's
 words that he had spoken unto me. And they said, Let us rise up and
 build. So they ^pstrengthened their hands for this good work.
 19 But when Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the servant, the Am-
 monite, and Geshem the Arabian, heard it, they ^qlaughed us to scorn,
 and despised us, and said, What is this thing that ye do? will ye rebel
 20 against the king? Then answered I them, and said unto them, ^rThe
 God of heaven, he will prosper us; therefore we his servants will arise
 and build: ^sbut ye have no portion, nor right, nor memorial, in
 Jerusalem.

B. C. 445.
² Or.
 Moabite,
 Isa 15 6.
ⁱ Ezra 8. 32.
^k 2 Chr. 26. 9.
 ch 3. 13.
^l ch 1. 3.
 Jer 5. 10.
^m 2 Ki. 18. 17.
 20.
 2 Ki. 20. 20.
 2 Chr. 32. 30.
 ch 3. 15.
ⁿ 2 Sam. 15.
 23.
 Jer 31. 40.
 John 18. 1.
^o 1 Sam. 11. 2.
 ch 1. 3.
 Ps. 44. 13.
 Ps. 79. 4.
 Jer. 24. 9.
 Lam. 3. 45.
 46.
 Eze. 5. 14.
 Eze. 22. 4.
^p 2 Sam 2. 7.
 Hag. 1. 13.
 14.
 Eph. 6. 10.
^q Job 30. 1.
 Ps. 44. 12.
 Ps. 50. 6.
 Heb 11. 56.
^r 2 Chr. 26. 5.
 Ps 127. 1.
 Rom. 8. 31.
^s Ezra 4. 3.
 John 4. 9.
 Acts 8. 21.

10. Sanballat the Horonite. Horonaim being a town in Moab, this person, it is probable, was a Moabite. Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite. The term used indicates him to have been a freed slave elevated to some official dignity. These were district magistrates under the government of the satrap of Syria; and they seem to have been leaders of the Samaritan faction.
 11. So I came to Jerusalem, and was there three days. Deeply affected with the desolations of Jerusalem, and uncertain what course to follow, he remained three days before informing any one of the object of his mission, and at the end of the third day, accompanied with a few attendants, he made, under covert of night, a secret survey of the walls and gates. 13. I went out by night by the gate of the valley—i. e., the Jaffa gate, near the tower of Hippicus, even before the dragon well—i. e., fountain on the opposite side of the valley, called "the dragon well," according to conjecture, from the spout being in the form of a dragon-mouth, or from the water meandering through the valley in a serpentine course. [The Septuagint calls it, *στομα πηγῆς τῶν οὐκῶν*, mouth of the fountain of figs.] The Syriac designates it, 'the fountain of the hills;' and the Arabic, 'the torrent.' and to the dung port—the gate on the east of the city, through which there ran a common sewer to the brook Kidron and the valley of Hinnom. 14. Then—i. e., after having passed through the gate of the Essenes I went on to the gate of the fountain—i. e., Siloah, from which turning round the fount of

Opheh, to the king's pool . . . no place for the beast that was under me to pass—i. e., by the sides of this pool—Solomon's—there being water in the pool, and too much rubbish about it to permit the passage of the beast. 15. Then went I up . . . by the brook—i. e., Kidron, and entered by the gate of the valley, and so returned. The gate leading to the valley of Jehoshaphat, east of the city. He went out by this gate, and having made the circuit of the city, went in by it again (*Barclay's* 'City of the Great King').
 16. the rulers knew not. The following day, having assembled the elders, Nehemiah produced his commission, and exhorted them to assist in the work. 17. let us build up the wall of Jerusalem [יִבְנֶה]—the walls of a city (v. 8; Isa. xx. 10; xxxvi. 11, 12). that we be no more a reproach [יִבְזֶה]—scorn, opprobrium (Job xvi. 10; Ps. xxxix. 9; lxxix. 12). But here it denotes the object of reproach (Ps. xxii. 7; Joel ii. 17-19), as the returned exiles were the butts of Sanballat and his associates (ch. iv. 4; v. 13; Zeph. ii. 8). The sight of his credentials, and the animating strain of his address and example, so revived their drooping spirits, that they resolved immediately to commence the building, which they did, despite of the bitter taunts and scoffing ridicule of some influential men.
 19. will ye rebel against the king?—i. e., the king of Babylon, the Persian monarch, to whom, it would seem, Moab, as well as Judea, was at that time tributary. 20. The God of heaven—(see on Ezra i. 2.)

3 THEN ^aEliashib the high priest rose up, with his brethren the priests, ^band they builded the sheep gate; they sanctified it, and set up the doors of it; ^ceven unto the tower of Meah they sanctified it, unto the tower of
 2 ^aHananeel. And ¹next unto him builded ^cthe men of Jericho. And next to them builded Zaccur the son of Imri.
 3 But ^fthe fish gate did the sons of Hassenaah build, who *also* laid the beams thereof, and ^gset up the doors thereof, the locks thereof, and the bars thereof. And next unto them repaired Meremoth the son of Urijah, the son of Koz. And next unto them repaired Meshullam the son of Berechiah, the son of Meshezabeel. And next unto them repaired Zadok the son of Baana. And next unto them the Tekoites repaired; but their nobles put not their necks to ^hthe work of their Lord.
 6 Moreover ⁱthe old gate repaired Jehoiada the son of Paseah, and Meshullam the son of Besodeiah; they laid the beams thereof, and set up the doors thereof, and the locks thereof, and the bars thereof. And next unto them repaired Melatiah the Gibeonite, and Jadon the Meronothite, the men of ^jGibeon and of Mizpah, unto the ^kthrone of the governor on this side the river. Next unto him repaired Uzziel the son of Harhaiah, of the goldsmiths. Next unto him also repaired Hananiah the son of one of the apothecaries; and they ²fortified Jerusalem unto the 'broad
 9 wall. And next unto them repaired Rephaiah the son of Hur, the ruler of the half part of Jerusalem. And next unto them repaired Jedaiah the son of Harumaph, even over against his house. And next unto him repaired Hattush the son of Hashabniah. Malchijah ^mthe son of Harim, and Hashub the son of Palath-moab, repaired the ³other piece, ⁿand
 12 the tower of the furnaces. And next unto him repaired Shallum the son of Halohesh, the ruler of the half part of Jerusalem, he and ^ohis daughters.
 13 The ^pvalley gate repaired Hanun, and the inhabitants of ^qZanoah; they built it, and set up the doors thereof, the locks thereof, and the bars thereof, and a thousand cubits on the wall unto ^rthe dung gate. But the dung gate repaired Malechiah the son of Rechab, the ruler of part ^sof

B. C. 445.
 CHAP. 3.
^a ch. 12. 10.
^b ch. 13. 21.
^c ch. 12. 39.
^d John 5. 2.
^e ch. 12. 39.
^f Jer. 31. 38.
^g Zech. 11. 10.
^h Jer. 31. 35.
ⁱ Zech. 14. 10.
^j at his hand.
^k Ezra 2. 34.
^l ch. 7. 36.
^m 2 Chr. 31. 14.
ⁿ ch. 12. 39.
^o ch. 6. 1.
^p Judg. 5. 23.
^q ch. 12. 39.
^r Josh. 9. 3.
^s Josh. 18. 25.
^t ch. 2. 8.
^u Or, left Jerusalem unto the broad wall.
^v ch. 12. 38.
^w Ezra 2. 32.
^x Ezra : 0. 25.
^y second measure.
^z ch. 12. 38.
^{aa} Ex 35 25.
^{ab} Luke 8. 3.
^{ac} Phil. 4. 3.
^{ad} ch. 2. 13.
^{ae} Josh. 15. 34.
^{af} ch. 2. 13.
^{ag} Jer. 6. 1.
^{ah} Mic. 1. 11.

CHAP. III. 1-32.—THE NAMES AND ORDER OF THEM THAT BUILDED THE WALL AT JERUSALEM.
 1. Then Eliashib the high priest—the grandson of Jeshua, and the first high priest after the return from Babylon. rose up, with his brethren the priests—i. e., set an example by commencing the work, their labours being confined to the sacred localities. they builded the sheep gate—close to the temple. Its name arose either from the sheep-market, or from the pool of Bethesda, where the sheep were washed, which was there (John v. 2) [in this passage, however, the rendering of the Septuagint, ἐπὶ τῆ προβατικῆ, is erroneously explained in the English version by ἀγορᾶ, market, instead of by πύλη, gate, as here and in ch. xii. 39], and thence they were taken to the temple for sacrifice. they sanctified it, and set up the doors. Being the common entrance into the temple, and the first part of the building repaired, it is probable that some religious ceremonies were observed in gratitude for its completion. It was the first-fruits, and, therefore, in the sanctification of it the whole lump and building was sanctified. the tower of Meah. This word is improperly considered, in our version, as the name of a tower. It is the Hebrew word for 'a hundred,' so that the meaning is, they not only rebuilt the sheep gate, but also a hundred cubits of the wall, which extended as far as the tower of Hananeel. 2. next unto him builded the men of Jericho, &c. The wall was divided into portions, one of which was assigned respectively to each of the great families which had returned from the

captivity; and this distribution, by which the building was carried on in all parts simultaneously with great energy, was eminently favourable to despatch. 'The villages where the restorers resided being mostly mentioned, it will be seen that this circumstance affords a general indication of the part of the wall upon which they laboured—such places being on that side of the city nearest their place of abode; the only apparent exception being perhaps where they repaired more than their piece: having completed their first undertaking (if they worked any more), there being no more work to be done on the side next their residence, or having arrived after the repairs on that part of the city nearest them under operation were completed, they would go wherever their services would be required' (Barclay's 'City of the Great King').
 8. fortified Jerusalem unto the broad wall—or double wall, extending from the gate of Ephraim to the corner gate, 400 cubits in length; formerly broken down by Joash, king of Israel, but afterwards rebuilt by Uzziah, who made it so strong, that the Chaldeans, finding it difficult to demolish it, had left it standing. 12. Shallum . . . the ruler of the half part of Jerusalem [שַׁלּוּם רֹאשׁ הַחֵצְיֹן הַצָּפוֹנִי]—chief of the half district or circuit round Jerusalem. he and his daughters—who were either heiresses or rich widows, who undertook to defray the expenses of a part of the wall next them.
 13. the inhabitants of Zanoah. There were

- Beth-haccerem; he built it, and set up the doors thereof, the locks thereof, and the bars thereof. But ⁴the gate of the fountain repaired Shallum the son of Col-hozeh, the ruler of part of ⁵Mizpah; he built it, and covered it, and set up the doors thereof, the locks thereof, and the bars thereof, and the wall of the pool of ⁶Siloah by the king's garden, and unto the stairs that go down from the city of David.
- 16 After him repaired Nehemiah the son of Azbuk, the ruler of the half part of Beth-zur, unto *the place* over against the sepulchres of David, and
- 17 to the ⁷pool that was made, and unto the ⁸house of the mighty. And after him repaired the Levites, Rehum the son of Bani. Next unto him repaired Hashabiah, the ruler of the half part of Keilah, in his part.
- 18 After him repaired their brethren, Bavai the son of Henadad, the ruler of
- 19 the half part of ⁹Keilah. And next to him repaired Ezer the son of Jeshua, the ruler of Mizpah, another piece over against the going up to
- 20 the armoury ¹⁰at the turning of the wall. After him Baruch the son of ¹¹Zabbai earnestly ¹¹repaired the other piece, from the turning of the wall
- 21 unto the door of the house of Eliashib the high priest. After him repaired Meremoth the son of Urijah the son of Koz another piece, from the door
- 22 of the house of Eliashib even to the end of the house of Eliashib. And
- 23 after him repaired the priests, the men of the plain. After him repaired Benjamin and Hashub over against their house. After him repaired
- 24 Azariah the son of Maaseiah the son of Ananiah by his house. After him repaired Binnui the son of Henadad another piece, from the house of
- 25 Azariah unto the turning of the wall, even unto the corner. Palal the son of Uzai, over against the turning of the wall, and the tower which lieth out from the king's high house, that *was* by the ¹²court of the prison. After him Pedaiah the son of Parosh.
- 26 Moreover ¹³the Nethinims ¹³dwelt in ¹⁴Ophel, unto *the place* over against
- 27 ¹⁴the water gate toward the east, and the tower that lieth out. After them the Tekoites repaired another piece, over against the great tower that lieth out, even unto the wall of Ophel.
- 28 From above the ¹⁵horse gate repaired the priests, every one over against
- 29 his house. After them repaired Zadok the son of Immer over against his house. After him repaired also Shemaiah the son of Shechaniah, the
- 30 keeper of ¹⁶the east gate. After him repaired Hananiah the son of Shelemiah, and Hanun the sixth son of Zalaph, another piece. After him
- 31 repaired Meshullam the son of Berechiah over against his chamber. After him repaired Malchiah the goldsmith's son unto the place of the Nethinims, and of the merchants, over against the gate Miphkad, and to the
- 32 ¹⁷going up of the corner. And between the going up of the corner unto ¹⁷the sheep gate repaired the goldsmiths and the merchants.

B. C. 445.
 2 Chr. 32, 39.
 ch. 2. 14.
 ch. 12. 37.
 Josh. 18. 1, 6.
 Judg. 20. 1, 3.
 ch. 11. 3.
 Jer 40. 6.
 Isa. 8. 6.
 Luke 13. 4.
 John 9. 7.
 2 Ki. 20. 20.
 Isa. 12. 11.
 1 Ki. 14. 27, 28.
 2 Chr 12. 10, 11.
 Song 3. 7.
 Josh. 15. 44.
 1 Sam. 23. 1.
 2 Chr. 26. 9.
 Or, Zaccai.
 Eccl. 9. 10.
 Rom. 12. 11.
 ch. 12. 59.
 Jer. 32. 2.
 Jer. 33. 1.
 Jer. 37. 21.
 1 Chr. 9. 4.
 Ezra 2. 43.
 ch. 7. 46-60.
 ch. 10. 28.
 ch. 11. 21.
 Or, which dwelt in Ophel, repaired unto.
 Or, the tower.
 2 Chr. 27. 3.
 ch. 8. 1, 3.
 ch. 12. 37.
 2 Ki. 11. 16.
 2 Chr. 23. 15.
 Jer. 31. 40.
 The sun gate.
 Jer. 19. 2.
 Or, corner-chamber.
 ch. 12. 39.
 John 5. 2.

two towns so called in the territory of Judah (Josh. xv. 34, 56). 14. Beth-haccerem—a city of Judah, supposed to be now occupied by Bethulia, on a hill of the same name, which is sometimes called also the mountain of the Franks, between Jerusalem and Tekoa.

16. Nehemiah . . . the ruler of the half part of Beth-zur [נְהִימְיָהוּ רֹאשׁ הַיָּמִין]—chief of the half district or circuit. Beth-zur (now Beit-sür), which was one of the strongest fortresses in Judea, was not far from Hal-hul (Josh. xv. 58), on the way from Jerusalem to Hebron (Robinson's 'Biblical Researches,' i., p. 320; iii., p. 14; also 'Handbook of Syria and Palestine,' p. 72). the sepulchres of David, and to the pool that was made, and unto the house of the mighty—i. e., along the precipitous cliffs of Zion on its eastern declivity (cf. Acts i. 29), between the pool of Siloam and the house of the mighty (Barclay, 'City of the Great

King,' p. 195). 19. at the turning of the wall—i. e., the wall across the Tyropœon, being a continuation of the first wall connecting mount Zion with the temple wall (Barclay). 25. the tower which lieth out from the king's high house—i. e., watch-tower by the royal palace, in the fortification wall of the palace.

26. the Nethinims—i. e., given to the sanctuary (cf. ch. vii. 46, 60, 73; x. 29; xi. 3, 21; 1 Chr. ix. 2; Ezra ii. 43, 58, 70; vii. 7; viii. 20; with Num. iii. 9). Not only the priests and the Levites, but the meanest persons that, like the Gibeonites, belonged to the house of God, contributed to the work. The names of those who repaired the walls of Jerusalem are commemorated, because it was a work of piety and patriotism to repair the holy city. It was an instance of religion and courage to defend the true worshippers of God, that they might serve him in quietness and safety, and, in the midst of so many enemies, go on with this

- 4 BUT it came to pass, ^athat when Sanballat heard that we builded the wall, he was wroth, and took great indignation, and mocked the Jews.
- 2 And he spake before his brethren and the army of Samaria, and said, What do these feeble Jews? will they ¹fortify themselves? will they sacrifice? will they make an end in a day? will they revive the stones out of the heaps of the rubbish which are burnt? Now ^bTobiah the Ammonite *was* by him, and he said, Even that which they build, if a fox go up, he shall even break down their stone wall.
- 4 Hear, ^cO our God; for we are ²despised: and ^dturn their reproach upon their own head, and give them for a prey in the land of captivity; and ^ecover not their iniquity, and let not their sin be blotted out from before thee: for they have provoked *thee* to anger before the builders.
- 6 So built we the wall; and all the wall was joined together unto the half thereof: for the people had a mind to work.
- 7 But it came to pass, *that* when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and the Arabians, and the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites, heard that the walls of Jerusalem ³were made up, *and* that the breaches began to be stopped, then they
- 8 were very wroth, and ^fconspired all of them together to come *and* to fight
- 9 against Jerusalem, and ⁴to hinder it. Nevertheless ^gwe made our prayer unto our God, and set a watch against them day and night, because of them. And Judah said, The strength of the bearers of burdens is decayed, and *there is* much rubbish; so that we are not able to build the wall.
- 11 And our adversaries said, They shall not know, neither see, till we come in the midst among them, and slay them, and cause the work to cease.
- 12 And it came to pass, that when the Jews which dwelt by them came, they said unto us ten times, ⁵From all places whence ye shall return unto us *they will be upon you*. Therefore set I ⁶in the lower places behind the wall, *and* on the higher places, I even set the people after their families,

B C. 445.

CHAP. 4.
^a ch. 2. 10.
 Ps 2. 1, 4.
 Acts 5. 17.
¹ leave to themselves.
^b ch. 2. 10, 19.
^c Ps. 123. 3, 4.
 Isa. 53. 3.
 Luke 16. 14.
² despise.
^d Ps. 79. 12.
 Pro. 3. 31.
^e Is. 69. 27.
^f Ps. 109. 17, 15.
 Jer 18. 23.
³ ascended.
⁷ Ps 83. 3.
⁴ to make an error to it.
^g Job 22. 27.
 Ps. 50. 15.
 Matt 26. 41.
⁶ Or, That from all places ye must return to us.
⁶ from the lower parts of the place, etc.

work, piously confiding in the power of God to support them.

CHAP. IV. 1-6.—WHILE THE ENEMIES SCOFF, NEHEMIAH PRAYS TO GOD, AND CONTINUES THE WORK.

1. when Sanballat heard . . . he was wroth. The Samaritan faction showed their bitter animosity to the Jews on discovering the systematic design of re-fortifying Jerusalem. Their opposition was confined at first to scoffs and insults—in heaping which the governors made themselves conspicuous, and circulated all sorts of disparaging reflections that might increase the feelings of hatred and contempt for them in their own party. The weakness of the Jews in respect of wealth and numbers—the absurdity of their purpose apparently to reconstruct the walls, and celebrate the feast of dedication in one day—the idea of raising the walls on their old foundations, as well as using the charred and mouldering debris of the ruins as the materials of the restored buildings—and the hope of such a parapet as they could raise being capable of serving as a fortress of defence—these all afforded fertile subjects of hostile ridicule. 3. if a fox go up—the foxes were mentioned from their having been known, in great numbers, to infest the ruined and desolate places in the mount and city of Zion (Lam. v. 18), as they frequently did vineyards, which in consequence were fenced, not by stone-hedges only, but frequently by stone parapets (Num. xxii. 24; Ps. lxxx. 13; Prov. xxiv. 31; Song ii. 15; Isa. v. 5; cf. *Virgil*, 'Georgics,' ii., 371).

4. Hear, O our God; for we are despised. The imprecations invoked here may seem harsh, cruel, and vindictive. But it must be remembered that Nehemiah and his friends regarded those Samaritan leaders as enemies to the cause of God and

His people, and therefore as deserving to be visited with heavy judgments. The prayer, therefore, is to be considered as emanating from hearts in which neither hatred, revenge, nor any inferior passion, but a pious and patriotic zeal for the glory of God and the success of His cause, held the ascendant sway.

6. all the wall was joined together unto the half thereof. The whole circuit of the wall had been distributed in sections to various companies of the people, and was completed to the half of the intended height.

7-23. HE SETS A WATCH.

7. But . . . when Sanballat . . . heard that the walls . . . were made up, and . . . the breaches . . . stopped. The rapid progress of the fortifications, despite of all their predictions to the contrary, goaded the Samaritans to frenzy, and they, dreading danger from the growing greatness of the Jews, formed a conspiracy to surprise them, demolish their works, and disperse or intimidate the builders.

12. when the Jews which dwelt by them came, they said unto us ten times—i. e., repeatedly. From all places whence ye shall return unto us, they will be upon you. The plot being discovered, Nehemiah adopted the most energetic measures for ensuring the common safety as well as the uninterrupted building of the walls. Hitherto the governor, for the sake of despatch, had set all his attendants and guards on the work—now half of them were withdrawn to be constantly in arms. The workmen laboured with a trowel in one hand and a sword in the other; and as, in so large a circuit, they were far removed from each other, Nehemiah, who was night and day on the spot, and, by his pious exhortations and example, animated the minds of his people,

- 14 with their swords, their spears, and their bows. And I looked, and rose up, and said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, ^hBe not ye afraid of them: remember the LORD, *which* ⁱis great and terrible, and ^jfight for your brethren, your sons, and your daughters, your wives, and your houses.
- 15 And it came to pass, when our enemies heard that it was known unto us, ^kand God had brought their counsel to nought, that we returned all of us to the wall, every one unto his work. And it came to pass from that time forth, *that* the half of my servants wrought in the work, and the other half of them held both the spears, the shields, and the bows, and the habergeons; and the rulers *were* behind all the house of Judah.
- 17 They which builded on the wall, and they that bare burdens, with those that laded, *every one* with ^lone of his hands wrought in the work, and
- 18 with the other *hand* held a weapon. For the builders, every one had his sword girded ^mby his side, and *so* builded: and he that sounded the
- 19 trumpet *was* by me. And I said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, The work *is* great and large, and we are separated upon the wall, one far from another. In what place *therefore* ye hear the sound of the trumpet, resort ye thither unto us: ⁿour God shall fight for us.
- 21 So we laboured in the work: and half of them held the spears from the
- 22 rising of the morning till the stars appeared. Likewise at the same time said I unto the people, Let every one with his servant lodge within Jerusalem, that in the night they may be a guard to us, and labour on the
- 23 day. So neither I, nor my brethren, nor my servants, nor the men of the guard which followed me, none of us put off our clothes, ^osaving that every one put them off for washing.
- 5 AND there was a great ^pcry of the people, and of their wives, against
- 2 ^qtheir brethren the Jews. For there were that said, We, our sons, and our daughters, *are* many: therefore we ^rtake up corn *for them*, that we
- 3 may eat, and live. *Some* also there were that said, We have mortgaged our lands, vineyards, and houses, that we might buy corn, because of the
- 4 dearth. There were also that said, We have borrowed money for the
- 5 king's tribute, *and that upon* our lands and vineyards. Yet now ^sour flesh *is* as the flesh of our brethren, our children as their children; and, lo, we ^tbring into bondage our sons and our daughters to be servants, and *some* of our daughters are brought unto bondage *already*: neither *is it* in our power *to redeem them*; for other men have our lands and vineyards.

B. C. 445.
^a Num. 14. 9.
 Deut. 1. 29-30.
 Josh. 1. 9.
 2 (hr. 20. 15-17.
 2 (hr. 32. 7.
 Ps. 27. 1.
 Isa. 41. 10-14.
 Heb. 13. 6.
^c Deut. 10. 17.
 Job 7. 21.
 Heb. 12. 20, 21, 22, 29.
^d 2 Sam. 10. 12.
^e 2 Sam. 15. 31.
 Job 5. 12.
 1 s. 23. 10.
^f 1 Cor. 16. 13.
 Eph. 6. 10.
^g on his loins.
^h Ex. 14. 14.
 Deut. 1. 30.
 Deut. 3. 21.
 Deut. 10. 4.
 Josh. 13. 0.
ⁱ Cr, every one went with his weapon for water.
 Judg. 5. 11.
 CHAP. 5.
^a Isa. 5. 7.
 Jas. 5. 4.
^b Lev. 25. 35.
 Deut. 15. 7.
^c Gen. 41. 57.
 Hag. 1. 6.
^d Gen. 37. 27.
 Isa. 58. 7.
 Acts 17. 26.
 Jas. 2. 5, 6.
^e Ex. 21. 7.
 Matt. 18. 25.

kept a trumpeter by his side, so that on any intelligence of a surprise being brought to him, an alarm might be immediately sounded, and assistance rendered to the most distant detachment of their brethren. By these vigilant precautions the counsels of the enemy were defeated, and the work was carried on apace.

23. none of us put off our clothes, saving that every one put them off for washing. Many writers, with *Grotius*, think that they did not put off their clothes but for the ablutions required by the law. This is not the meaning. The margin renders the Hebrew text better, and gives a signification to the words in full accordance with the difficulties and dangers of the crisis: 'every one went with his weapon for water' (cf. Judg. v. 11). God, when he has important public work to do, never fails to raise up instruments for accomplishing it, and in the person of Nehemiah, who, to great natural acuteness and energy, added fervent piety and heroic devotion, He provided a leader, whose high qualities fitted him for the demands of the crisis. Nehemiah's vigilance anticipated every difficulty; his prudent measures defeated

every obstruction; and, with astonishing rapidity, this Jerusalem was made again "a city fortified."

CHAP. V. 1-5.—THE PEOPLE COMPLAIN OF THEIR DEBT, MORTGAGE, AND BONDAGE.

1. there was a great cry of the people . . . against their brethren. Such a crisis in the condition of the Jews in Jerusalem—fatigued with hard labour, and harassed by the machinations of restless enemies, the majority of them poor, and the bright visions which hope had painted, of pure happiness on their return to the land of their fathers, being unrealized—must have been very trying to their faith and patience. But, in addition to these vexatious oppressions, many began to sink under a new and more grievous evil. The poor made loud complaints against the rich for taking advantage of their necessities, and grinding them by usurious exactions. Numbers of them had, in consequence of these oppressions, been driven to such extremities that they had to mortgage their lands and houses to enable them to pay the taxes to the Persian government, and, ultimately, even to sell their children for slaves to procure the means of subsistence. The con-

6, And I was very ^fangry when I heard their cry and these words. Then
 7 ¹ I consulted with myself, and ^g I rebuked the nobles, and the rulers, and
 said unto them, ^h Ye exact usury, every one of his brother. And I set ⁱ a
 8 great assembly against them. And I said unto them, We after our ability
 have ^j redeemed our brethren the Jews, which were sold unto the heathen;
 and will ye even sell your brethren? or shall they be sold unto us? Then
 9 held they their peace, and found nothing to answer. Also I said, It is
 not good that ye do: ought ye not to walk ^k in the fear of our God
 10 ^l because of the reproach of the heathen our enemies? I likewise, and my
 brethren, and my servants, might exact of them money and corn: I pray
 11 you, let us leave off this usury. Restore, I pray you, to them, even this
 day, their lands, their vineyards, their oliveyards, and their houses, also
 the hundredth ^m part of the money, and of the corn, the wine, and the oil,
 that ye exact of them.
 12 Then said they, We will restore ⁿ them, and will require nothing of them;
 so will we do as thou sayest. Then I called the priests, ^o and took an
 13 oath of them, that they should do according to this promise. Also ^p I
 shook my lap, and said, So God ^q shake out every man from his house,
 and from his labour, that performeth not this promise, even thus be he
 shaken out, and ^r emptied. And all the congregation said, Amen, and
 praised the LORD. ^s And the people did according to this promise.
 14 Moreover from the time that I was appointed to be their governor
 in the land of Judah, from the twentieth year ^t even unto the two and
 thirtieth year of Artaxerxes the king, ^u that is, twelve years, I and my
 15 brethren have not ^v eaten the bread of the governor. But the former
 governors that ^w had been before me were chargeable unto the people, and
 had taken of them bread and wine, besides forty shekels of silver; yea,
 even their servants bare rule over the people: but ^x so did not I, because

B 1. 415.
 Ex. 11. 8.
 ch. 12. 8.
 Mark 3. 5.
 Eph. 1. 23.
 1 my heart
 consulted
 in me.
 Lev. 19. 17.
 1 Tim. 5:20.
 A Ex 22. 25.
 Deut. 23. 9.
 Ps. 15. 5.
 Eze. 22. 12.
 f Pro. 27. 5.
 Matt. 18. 17.
 j Lev. 25. 48.
 k Lev. 25. 50.
 Acts 9. 31.
 l 2 Sam. 12.
 14.
 Rom. 2. 24.
 1 Pet. 2. 12.
 m Ezra 10. 5.
 Jer. 34. 8.
 9.
 n Matt 10. 14.
 Acts 13. 5.
 o Acts 15. 6.
 p Zech. 5. 4.
 2 emp'y, or,
 void.
 q 2 Ki. 23. 3.
 r ch. 13. 6.
 s 1 Cor. 9. 4.
 t 2 Cor. 11. 9.
 u 2 Cor. 12. 13.

ditation of the poorer inhabitants was indeed deplorable; for, besides the deficient harvests caused by the great rains (Ezra x. 9; also Hagg. i. 6-11), a dearth was now threatened by the enemy keeping such a multitude pent up in the city and preventing the country people bringing in provisions.

6 19.—THE USURERS REBUKED.

6. I was very angry when I heard their cry and these words. When such disorders came to the knowledge of the governor, his honest indignation was roused against the perpetrators of the evil; and, having summoned a public assembly, he denounced their conduct in terms of just severity (cf. Amos ii. 8), contrasted it with his own in redeeming with his money some of the Jewish exiles who, through debt or otherwise, had lost their personal liberty in Babylon—urged the rich creditors not only to abandon their illegal and oppressive system of usury, but to restore the fields and vineyards of the poor, so that a remedy might be put to an evil, the introduction of which had led to so much actual disorder, and the continuance of which would inevitably prove ruinous to the newly restored colony, by violating the fundamental principles of the Hebrew constitution. 11. Restore, I pray you, to them . . . their lands, their vineyards . . . also the hundredth part of the money . . . the wine, and the oil, that ye exact of them. In the ancient Oriental kingdoms the hundredth was the rate of interest exigible; and, as this rate was paid not annually, but monthly, the debtor had to pay in the course of a year the eighth part of the principal. This was oppressive enough; but it was nothing to what was done for things lent during smaller periods, such as a week or a day. The lender, as *Salmassius* declares, was allowed to demand any rate of interest, however exorbitant, he could get. No

wonder that Nehemiah inveighed against such excessive usury, especially in the circumstances of the returned exiles. The remonstrance was effectual. The conscience of the usurious oppressors could not resist the touching and powerful appeal; and, with mingled emotions of shame, contrition, and fear, they with one voice expressed their readiness to comply with the governor's recommendation. The proceedings were closed by the parties binding themselves by a solemn oath, administered by the priests, that they would redeem their pledge, as well as by the governor invoking, by the solemn and significant gesture of shaking a corner of his garment, a malediction on those who should violate it. The historian has taken care to record that the people did according to this promise.

13. Also I shook my lap, and said, So God shake out every man, &c. As the people often sit upon the ground, the dust or sand accumulates around and upon them, for it is continually blowing about. Every now and then, therefore, they rise, shake the dust out of their laps, and then sit down again. Nehemiah's metaphorical reference to this practice is obvious.

14. Moreover from the time that I was appointed, &c. We have a remarkable proof both of the opulence and disinterestedness of Nehemiah. As he declined, on conscientious grounds, to accept the lawful emoluments attached to his government, and yet maintained a style of princely hospitality, for twelve years, out of his own resources, it is evident that his office of cup-bearer at the court of Shishan must have been very lucrative. 15. the former governors . . . had taken of them bread and wine, besides forty shekels of silver. The income of Eastern governors is paid partly in produce, partly in money.

16 of the 'fear of God. Yea, also I continued in the work of this wall, neither bought we any land: and all my servants *were* gathered thither
 17 unto the work. Moreover *there were* ^uat my table an hundred and fifty
 18 heathen that *are* about us. Now *that* ^vwhich was prepared for me
 daily *was* one ox, and six choice sheep; also fowls were prepared for
 me, and once in ten days store of all sorts of wine: yet for all this
 required not I the bread of the governor, because the bondage was heavy
 upon this people.

19 Think ^wupon me, my God, for good, according to all that I have done
 for this people.

6 NOW it came to pass, ^awhen Sanballat, and Tobiah, and ¹Geshem
 the Arabian, and the rest of our enemies, heard that I had builded the
 wall, and *that* there was no breach left therein, (^bthough at that time I
 2 had not set up the doors upon the gates,) that Sanballat and Geshem
^csent unto me, saying, Come, let us meet together in *some one of* the
 villages in the plain ^dof Ono. But they ^ethought to do me mischief.
 3 And I ^fsent messengers unto them, saying, I *am* doing a great work, so
 that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it,
 4 and come down to you? Yet they sent unto me ^gfour times after this
 sort; and I answered them after the same manner.

5 Then sent Sanballat his servant unto me in like manner the fifth time
 6 with an open letter in his hand; wherein *was* written, It is ^hreported
 among the heathen, and ²Gashmu saith *it, that* ⁱthou and the Jews think
 to rebel: for which cause thou buildest the wall, that thou mayest be
 7 their king, according to these words. And thou hast also appointed
 prophets to preach of thee at Jerusalem, saying, *There is* a king in Judah:
 and now shall it be reported to the king according to these words. Come
 now therefore, and let us take counsel together.

B. C. 445.

¹ Gen. 42. 18.
² Job 31. 53.
 Pro. 16. 6.
 Pro. 23. 17.
 Eccl. 12. 13.
 Luke 13. 2.
^u 2 Sam. 9. 7.
^v 1 Ki. 18. 19.
^w 1 Ki. 4. 22.
^x ch. 13. 22.

CHAP. 6.

^a ch. 2. 10.
^b ch. 4. 1. 7.
¹ Or.
 Gashmu,
 ver. 6.
^b ch. 3. 1. 3.
^c Pro. 26. 21.
^d 1 Chr. 8. 12.
^e ch. 11. 5.
^f Ps. 12. 2.
^g Ps. 37. 12.
^h Pro. 26. 21.
 Eccl. 4. 4.
ⁱ Mic. 7. 4. 5.
^j Pro. 14. 15.
^k Pro. 1. 10.
^l Pro. 4. 16.
 Rom. 3. 15.
^m Jer. 9. 3.
 Jer. 20. 10.
ⁿ Or.
 Geshem,
 ver. 1.
^o ch. 2. 19.
 Ezra 4. 13.
 Luke 13. 2.

"Bread" means all sorts of provisions. The forty shekels of silver per day would amount to a yearly salary of £1,800 sterling. More than two or three governors are evidently intended. Zerubbabel was still Tirshatha in the second year of Darius Hystaspes, and there is reason to believe that he was holding this office in the sixth of that monarch's reign. How long he survived the building of the temple is not known. But more than one governor intervened between him and Nehemiah. 17. Moreover there were at my table an hundred and fifty of the Jews. In the East it has been always customary to calculate the expense of a king's or grandee's establishment, not by the amount of money disbursed, but by the quantity of provisions consumed (see 1 Ki. vi. 22; xviii. 19; Eccl. v. 11).

CHAP. VI. 1-19. — SANBALLAT PRACTISES AGAINST NEHEMIAH BY INSIDIOUS ATTEMPTS.

2. Sanballat and Geshem sent unto me. The Samaritan leaders, satisfied that they could not overcome Nehemiah by open arms, resolved to gain advantage over him by deceit and stratagem. With this view, under pretext of terminating their differences in an amicable manner, they invited him to a conference. The place of rendezvous was fixed "in *some one of* the villages in the plain of Ono." "In the villages" (Heb.), "in Cephirim," or Cephirah, the name of a town in the territory of Benjamin (Josh. ix. 17; xviii. 23). Nehemiah, however, apprehensive of some intended mischief, prudently declined the invitation; and, though it was repeated four times, his uniform answer was, that his presence could not be dispensed with from the important work in which he was engaged. This was one, though not the only reason. The

principal ground of his refusal was, that his seizure or death at their hands would certainly put a stop to the further progress of the fortifications.

5. Then sent Sanballat his servant . . . the fifth time with an open letter in his hand [תִּשְׁבֵּרָה לְפָנָי; Septuagint, ἐπιστολὴν ἀνεωγμένην]. In Western Asia, letters, after being rolled up like a map, are flattened to the breadth of an inch, and instead of being sealed, are pasted at the ends. In Eastern Asia, the Persians make up their letters in the form of a roll about six inches long, and a bit of paper is fastened round it with gum, and sealed with an impression of ink, which resembles our printers' ink, but is not so thick. Letters were, and are still, sent to persons of distinction in a bag or purse, and even to equals they are enclosed—the tie being made with a coloured ribbon; but to inferiors, or persons who are to be treated contemptuously, the letters were sent open—i. e., not enclosed in a bag. Nehemiah, accustomed to the punctilious ceremonial of the Persian court, would at once notice the want of the usual formality, and know that it was from designed disrespect. The strain of the letter was equally insolent. It was to this effect: that the fortifications with which he was so busy were intended to strengthen his position in the view of a meditated revolt; that he had engaged prophets to incite the people to enter into his design, and support his claim to be their native king; and that, to stop the circulation of such reports, which would soon reach the court, he was earnestly besought to come to the wished for conference. Nehemiah, strong in the consciousness of his own

- 8 Then I sent unto him, saying, There are no such things done as thou
 9 sayest, but thou feignest them out of thine own heart. For they all made
 us afraid, saying, Their hands shall be weakened from the work, that it
 be not done. Now therefore, O ^kGod, strengthen my hands.
- 10 Afterward I came unto the house of Shemaiah the son of Delaiah the
 son of Mehetabel, who *was* shut up; and he said, Let ^lus meet together
 in the house of God, within the temple, and let us shut the doors of the
 temple: for they will come to slay thee; yea, in the night will they come
 11 to slay thee. And I said, Should ^msuch a man as I flee? and who *is*
 there, that, *being* as I *am*, would go into the temple to save his life? I
 12 will not go in. And, lo, I perceived that God had not sent him; but
 that ⁿhe pronounced this prophecy against me: for Tobiah and Sanballat
 13 had hired him. Therefore *was* he hired, that I should be afraid, and do
 so, and sin, and *that* they might have *matter* for an evil report, that they
 might reproach me.
- 14 My ^oGod, think thou upon Tobiah and Sanballat according to these
 their works, and on the ^pprophetess Noadiah, and the rest of the pro-
 phets, that would have put me in fear.
- 15 So the wall was finished in the twenty and fifth *day of the month* Elul,
 16 in fifty and two days. And it came to pass, that ^qwhen all our enemies
 heard *thereof*, and all the heathen that *were* about us saw *these things*,
 they were much cast down in their own eyes: for they ^rperceived that
 this work was wrought of our God.
- 17 Moreover in those days the nobles of Judah ^ssent many letters unto
 18 Tobiah, and *the letters* of Tobiah came unto them. For *there were* many
 in Judah sworn unto him, because he *was* the son-in-law of Shechaniah
 the son of Arah; and his son Johanan had taken the daughter of
 19 Meshullam the son of Berechiah. Also they reported his good deeds
 before me, and uttered my ^twords to him. And Tobiah sent letters to
 put me in fear.
- 7 NOW it came to pass, when the ^awall was built, and I had ^bset up the
 doors, and the porters and the singers and the Levites were appointed,
 2 that I gave my brother Hanani, and Hananiah the ruler ^cof the palace,
 charge over Jerusalem; for he *was* ^da faithful man, and ^efeared God above

B. C. 446.
Job 13. 4.
Ps. 62. 2.
Isa. 59. 4.
Dan 11. 27.
k Deut. 33. 25.
Ps. 138. 3.
Isa. 41. 10.
Zech. 10. 12.
2 Cor. 12. 9.
l Fro. 26. 24.
m Fro. 28. 1.
Isa. 10. 13.
Luke 13. 31-33.
Acts 8. 1.
Acts 20. 21.
Heb. 11. 27.
n Ex. 13. 22.
o ch. 13. 29.
p Eze. 13. 17.
q ch. 2. 10.
ch. 4. 1. 7.
ch. 6. 1.
r Ps 126. 2.
s multiplied their letters passing to Tobiah.
t Or, matters.
CHAP. 7.
a ch. 3. 1-32.
b ch. 6. 1.
c ch. 2. 8.
d ch. 13. 13.
1 Cor. 4. 2.
e Gen. 42. 18.
Ex. 18. 21.
ch. 5. 15.
Job 31. 23.
Fro. 16. 6.
Fro. 23. 17.

integrity, and penetrating the purpose of this shallow artifice, replied that there were no rumours of the kind described; that the idea of a revolt, and the stimulating addresses of hired demagogues, were stories of the writer's own invention; and that he declined now, as formerly, to leave his work.

10. Afterward I came into the house of Shemaiah, &c. This man was the son of a priest, who was an intimate and confidential friend of Nehemiah. The young man claimed to be endowed with the gift of prophecy. Having been secretly bribed by Sanballat, he, in his pretended capacity of prophet, told Nehemiah that his enemies were that night to make an attempt upon his life; and advised him, at the same time, to consult his safety by concealing himself in the sanctuary—a crypt which, from its sanctity, was strong and secure. But the noble-minded governor determined at all hazards to remain at his post, and not bring discredit on the cause of God and religion by his unworthy cowardice in leaving the temple and city unprotected.

14. My God, think thou . . . and on the prophetess Noadiah. [*First* ('Concordance,' sub voce) doubts or rejects the reading, נְבִיאָה, the prophetess. And so also does the Septuagint, τῆς Νωαδίας τῆς προφήτιν, Noadiah, the prophetess.] This plot,—together with a secret collusion between the

enemy and the nobles of Judah who were favourably disposed towards the bad Samaritan, in consequence of his Jewish connections (v. 18),—the undaunted courage and vigilance of Nehemiah were enabled, with the blessing of God, to defeat, and the erection of the walls thus built in troublous times (Dan. ix. 25) was happily completed (v. 15) in the brief space of fifty-two days. So rapid execution, even supposing some parts of the old wall standing, cannot be sufficiently accounted for, except by the consideration that the builders laboured with the ardour of religious zeal, as men employed in the work of God.

CHAP. VII. 1-4.—NEHEMIAH COMMITS THE CHARGE OF JERUSALEM TO HANANI AND HANANIAH.

2. I gave my brother . . . charge over Jerusalem. If, as is commonly supposed, Nehemiah was now contemplating a return to Shushan, according to his promise, it was natural that he should wish to entrust the custody of Jerusalem and the management of its civic affairs to men in whose ability, experience, and fidelity he could confide. Hanani, a near relative (ch. i. 2), was one, and with him was associated as colleague Hananiah, "the ruler of the palace"—i. e., the marshal or chamberlain of the viceregal court which Nehemiah had maintained in Jerusalem. The high religious principle, as well as the patriotic spirit

- 3 many. And I said unto them, Let not the gates of Jerusalem be opened until the sun be hot; and while they stand by, let them shut the doors, and bar them: and appoint watches of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, every one in his watch, and every one to be over against his house.
- 4 Now the city was ¹large and great; but the people were few therein, and the houses were not builded.
- 5 And my God put into mine heart to gather together the nobles, and the rulers, and the people, that they might be reckoned by genealogy: and I found ²a register of the genealogy of them which came up at the first, and found written therein,
- 6 These are the children of the province, that went up out of the captivity, of those that had been carried away, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away, and came again to Jerusalem and to Judah,
- 7 every one unto his city; who came with Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Nehemiah, ⁵Azariah, Raamiah, Nahamani, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispereth, Bigvai, Nehum, Baanah. The number, I say, of the men of the people of Israel
- 8 was this; the children of Parosh, two thousand an hundred seventy and
- 9 two. The children of Shephathiah, three hundred seventy and two. The
- 11 children of Arah, six hundred fifty and two. The children of Pahathmoab, of the children of Jeshua and Joab, two thousand and eight hundred and eighteen. The children of Elam, a thousand two hundred fifty
- 12 and four. The children of Zattu, eight hundred forty and five. The

B C 445.
¹ broad in spaces.
² 1 ro. 2. 6.
 1 ro. 3. 6.
 Rom. 11. 31.
 1 Cor. 4. 7.
 2 Cor. 8. 16.
 Jas. 1. 17.
³ Perhaps the one in Ezra 2. 1, contained the number enrolled for the journey, and this only those who actually returned, as they are not exactly the same.
⁵ Or, Seraiah.
 Ezra 2. 2.

of those two men, recommended them as pre-eminently qualified for being invested with an official trust of such peculiar importance, feared God above many. The piety of Hananiah is especially mentioned as the ground of his eminent fidelity in the discharge of all his duties, and, consequently, the reason of the confidence which Nehemiah reposed in him, for he was fully persuaded that Hananiah's fear of God would preserve him from those temptations to treachery and unfaithfulness which he was likely to encounter on the governor's departure from Jerusalem. 3. Let not the gates of Jerusalem be opened until the sun be hot, &c. In the East, it is customary to open the gates of a city at sunrise and to bar them at sunset—a rule which is very rarely, and not except to persons of authority, infringed. Nehemiah recommended that the gates of Jerusalem should not be so early opened; a precaution necessary at a time when the enemy were practising all sorts of dangerous stratagems, to ensure that the inhabitants were all astir, and enjoyed the benefit of clear broad daylight for observing the suspicious movements of any enemy. The propriety of regularly barring the gates at sunset was, in this instance, accompanied with the appointment of a number of the people to act as sentinels, each mounting guard in front of his own house.

4. Now the city was large and great. The walls being evidently built on the old foundations, the city covered a large extent of surface, as all Oriental towns do, the houses standing apart, with gardens and orchards intervening. This extent, in the then state of Jerusalem, was the more observable as the population was comparatively small, and the habitations of the most rude and simple construction—mere wooden sheds or coverings of loose unmortared stones.

5-33.—GENEALOGY OF THOSE WHO CAME AT THE FIRST OUT OF BABYLON.

5. my God put into mine heart to gather together, &c. The arrangement about to be described, though dictated by mere common prudence, is, in accordance with the pious feelings of

Nehemiah, ascribed not to his own prudence or reflection, but to the grace of God prompting and directing him. He resolved to prepare a register of the returned exiles, containing an exact record of the family and ancestral abode of every individual, and while thus directing his attention, discovered a register of the first detachment who had come under the care of Zerubbabel. It is transcribed in the following verses, and is the same as that in Ezra ii., though it differs in some few particulars; but the discrepancy is sufficiently accounted for from the different circumstances in which the two registers were taken,—that of Ezra having been made up at Babylon, while that of Nehemiah was drawn out in Judea, after the walls of Jerusalem had been rebuilt. The lapse of so many years might well be expected to make a difference appear in the catalogue, through death or other causes; thus Machish (Ezra ii. 30) is omitted: perhaps, though entered into the register as intending to accompany the returning, he and his family changed their minds and remained in Babylon. Other circumstances led to a difference between this register and that of Ezra,—in particular, one person being, according to Jewish custom, called by different names. Thus, Hariph (v. 24) is the same as Jorah (Ezra ii. 18); Sia (v. 47) the same as Siaha (Ezra ii. 44), &c. On the subject of the variation of the names, and the difference as to numbers in this and the parallel passage of Ezra, see 'Dissertation' of Kenicott, vol. ii., p. 508, which gives a minute comparison of texts as well as a very full and satisfactory explanation of all obscurities. As to the difference of numbers, that is just what might have been expected: many who had resolved to take advantage of Cyrus's edict, and intimated their purpose to Ezra, drew back, and continued where they were; while on the other hand, great numbers, when the caravan was starting, unexpectedly joined their ranks and came to Jerusalem. Besides other purposes to which this genealogy of the nobles, rulers, and people was subservient, one leading object contemplated by it was to ascertain with accuracy the parties to whom the duty legally belonged of ministering at the altar,

15 children of Zaccai, seven hundred and threescore. The children of
 16 ⁴Biunui, six hundred forty and eight. The children of Bebai, six hun-
 17 dred twenty and eight. The children of Azgad, two thousand three hun-
 18 dred twenty and two. The children of Adonikam, six hundred threescore
 19 and seven. The children of Bigvai, two thousand threescore and seven.
 20 The children of Adin, six hundred fifty and five. The children of Ater
 21 of Hezekiah, ninety and eight. The children of Hashum, three hundred
 22 twenty and eight. The children of Bezai, three hundred twenty and
 23 four. The children of ⁵Hariiph, an hundred and twelve. The children
 24 of ⁶Gibeon, ninety and five. The men of ⁷Beth-lehem and Netophah, an
 25 hundred fourscore and eight. The men of ⁸Anathoth, an hundred twenty
 26 and eight. The men of ⁹Beth-azmaveth, forty and two. The men of
 27 ¹⁰Kirjath-jearim, Chephirah, and Beeroth, seven hundred forty and three.
 28 The men of Ramah and Gaba, six hundred twenty and one. The men of
 29 ¹¹Michmas, an hundred and twenty and two. The men of Beth-el and Ai,
 30 an hundred twenty and three. The men of the other Nebo, fifty and two.
 31 The children of the other Elam, a thousand two hundred fifty and four.
 32 The children of Harim, three hundred and twenty. The children of
 33 Jericho, three hundred forty and five. The children of Lod, Hadid, and
 34 Ono, seven hundred twenty and one. The children of Senaah, three
 35 thousand nine hundred and thirty.

36 The priests: the children of ¹²Jedaiah, of the house of Jeshua, nine
 37 hundred seventy and three. The children of ¹³Immer, a thousand fifty
 38 and two. The children of ¹⁴Pashur, a thousand two hundred forty and
 39 seven. The children of ¹⁵Harim, a thousand and seventeen.

40 The Levites: the children of Jeshua, of Kadmiel, and of the children
 41 of ¹⁶Hodevah, seventy and four.

42 The singers: the children of Asaph, an hundred forty and eight.

43 The porters: the children of Shallum, the children of Ater, the children
 44 of Talmon, the children of Akkub, the children of Hatita, the children of
 45 Shobai, an hundred thirty and eight.

46 The Nethinims: the children of Ziba, the children of Hashupha, the
 47 children of Tabbaoth, the children of Keros, the children of ¹⁷Sia, the
 48 children of Padon, the children of Lebana, the children of Hagaba, the
 49 children of ¹⁸Shalmal, the children of Hanan, the children of Giddel, the
 50 children of Gahar, the children of Reaiah, the children of Rezin, the
 51 children of Nekoda, the children of Gazzam, the children of Uzza, the
 52 children of Phaseah, the children of Bezai, the children of Meunim, the
 53 children of ¹⁹Nephishesim, the children of Bakbuk, the children of Hak-
 54 upha, the children of Harhur, the children of ²⁰Bazlith, the children of
 55 Mehida, the children of Harsha, the children of Barkos, the children of
 56 Sisera, the children of Tamah, the children of Neziah, the children of
 57 Hatipha. The ²¹children of Solomon's servants: the children of Sotai,
 58 the children of Sophereth, the children of ²²Perida, the children of Jaala,
 59 the children of Darkon, the children of Giddel, the children of She-
 60 phatiah, the children of Hattil, the children of Pochereth of Zebaim,
 61 the children of ²³Amon. All the Nethinims, and the children of Solomon's
 62 servants, were three hundred ninety and two.

63 And ²⁴these were they which went up also from Tel-melah, Tel-haresha,
 64 Cherub, ²⁵Addon, and Immer: but they could not show their father's
 65 house, nor their ²⁶seed, whether they were of Israel. The children of

B. C. 536.
⁴ Or, Bani,
 Ezra 2. 10.
⁵ Or, Jorah,
 Ezra 2. 18.
⁶ Or,
 Gibbar,
 Ezra 2. 20.
⁷ Gen. 25. 6.
 Ruth 2. 4.
 Ruth 4. 11.
⁸ 1 Sam. 17.
 12.
⁹ Chr. 11. 6.
 Mic. 5. 2.
 Matt. 2. 1.
¹⁰ Josh. 21. 18.
¹¹ 1 Ki. 2. 21.
¹² 1 Chr. 9. 54.
 10.
 Ezra 2. 23.
 Jer. 1. 1.
 Jer. 11. 21.
 13.
 Jer. 32. 7-9.
¹³ Or,
 Azmaveth
 Ezra 2. 24.
¹⁴ Or, Kir-
 jath-arim,
 Josh. 9. 3,
 17.
 Josh. 15. 9.
¹⁵ 1 Sam. 7. 1.
 1 Chr. 3. 5.
¹⁶ 1 Sam. 3. 2.
 Isa. 10. 28.
¹⁷ 1 Chr. 21. 7.
¹⁸ 1 Chr. 24. 14.
¹⁹ 1 Chr. 9. 12.
²⁰ 1 Chr. 21. 9.
²¹ 1 Chr. 24. 8.
 ch. 12. 13.
²² Or,
 Hodaviah,
 Ezra 2. 40.
 or, Judah,
 Ezra 3. 9.
²³ Or, Siaba.
²⁴ Or,
 Shalmal.
²⁵ Or,
 Nephusim.
²⁶ Or,
 Bazluth
²⁷ Gen. 9. 25,
 26.
²⁸ 1 Ki. 5. 13.
 14.
²⁹ 1 Ki. 9. 21.
³⁰ Or,
 Peruda.
³¹ Or, Ami.
³² Ezra 2. 9.
³³ Or,
 Addan.
³⁴ Or,
 pedigree.

and conducting the various services of the temple; and for guiding to exact information in this important point of enquiry, the possession of the old register of Zerubbabel was invaluable.

39-73.—OF THE PRIESTS.

39. The priests. It appears that only four of

the courses of the priests returned from the captivity, and that the course of Abia (Luke i. 5) is not in the list. But it must be noticed that these four courses were afterwards divided into twenty-four, which retained the names of the original courses which David appointed.

Delaiah, the children of Tobiah, the children of Nekoda, six hundred forty and two.

63 And of the priests: the children of Habaiah, the children of Koz, the children of Barzillai, which took *one* of the daughters of ²Barzillai the

64 Gileadite to wife, and was called after their name. These sought their register *among* those that were reckoned by genealogy, but it was not found:

65 therefore were they, as polluted, put from the priesthood. And ¹⁸the Tirshatha said unto them, that they should not eat of the most holy things, till there stood *up* a priest with Urim ²and Thummim.

66 The whole congregation together *was* forty and two thousand three

67 hundred and threescore: besides their man-servants and their maid-servants, of whom *there were* seven thousand three hundred thirty and seven; and they had two hundred forty and five singing men and singing

68 women. Their horses, seven hundred thirty and six; their mules, two

69 hundred forty and five; *their* camels, four hundred thirty and five; six thousand seven hundred and twenty asses.

70 And ¹⁹some of the chief of the fathers gave unto the work. ^rThe Tirshatha gave to the treasure a thousand drams of gold, fifty basins, five

71 hundred and thirty priests' garments. And *some* of the chief of the fathers gave to the treasure of the work ^stwenty thousand drams of

72 gold, and two thousand and two hundred pound of silver. And *that* which 'the rest of the people gave *was* twenty thousand drams of gold, and two thousand pound of silver, and threescore and seven priests' garments.

73 So the priests, and the Levites, and the porters, and the singers, and *some* of the people, and the Nethinims, and all Israel, dwelt ^uin their cities; ^vand when the seventh month came, the children of Israel *were* in their cities.

8 AND ^aall the people gathered themselves together as one man into the street that *was* ^bbefore the water gate; and they spake unto Ezra the ^cscribe to bring the book ^dof the law of Moses, which the LORD had

B. C. 536.
^p 2 Sam. 17.
 27.
 2 Sam 19.
 31-40.
 1 Ki 2. 7.
 1 Ki 12. 7.
 Ezra 2. 61.
¹⁸ Or, the governor.
 Ezra 2. 63.
 ch. 8. 9.
 ch. 10. 1.
^q Ex. 25. 30.
 Lev 8. 8.
 Num. 7. 89.
 Num. 27. 15-21.
 Deut 37. 8.
 Judg. 1. 1.
¹⁹ part.
^r ch 8. 9.
 ch. 10. 1.
^s Ezra 2. 69.
^t Job 4. 19.
 Rom 2. 11.
 Gal 3. 24.
^u ch. 11. 20.
 36.
^v Ex. 23. 14-17.
 Ex. 34. 23.
 Lev. 23. 24-44
 Ezra 3. 1.
 CHAP. 8.
^a Ezra 3. 1.
^b ch 3. 23.
^c Ezra 7. 6.
^d Mal 4. 4.

65. the Tirshatha said . . . that they should not eat of the most holy things, till there stood up a priest with Urim and Thummim. Whether the Urim and Thummim was continued till the Babylonish captivity, is not known, but it is probable; and Nehemiah seems here to anticipate its restoration.

70. some of the chief of the fathers, &c. With v. 69 the register ends, and the thread of Nehemiah's history is resumed. He was the Tirshatha or governor, and the liberality displayed by him and some of the leading men, for the suitable equipment of the ministers of religion, forms the subject of the remaining portion of the chapter. Their donations consisted principally in garments. This would appear a singular description of gifts to be made by any one amongst us; but, in the East, a present of garments, or of any article of use, is conformable to the prevailing sentiments and customs of society. **drams of gold**—i.e., darics. A daric was a gold coin of ancient Persia, worth £1, 5s. **71. pound of silver**—i.e., mina (sixty shekels, or £9).

73. So . . . all Israel, dwelt in their cities. The utility of these genealogical registers was thus found in guiding to a knowledge of the cities and localities in each tribe to which every family anciently belonged. This verse is borrowed from Ezra iii. 1.

CHAP. VIII. 1-8.—RELIGIOUS MANNER OF READING AND HEARING THE LAW.

1. all the people gathered themselves together as one man. Having completed the insertion of the long parenthetical register (ch. vii. 6-73),

Nehemiah resumes his narrative in this chapter. The occasion was the celebration of the feast of the seventh month (ch. vii. 73). The beginning of every month was ushered in as a sacred festival; but this, the commencement of the seventh month (Tisri), had been formerly kept with distinguished honour as "the feast of trumpets," which extended over two days. It was the first day of the seventh ecclesiastical year, and the new year's day of the civil year, on which account it was held as "a great day." The place where the general concourse of people was held was 'at the water-gate,' on the south rampart. Through that gate the Nethinims or Gibeonites brought water into the temple, and there was a spacious area in front of it. they spake unto Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses. He had come to Jerusalem twelve or thirteen years previous to Nehemiah; and either remained there, or had returned to Babylon in obedience to the royal order, and for the discharge of important duties. He had returned along with Nehemiah, but in a subordinate capacity. From the time of Nehemiah's appointment to the dignity of Tirshatha, Ezra had retired into private life; and, although cordially and zealously co-operating with the former patriot in his important measures of reform, the pious priest had devoted his time and attention principally towards producing a complete edition of the canonical Scriptures. The public reading of the Scriptures was required by the law to be made every seventh year, but during the long period of the captivity this excellent practice, with many others, had fallen into neglect, till

2 commanded to Israel. And Ezra the priest brought ⁶the law before the congregation ⁷both of men and women, and all ¹that could hear with
 3 understanding, ⁸upon the first day of the seventh month. And he read therein before the street that *was* before the water gate, ²from the morning until mid-day, before the men and the women, and those that could understand; and the ears of all the people *were attentive* unto the
 4 book of the law. And Ezra the scribe stood upon a ³pulpit of wood, which they had made for the purpose; and beside him stood Mattithiah, and Shema, and Anaiah, and Urijah, and Hilkiah, and Maaseiah, on his right hand; and on his left hand, Pedaiah, and Mishael, and Malchiah,
 5 and Hashum, and Hashbadana, Zechariah, and Meshullam. And Ezra opened the book in the ⁴sight of the people; (for he was above all the
 6 people;) and when he opened it, all the people ⁵stood up: and Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God: and all the people ⁶answered, Amen, Amen, with ⁷lifting up their hands: and they ⁸bowed their heads, and
 7 worshipped the LORD with *their* faces to the ground. Also Jeshua, and Bani, and Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodijah, Maasciah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the Levites, ⁹caused the
 8 people to understand the law: and the people *stood* in their place. So they read in the book, in the law of God, ¹⁰distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused *them* to understand the reading.
 9 And ¹¹Nehemiah, which *is* ¹²the Tirshatha, and Ezra the priest the scribe, and ¹³the Levites that taught the people, said unto all the people, ¹⁴"This day *is* holy unto the LORD your God; ¹⁵mourn not, nor weep. For
 10 all the people wept, when they heard the words of the law. Then he said unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, ¹⁶and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for *this day is holy* unto our LORD: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the LORD is your strength.
 11 So the Levites stilled all the people, saying, Hold your peace, for the day
 12 *is* holy; neither be ye grieved. And all the people went their way to eat, and to drink, and to send portions, and to make great mirth, because they had understood the words that were declared unto them.
 13 And on the second day were gathered together the chief of the fathers of all the people, the priests, and the Levites, unto Ezra the scribe, even
 14 ¹⁷to understand the words of the law. And they found written in the law which the LORD had commanded ¹⁸by Moses, that the children of Israel
 15 should dwell in ¹⁹booths in the feast of the seventh month: and that they should publish and proclaim in all their cities, and in Jerusalem, saying,

B. C. 445.

⁶ Deut. 31, 11, 12.
² Chr. 17. 7-9.
⁷ 1 Pet. 3. 7.
¹ that understood in hearing.
⁸ Lev. 23. 24. Num. 29. 1-6.
² from the light.
³ tower of wood.
⁴ eyes.
⁵ Judg. 3. 10. 1 Ki. 1. 14.
⁶ Deut. 27. 15-26.
¹ Cor 14. 16.
⁷ Lam. 3. 41.
¹ Tim. 2. 8.
⁸ Ex. 4. 31. Ex. 12. 27.
² Chr 20. 18.
⁴ Lev. 10. 11.
¹¹ Hab. 2. 2.
¹² Ezra 2. 13. ch. 7. 65.
⁵ Or, the governor.
⁶ 2 Chr. 35. 3.
⁷ Lev. 23. 24. Num. 29. 1.
⁸ Deut. 16. 14. Eccl. 3. 4.
⁹ Esth. 9. 19. Rev. 11. 16.
⁶ Or, that they might instruct in the words of the law.
⁷ by the hand of.
⁸ Lev 23. 34. Deut. 16. 13.

revived on this occasion; and it indicates a greatly improved tone of religious feeling that there was a strong and general desire among the returned exiles in Jerusalem to hear the word of God read to them. 4. Ezra . . . upon a pulpit of wood—not made in the form known to us, but only a raised scaffold or platform, broad enough to allow fourteen persons to stand with ease upon it. Ezra was present and took an active part in this festival anniversary; but his duty was special and very laborious, as he continued reading aloud from morning until mid-day, but his labour was lightened by the aid of the other priests present. Their presence was of use, partly to show their cordial agreement with Ezra's declaration of divine truth, and partly to take their share with him in the important duty of publicly reading and expounding the Scripture. 5. when he opened it, all the people stood up. This attitude they assumed either from respect to God's word, or, rather, because the reading was prefaced by a solemn prayer, which was concluded by a general expression of Amen, Amen. 7. caused the people to understand the law . . . 8. gave the sense. Commentators are

divided in opinion as to the import of this statement, some thinking that Ezra read the law in pure Hebrew, while the Levites who assisted him translated it sentence by sentence into Chaldee, the vernacular dialect which the exiles spoke in Babylon; while others maintain that the duty of these Levites consisted in explaining to the people, many of whom had become very ignorant, what Ezra had read.

9-15.—THE PEOPLE COMFORTED.

9. This day is holy unto the Lord your God; mourn not, nor weep. A deep sense of their national sins, impressively brought to their remembrance by the reading of the law and its denunciations, affected the hearts of the people with penitential sorrow; but notwithstanding the painful remembrances of their national sins which the reading of the law awakened, the people were exhorted to cherish the feelings of joy and thankfulness associated with a sacred festival—viz., the feast of trumpets (see on Lev. xxiii. 23-25), and by sending portions of it to their poorer brethren (Deut. xvi. 11, 14; Esth. ix. 19), a usual custom on occasions of great joy and festivity (cf. Esth.

- Go forth unto the mount, and fetch olive branches, and pine branches, and myrtle branches, and palm branches, and branches of thick trees, to
- 16 make booths, as *it is* written. So the people went forth, and brought *them*, and made themselves booths, every one upon the 'roof of his house, and in their courts, and in the courts of the house of God, and in the
- 17 street of the "water gate," and in the street of the gate of Ephraim. And all the congregation of them that were come again out of the captivity made booths, and sat under the booths: for since the days of Jeshua the son of Nun unto that day had not the children of Israel done so. And there was very great gladness.
- 18 Also "day by day, from the first day unto the last day, he read in the book of the law of God. And they kept the feast seven days; and on the eighth day *was* ^s a solemn assembly, ^x according unto the manner.
- 9 NOW in the twenty and fourth day of this "month, the children of Israel were assembled with fasting, and with sackclothes, ^b and earth upon
- 2 them. And ^c the seed of Israel separated themselves from all ¹strangers, and stood ^a and confessed their sins, and the iniquities of their fathers.
- 3 And they stood up in their place, and read ^e in the book of the law of the LORD their God *one* fourth part of the day; and *another* fourth part they

B. C. 415.
^t Deut. 22. 8.
^u ch. 3. 26.
^v ch. 1. 37.
^w 2 Ki. 11. 13.
^x ch. 12. 32.
^y Deut. 31. 10.
^z a res' raint.
¹ Num. 29. 35.
 CHAP. 9.
^a ch. 8. 2.
^b Josh. 7. 6.
^c 1 Sam. 4. 12.
^d 2 Sam. 1. 2.
^e Job. 7. 12.
^f Ezra 10. 11.
^g ch. 13. 3.
^h strange children.
ⁱ Ezra 9. 6, 7.
^j 15.
^k Pro. 23. 13.
^l Jer. 3. 13.
^m 1 John 1. 7-9.
ⁿ ch. 9. 7.

ix. 19-23; Rev. xi. 10), enable them to participate in the public rejoicings.

15. Go forth unto the mount, and fetch . . . palm branches, &c. It appears from this that palms were growing in the immediate neighbourhood of Jerusalem, probably on the mount of Olives (cf. John xii. 13).

16-18. — THEY KEEP THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES.

16. the people went forth, and brought them, and made themselves booths—(see on Lev. xxiii. 34-44; Deut. xvi. 13-17.) every one upon the roof of his house, and in their courts, and in the courts of the house of God, &c. It is evident that when this feast was celebrated, not only were there inhabited houses, regular streets, and gates in the city walls, but the restoration of the temple was completed. 17. since the days of Jeshua . . . had not the children of Israel done so. This national feast had not been neglected for so protracted a period; for, besides that it is impossible that such a flagrant disregard of the law could have been tolerated by Samuel, David, and other pious rulers, its observance is sufficiently indicated, 1 Ki. viii. 2, 65; 2 Chr. vii. 9; and expressly recorded, Ezra iii. 4. But the meaning is, that the popular feelings had never been raised to such a height of enthusiastic joy since the time of their entrance into Canaan, as now on their return after a long and painful captivity. The sacred ceremonies extended over eight days, from the fifteenth to the twenty-second (inclusive) of Tisri.

18. Also day by day . . . he read in the book of the law of God. This was more than was enjoined (Deut. xxxi. 10-12), and arose from the exuberant zeal of the time. on the eighth day was a solemn assembly. This was the last and great day of the feast (Num. xxx. 35). In later times other ceremonies, which increased the rejoicing, were added (John vii. 37).

CHAP. IX. 1-3.—A SOLEMN FAST, AND RE-
 PENTANCE OF THE PEOPLE.

1. Now in the twenty and fourth day of this month—i. e., on the second day after the close of the Feast of Tabernacles, which commenced on the fourteenth and terminated on the twenty-second of Tisri, (Lev. xxiii.) The day immediately after that feast, the twenty-third, had been occu-

ried in separating the delinquents from their unlawful wives, as well, perhaps, as in taking steps for keeping aloof in future from unnecessary intercourse with the heathen around them. For although this necessary measure of reformation had been begun formerly by Ezra (Ezra x.), and satisfactorily accomplished at that time—so far as he had information of the existing abuses, or possessed the power of correcting them—yet it appears that this reformatory work of Ezra had been only partial and imperfect; many cases of delinquency had escaped, or new defaulters had appeared who had contracted those forbidden alliances; and there was an urgent necessity for Nehemiah again to take vigorous measures for the removal of a social evil which threatened the most disastrous consequences to the character and prosperity of the chosen people. A solemn fast was now observed for the expression of those penitential and sorrowful feelings which the reading of the law had produced, but which had been suppressed during the celebration of the feast; and the sincerity of their repentance was evinced by the decisive steps taken for the correction of existing abuses in the matter of marriage. 2. confessed their sins, and the iniquities of their fathers. Not only did they read in their recent sufferings a punishment of the national apostasy and guilt; but they had made themselves partakers of their fathers' sins by following the same evil ways. 3. read in the book of the law. Their extraordinary zeal led them to continue this as before. one fourth part of the day—i. e., for three hours, twelve hours being the acknowledged length of the Jewish day (John xi. 9), so that this solemn diet of worship, which probably commenced at the morning sacrifice, was continued for six hours—i. e., till the time of the evening sacrifice. The worship which they gave to the Lord their God, at this season of solemn national humiliation, consisted in acknowledging and adoring His great mercy in the forgiveness of their great and multiplied offences, in delivering them from the merited judgments which they had already experienced or which they had reason to apprehend, in continuing amongst them the light and blessings of His word and worship, and in supplicating the extension of His grace and protection.

4 confessed, and worshipped the LORD their God. Then stood up upon the ²stairs, of the Levites, Jeshua, and Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani, and Chenani, and cried with a loud voice unto the LORD their God.

5 Then the Levites, Jeshua, and Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabniah, Sherebiah, Hodijah, Shebaniah, and Pethahiah, said,
Stand up and bless the LORD your God for ever and ever; and blessed be ^rthy glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise.

6 Thou, ^oeven thou, art LORD alone: ^hthou hast made heaven, ⁱthe heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all *things* that *are* therein, the seas, and all that *is* therein, and thou ^jpreservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth thee.

7 Thou art the LORD the God, who didst choose ^kAbram, and broughtest him forth out of Ur of the Chaldees, and gavest him the name of Abraham: and foundest his heart faithful before thee, and madest a covenant with him, to give the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Jebusites, and the Girgashites, to give *it*, I say, to his seed, and ^lhast performed thy words; for thou art righteous:

8 and didst see the affliction of our fathers in Egypt, and hearest their cry by the Red sea: and showedst signs and wonders upon Pharaoh, and on all his servants, and on all the people of his land; for thou knewest that they dealt proudly against them: so didst thou ^mget thee a name, as *it is* this day. And thou didst divide the sea before them, so that they went through the midst of the sea on the dry land; and their persecutors thou threwest into the deeps, as a stone into the mighty waters. Moreover thou ⁿleddest them in the day by a cloudy pillar; and in the night by a pillar of fire, to give them light in the way wherein they should go.

9 Thou camest down also upon mount Sinai, and spakest with them from heaven, and gavest them ^oright judgments, and ³true laws, good statutes and commandments: and madest known unto them thy holy ²sabbath, and commandedst them precepts, statutes, and laws, by the hand of Moses thy servant: and ^qgavest them bread from heaven for their hunger, and broughtest forth water for them out of the rock for their thirst, and promisedst them that they should ^rgo in to possess the land ⁴which thou hadst sworn to give them.

B. C. 445.

² r. scaffold.
f Ex. 15. 6.
11.
Deut. 28. 59.
1 Chr. 29. 13.
Ps. 27. 15.
Ps. 145. 11.
2 Cor. 4. 6.
^o Deut. 6. 4.
Isa. 37. 16.
Mark 12. 29.
^h Eccl. 14. 7.
ⁱ Dent. 10. 14.
1 Ki. 8. 27.
^k Ps. 56. 6.
^l Gen. 11. 31.
^l Josh. 23. 14.
^m Ex. 9. 16.
Isa. 63. 12.
11.
Jer. 32. 20.
Dan. 9. 15.
Rom. 9. 17.
ⁿ Ex. 13. 21.
^o Ps. 19. 8, 9.
Rom. 7. 12.
³ laws of truth.
² Gen. 2. 3.
Ex. 20. 8.
Isa. 56. 2.
Mark 2. 27.
Heb. 4. 9.
^q Ex. 16. 14.
15.
John 6. 31.
^r Deut. 1. 8.
⁴ which thou hadst lift up thine hand to give them.
Num. 14. 30.

4.35.—THE LEVITES CONFESS GOD'S MANIFOLD GOODNESS, AND THEIR OWN WICKEDNESS.

4. Then stood up upon the stairs. The scaffolds or pulpits, whence the Levites usually addressed the people. There were probably several placed at convenient distances, to prevent confusion, and the voice of one drowning those of the others. cried with a loud voice. Such an exertion, of course, was indispensably necessary, in order that the speakers might be heard by a vast multitude congregated in the open air. But these speakers were then engaged in expressing their deep sense of sin, as well as fervently imploring the forgiving mercy of God, and 'crying with a loud voice' was a natural accompaniment of this extraordinary prayer meeting, as violent gestures and vehement tones are always the way in which the Jews, and other people in the East, have been accustomed to give utterance to deep and earnest feelings.

5. said, Stand up and bless the Lord your God. If this prayer was uttered by all these Levites in common, it must have been prepared and adopted beforehand, perhaps by Ezra; and it may only embody the substance of the confession and thanksgiving. 6. Thou, even thou, art Lord alone, &c. In this solemn and impressive prayer, in which they made public confession of their sins,

and deprecated the judgments due to the transgressions of their fathers, they begin with a profound adoration of God, whose supreme majesty and omnipotence is acknowledged in the creation, preservation, and government of all, and then they proceed to enumerate His mercies and distinguished favours to them as a nation, from the period of the call of their great ancestor, and the gracious promise intimated to him in the divinely bestowed name of Abraham—a promise which implied that he was to be the Father of the faithful, the ancestor of the Messiah, and the honoured individual in whose seed all the families of the earth should be blessed. Tracing in full and minute detail the signal instances of Divine interposition for their deliverance and their interest; in their deliverance from Egyptian bondage; their miraculous passage through the Red Sea; the promulgation of His law (for the whole form of national government, civil, or ecclesiastical, with all its ordinances, proceeded directly from God) in His 'making known to them His holy Sabbaths,' which, from the usage of Scripture writers, does not mean a first announcement (cf. 1 Chr.), but the formal republication of the Sabbath law, which, to the degraded serfs from the house of bondage, would be absolutely necessary [אֵת־שַׁבָּתוֹ וְיָרַדְךָ הַיְרֵדָה לָרֶגֶל]

- 16 But ^sthey and our fathers dealt proudly, and hardened their necks,
 17 and hearkened not to thy commandments, and refused to obey, ^tneither were mindful of thy wonders that thou didst among them; but hardened their necks, and in their rebellion appointed ^ua captain to return to their bondage: but thou *art* ^{5a}a God ready to pardon, ^vgracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and forsookest them
 18 not. Yea, when they had made them a molten calf, and said, This *is* thy god that brought thee up out of Egypt, and had wrought great provocations; yet thou in thy ^wmanifold mercies forsookest them not in the wilderness: the pillar ^xof the cloud departed not from them by day, to lead them in the way; neither the pillar of fire by night, to show them light, and the way wherein they should go.
 20 Thou gavest also thy ^ygood Spirit to instruct them, and withheldst not thy manna from their mouth, and gavest them water for their thirst.
 21 Yea, forty years didst thou sustain them in the wilderness, *so that* they lacked nothing; their ^zclothes waxed not old, and their feet swelled not.
 22 Moreover thou gavest them kingdoms and nations, and didst divide them into corners: so they possessed the land of Sihon, and the land of the king of Heshbon, and the land of Og king of Bashan. Their ^achildren also multipliedst thou as the stars of heaven, and broughtest them into the land concerning which thou hadst promised to their fathers, that
 24 they should go in to possess *it*. So the children went in and possessed the land, and thou subduedst before them the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, and gavest them into their hands, with their kings, and the
 25 people of the land, that they might do with them ^bas they would. And they took strong cities, and a fat ^cland, and possessed ^chouses full of all goods, ^dwells digged, vineyards, and oliveyards, and ^efruit trees in abundance: so they did eat, and were filled, and ^fbecame fat, and delighted themselves in thy ^egreat goodness.
 26 Nevertheless they were disobedient, and rebelled against thee, and cast thy law behind their backs, and slew thy ^gprophets which testified against them to turn them to thee; and they wrought great provocations.
 27 Therefore thou deliverdst them into the hand of their enemies, who vexed them: and in the time of their trouble, when they cried unto thee, thou heardest *them* from heaven; and according to thy manifold mercies thou gavest them saviours, who saved them out of the hand of
 28 their enemies. But after they had rest, ^hthey did evil again before

tend to, observe thy holy Sabbaths, *Gesenius*]; in the forbearance and long-suffering shown them amid their frequent rebellions; the signal triumphs given them over their enemies; their happy settlement in the promised land—and all the extraordinary blessings, both in the form of temporal prosperity and of religious privilege, with which His paternal goodness had favoured them above all other people—they charge themselves with making a miserable requital; confess their numerous and determined acts of disobedience; read in the loss of their national independence and their long captivity the severe punishment of their sins; acknowledge that, in all the heavy and continued judgments upon their nation, God had done rightly (ch. xvi. 8; Ps. cxlv. 12; Eph. vi. 19), but they had done wickedly; and in throwing themselves on His mercy, express their purpose of entering into a national covenant, by which they pledge themselves to dutiful obedience in future.

18. they had made them a molten calf, and said, This is thy God that brought thee up out of Egypt. The English translation of Exod. xxxii.

4 is, "These be thy gods." [In both passages, the Septuagint has *οὗτοι οἱ θεοὶ σου*, and so also the Peshito version, 'Hi sunt dii tui, Israel,'] 'Elohim,' though plural, when applied to the Supreme Being, is rendered in the singular, and we give a preference to this translation in Exod. xxxii. 4, because the offence of the Israelites in the matter of the molten calf was not a breach of the first commandment, the multiplication of deities, but a breach of the second, the worshipping of God by a material image.

22. Moreover thou gavest them kingdoms and nations—i. e., put them in possession of a rich country, of an extensive territory, which had been once occupied by a variety of princes and people. and didst divide them into corners [מַחְצוֹת]—and didst distribute them into various quarters or districts of the promised land. The propriety of the expression arose from the various districts touching at points or angles on each other. the land of Sihon, and the land of the king of Heshbon. Heshbon being the capital city, the passage should run thus: 'the land of Sihon or the land of the king of Heshbon,'

B. C. 445.
^a Deut. 31. 27.
² Ki. 17. 14.
³ Chr. 30. 8.
⁴ Ps. 106. 6.
⁵ Jer. 19. 15.
⁶ Ps. 78. 11.
⁷ Num. 14. 4.
⁸ a God of pardons.
⁹ Ex. 31. 6.
¹⁰ Num. 14. 18.
¹¹ Ps. 86. 5.
¹² Joel 2. 13.
¹³ Ps. 101. 45.
¹⁴ Ex. 13. 21, 22.
¹⁵ Num. 14. 14.
¹⁶ 1 Cor. 10. 1.
¹⁷ Num. 11. 17.
¹⁸ Isa. 63. 11.
¹⁹ Deut. 8. 4.
²⁰ Deut. 23. 5.
²¹ Gen. 15. 5.
²² Gen. 22. 17.
²³ 1 Chr. 27. 23.
²⁴ according to their will.
²⁵ Deut. 8. 7-10.
²⁶ Eze. 20. 6.
²⁷ Deut. 6. 11.
²⁸ Or, cisterns.
²⁹ tree of food.
³⁰ Deut. 32. 15.
³¹ Hos. 13. 6.
³² 1 Ki. 8. 66.
³³ Hos. 3. 5.
³⁴ Rom. 2. 4.
³⁵ 1 Ki. 18. 4.
³⁶ Matt 21. 35.
³⁷ Acts 7. 52.
³⁸ they returned to do evil.

- thee: therefore leftest thou them in the hand of their enemies, so that they had the dominion over them: yet when they returned, and cried unto thee, thou heardest *them* from heaven; and many times didst thou deliver them according to thy mercies; and ⁹testifiedst against them, that thou mightest bring them again unto thy law: yet they dealt proudly, and hearkened not unto thy commandments, but sinned against thy judgments, (^hwhich if a man do, he shall live in them,) and ¹⁰withdrew the shoulder, and hardened their neck, and would not hear: yet many years didst thou ¹¹forbear them, and testifiedst ¹²against them by thy Spirit ¹³in thy prophets: yet would they not give ear: therefore gavest thou them into the hand of the people of the lands. Nevertheless for thy great mercies' sake ¹⁴thou didst not utterly consume them, nor forsake them; for thou *art* a gracious and merciful God.
- ³² Now therefore, our God, the great, the mighty, and the terrible God, who keepest covenant and mercy, let not all the ¹³trouble seem little before thee ¹⁴that hath come upon us, on our kings, on our princes, and on our priests, and on our prophets, and on our fathers, and on all thy people, since ^hthe time of the kings of Assyria unto this day.
- ³³ Howbeit *thou art* just in all that is brought upon us; for thou hast done right, but we have done wickedly: neither have our kings, our princes, our priests, nor our fathers, kept thy law, nor hearkened unto thy commandments, and thy testimonies, wherewith thou didst testify against them. For they have not served thee in their kingdom, and in thy great goodness that thou gavest them, and in the large and fat land which thou gavest before them, neither turned they from their wicked works. Behold, ^mwe *are* servants this day; and *for* the land that thou gavest unto our fathers to eat the fruit thereof and the good thereof, behold, we *are* servants in it: and ⁿit yieldeth much increase unto the kings whom thou hast set over us because of our sins: also they have ^odominion over our bodies, and over our cattle, at their pleasure, and we *are* in great distress.
- ³⁸ And because of all this we make a sure *covenant*, and write *it*; and our princes, Levites, and priests, ¹⁵seal *unto it*.
- ¹⁰ NOW ¹those that sealed *were* ^aNehemiah, ²the Tirshatha, ^bthe son of Hachaliah, and Zidikijah, Seraiah, Azariah, Jeremiah, Pashur, Amariah, 4 Malchijah, Hattush, Shebaniah, Malluch, Harim, Meremoth, Obadiah,

B. C. 445.

⁹ Deut. 4. 26.

Hos. 6. 5.

^h Lev. 18. 5.

Matt. 19. 17.

Luke 10. 23.

Rom. 3. 19.

Rom. 10. 5.

Gal. 3. 12.

¹⁰ they gave

a with-

drawing

shoulder

¹¹ pro-tract

over them.

¹² Jer. 7. 25.¹³ in the

hand of

thy prop-

hets.

¹⁴ Jer. 6. 10.¹⁵ weariness.¹⁴ that hath

found us.

^h 2 Ki. 17. 2.

Isa. 7. 17.

18.

¹ Gen. 13. 25.

Ps. 119. 137.

Dan. 9. 14.

^m Deut. 23. 48.ⁿ Deut. 2. 33.^o Deut. 23. 48.¹⁵ are at the

sealing, or

sealed,

ch. 10. 1.

CHAP. 10.

¹ at the

sealings,

ch. 9. 38.

^a ch. 8. 9.² Or the

governor

Ezra 2. 63.

ch. 7. 65.

^b ch. 1. 1.

³² Now therefore, our God . . . who keepest covenant and mercy. God's fidelity to His covenant is prominently acknowledged; and well it might, for their whole national history bore testimony to it. But as this could afford them little ground of comfort or of hope, while they were so painfully conscious of having violated it, they were driven to seek refuge in the riches of divine grace; and hence the peculiar style of invocation here adopted, "Now therefore, our God, the great, the mighty, and the terrible God, who keepest covenant and mercy." ³⁶ Behold, we are servants this day. Notwithstanding their happy restoration to their native land, they were still tributaries of a foreign prince, whose officers ruled them, and were not like their fathers, free tenants of the land which God gave them. ³⁷ It yieldeth much increase unto the kings whom thou hast set over us because of our sins—our agricultural labours have been resumed in the land—we plough, and sow, and till, and thou blesses the work of our hands with a plentiful return; but this increase is not for ourselves, as once it was, but for our foreign masters, to whom we have to pay large and oppressive tribute. they have dominion over our bodies. Their persons were liable to be pressed, at the mandate of their Assyrian conqueror, into

the service of his empire, either in war or in public works (whence we may see how groundless the boast of their descendants, John viii. 33); and 'our beasts are taken to do their pleasure.'

³⁸ we make a sure covenant, and write—i. e., subscribe or sign it. This written document would exercise a wholesome influence in restraining their backslidings or in animating them to duty, by being a witness against them if in future they were unfaithful to their engagements. Every deed in Israel was so arranged as to be voluntary, and so was their entering into a national covenant, by which they bound themselves to be faithful to the service of Jehovah. The people did it by their representatives (cf. Exod. xxiv. 3-8; Deut. xxvii. 17, 18; Josh. xxiv. 1-25; cf. viii. 30-35), as on this occasion under Nehemiah.

CHAP. X. 1-27.—THE NAMES OF THOSE WHO SEALED THE COVENANT.

1. Nehemiah, the Tirshatha. His name was first placed in the roll on account of his high official rank, as deputy of the Persian monarch. All classes were included in the subscription list; but the people were represented by their elders (v. 14), as it would have been impossible for every one in the country to have been admitted to the sealing.

6, Daniel, Ginnethon, Baruch, Meshullam, Abijah, Mijamin, Maaziah, Bilgai, 8 Shemaiah: these *were* the priests.
 9 And ^cthe Levites: both Jeshua the son of Azaniah, Binnui of the 10 sons of Henadad, Kadmiel; and their brethren, Shebaniah, Hodijah, 11 Kelita, Pelaiah, Hanan, Micha, Rehob, Hashabiah, Zaccur, Sherebiah, 12 Shebaniah, Hodijah, Bani, Beninu.
 13 The chief of the people; Parosh, Pahath-moab, Elam, Zattu, Bani, 14 Bunni, Azgad, Bebai, Adonijah, Bigvai, Adin, Ater, Hizkijah, Azzur, 15 Hodijah, Hashum, Bezai, Hariph, Anathoth, Nebai, Magpiash, 16 Meshullam, Hezir, Meshezabeel, Zadok, Jaddua, Pelatiah, Hanan, 17 Anaiah, Hoshea, Hananiah, Hashub, Hallohesh, Pileha, Shobek, Rehum, 18 Hashabnah, Maaseiah, and Ahijah, Hanan, Anan, Malluch, Harim, 19 Baanah.
 20 And ^dthe rest of the people, the priests, the Levites, the porters, the 21 singers, the Nethinims, ^eand all they that had separated themselves from the people of the lands unto the law of God, their wives, their sons, 22 and their daughters, every one having knowledge, and having under- 23 standing; they clave to their brethren, their nobles, ^fand entered into a 24 curse, and into an oath, ^gto walk in God's law, which was given ^hby 25 Moses the servant of God, and to observe and do all the commandments 26 of the LORD our Lord, and his judgments and his statutes; and that 27 we would not give ⁱour daughters unto the people of the land, nor take 28 their daughters for our sons: and ^jif the people of the land bring ware or any victuals on the sabbath day to sell, ^kthat we would not buy it of them on the sabbath, or on the holy day; and ^lthat we would leave the 29 seventh year, and the ^mexaction of ⁿevery debt.
 30 Also we made ^oordinances for us, to charge ourselves yearly with the 31 third part of a shekel for the service of the house of our God; for ^pthe 32 showbread, and for the continual meat offering, and for the continual 33 burnt offering, of the sabbaths, of the new moons, for the set feasts, and for the holy *things*, and for the sin offerings to make an atonement for Israel, and ^qfor all the work of the house of our God.
 34 And we cast the lots among the priests, the Levites, and the people, ^rfor the wood offering, to bring *it* into the house of our God, after the houses of our 35 fathers, at times appointed year by year, to burn upon the altar of the 36 LORD our God, as ^sit is written in the law; and ^tto bring the first-fruits of our ground, and the first-fruits of all fruit of all trees, year by year, unto the house of the LORD: also the first-born of our sons, and of our cattle, as

B C. 445.
 c ch. 12. 8.
 d Ezra 2. 36.
 43.
 e Lev. 20. 24.
 Ezra 9. 1.
 Ezra 10. 11.
 12, 19.
 ch. 13. 3.
 2 Cor. 6. 14.
 17.
 f Deut. 27. 15.
 Deut. 19. 12.
 ch. 5. 1.
 Ps 119. 107.
 1. a. 14. 1.
 Rom. 12. 9.
 g 2 Ki. 23. 3.
 h by the hand of.
 i Gen. 6. 2.
 Ex. 31. 16.
 Deut. 7. 3.
 Ezra 9. 12.
 j Ex. 20. 10.
 Lev. 23. 3.
 Deut. 5. 12.
 ch. 13. 15.
 Jer. 17. 21.
 k Ex. 23. 10.
 Lev. 25. 4.
 l 2 Chr. 35. 21.
 m Deut. 15. 1.
 ch. 5. 12.
 n every band.
 o Gen. 28. 22.
 p 1 ro 3. 9.
 q Lev. 24. 5.
 r 2 Chr. 2. 4.
 s ch. 13. 51.
 t Isa. 40. 16.
 u Lev. 6. 12.
 v Ex. 23. 19.
 w Ex. 34. 26.
 x Lev. 19. 23.
 Num. 18. 12.
 y Deut. 26. 2.
 z 2 Chr. 31. 3-10.

28.—THE REST OF THE PEOPLE BOUND THEMSELVES TO OBSERVE IT.

Those who were not present at the sealing ratified the covenant by giving their assent, either in words or by lifting up their hands, and bound themselves by a solemn oath to walk in God's law, imprecating a curse upon themselves in the event of their violating it.

29-39.—POINTS OF THE COVENANT.

29. to observe and do all the commandments, &c. This national covenant, besides containing a solemn pledge of obedience to the divine law generally, specified their engagement to some particular duties, which the character and exigency of the times stamped with great urgency and importance, and which may be summed up under the following heads:—That they abstain from contracting matrimonial alliances with the heathen; that they would rigidly observe the Sabbath; that they would let the land enjoy rest and remit debts every seventh year; that they would contribute to the maintenance of the temple service, the necessary expenses of which had formerly been defrayed out of the treasury of the temple (1 Chr.

xxvi. 20), and when it was drained, given out from the king's privy purse (2 Chr. xxxi. 3); and that they would make an orderly payment of the priests' dues. A minute and particular enumeration of the first-fruits was made, that all might be made fully aware of their obligations, and that none might excuse themselves on pretext of ignorance from withholding taxes which the poverty of many, and the irreligion of others, had made them exceedingly prone to evade.

32. the third part of a shekel for the service of the house of our God. The law required every individual above twenty years of age to pay half a shekel to the sanctuary. But in consequence of the general poverty of the people, occasioned by war and captivity, this tribute was reduced to a third part of a shekel.

34. we cast the lots . . . for the wood offering. The carrying of the wood had formerly been the work of the Nethinims. But few of them having returned, the duty was assigned as stated in the text. The practice afterwards rose into great importance; and *Josephus* speaks ('Wars,' ii. 17, sec. 6) of Xylophoria, or certain stated and solemn

- it is written ² in the law, and the firstlings of our herds and of our flocks, to bring to the house of our God, unto the priests that minister in the house of our God: and ⁷ that we should bring the first-fruits of our dough, and our offerings, and the fruit of all manner of trees, of wine, and of oil, unto the priests, to the chambers of the house of our God; and ⁸ the tithes of our ground unto the Levites, that the same Levites might have the tithes in all the cities of our tillage. And the priest the son of Aaron shall be with the Levites, ⁴ when the Levites take tithes: and the Levites shall bring up the tithe of the tithes unto the house of our God, to ² the chambers, into the treasure house. For the children of Israel and the children of Levi ² shall bring the offering of the corn, of the new wine, and the oil, unto the chambers, where *are* the vessels of the sanctuary, and the priests that minister, and the porters, and the singers: ² and we will not forsake the house of our God.
- 11 AND the rulers of the people dwelt at Jerusalem: the rest of the people also cast lots, to bring one of ten to dwell in Jerusalem ² the holy city, 2 and nine parts to dwell in other cities. And the people blessed all the men that willingly ⁶ offered themselves to dwell at Jerusalem.
- 3 Now ² these *are* the chief of the province that dwelt in Jerusalem: but in the cities of Judah dwelt every one in his possession in their cities, to wit, Israel, the priests, and the Levites, and ² the Nethinims, and ² the

B. C. 445.

² Ex. 13. 2,
12, 13.
Lev. 27. 26,
Num. 18. 15.
⁷ Lev. 23. 17.
Num. 15. 19.
Num. 15. 12.
Deut. 18. 4.
Deut. 26. 2.
⁴ Lev. 27. 30,
32
Num. 18. 21.
² Num. 1. 20.
² 1 Chr. 9. 26.
2 Chr. 31. 11.
² Num. 18. 7.
Deut. 12. 6.
2 Chr. 31. 12.
ch. 13. 12.
² ch. 13. 10.

CHAP. 11.

² Isa. 43. 2.⁶ Judg. 5. 9.² 1 Chr. 9. 2.² Ezra 2. 43.² Ezra 2. 55.

times at which the people brought up wood to the temple. 38. the priest the son of Aaron shall be with the Levites, when the Levites take tithes. This was a prudential arrangement. The presence of a dignified priest would ensure the peaceful delivery of the tithes—at least his superintendence and influence would tend to prevent the commission of any wrong in the transaction, by the people deceiving the Levites, or the Levites defrauding the priests. the tithe of the tithes—*i. e.*, the Levites having received a tenth of all land produce, were required to give a tenth of this to the priests. The Levites were charged with the additional obligation to carry the tithes when received, and deposit them in the temple stores, for the use of the priests. 39. we will not forsake the house of our God. This solemn pledge was repeated at the close of the covenant as an expression of the intense zeal by which the people at this time were animated for the glory and the worship of God. Under the pungent feelings of sorrow and repentance for their national sins, of which apostasy from the service of the true God was the chief, and under the yet fresh and painful remembrance of their protracted captivity, they vowed, and, feeling the impulse of ardent devotion, as well as of gratitude for their restoration, flattered themselves, they would never forget their vow to be the Lord's.

CHAP. XI. 1, 2.—THE RULERS, VOLUNTARY MEN, AND EVERY TENTH MAN, CHOSEN BY LOT, DWELL AT JERUSALEM.

1. the rulers . . . dwelt at Jerusalem. That city being the metropolis of the country, it was right and proper that the seat of government should be there. But the exigency of the times required that special measures should be taken to ensure the residence of an adequate population, for the custody of the buildings and the defence of the city. From the annoyances of restless and malignant enemies, who tried every means to demolish the rising fortifications, there was some danger attending a settlement in Jerusalem; and hence the greater part of the returned exiles, in order to earn as well as secure the rewards of their duty, preferred to remain in the country or the provincial towns. (As to Nethinims and the chil-

dren of Solomon's servants; see on 1 Chr. ix. 2; Ezra ii. 43, 58; vii. 7; also vii. 60.) To remedy this state of things, it was resolved to select every tenth man of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin by lot, to become a permanent inhabitant of the capital. The necessity of such an expedient commended it to the general approval. It was the more readily submitted to, that the lot was resorted to on all the most critical conjunctures of the Jewish history, and regarded by the people as a Divine decision (Prov. xviii. 18). This awakened strongly the national spirit; and patriotic volunteers came readily forward to meet the wishes of the authorities,—a service which, implying great self-denial as well as courage, was reckoned in the circumstances of so much importance as entitled them to the public gratitude. No wonder that the conduct of these volunteers drew forth the tribute of public admiration; for they sacrificed their personal safety and comfort for the interests of the community, Jerusalem being at that time a place against which the enemies of the Jews were directing a thousand plots, and, therefore, residence in it at such a juncture was attended with expense and various annoyances from which a country life was entirely free.

3-36. THEIR NAMES.

3. the chief of the province—*i. e.*, Judea. Nehemiah speaks of it as it then was, a small appendix of the Persian empire. in the cities of Judah dwelt every one in his possession in their cities. The returned exiles, who had come from Babylon, repaired generally, and by a natural impulse, to the lands and cities throughout the country which had been anciently assigned them. Israel. This general name, which designated the descendants of Jacob before the unhappy division of the two kingdoms under Rehoboam, was restored after the captivity, the Israelites being then united with the Jews, and all traces of their former separation being obliterated. Although the majority of the returned exiles belonged to the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, they are here called Israel; because a large number out of all the tribes were now intermingled, and these were principally the occupiers of the rural villages, while none but those of Judah and Benjamin

4 children of Solomon's servants. And ¹at Jerusalem dwelt *certain* of the children of Judah, and of the children of Benjamin.

Of the children of Judah; Athaiah the son of Uzziyah, the son of Zechariah, the son of Amariah, the son of Shephatiah, the son of Mahalaleel, of the children of ⁹Perez; and Maaseiah the son of Baruch, the son of Col-hozeh, the son of Hazaiah, the son of Adaiah, the son of Joarib, the son of Zechariah, the son of Shiloni. All the sons of Perez that dwelt at Jerusalem *were* four hundred threescore and eight ¹valiant men.

7 And these *are* the sons of Benjamin; Sallu the son of Meshullam, the son of Joed, the son of Pedaiah, the son of Kolaiah, the son of Maaseiah, the son of Ithiel, the son of Jesaiah. And after him Gabbai, Sallai, nine hundred twenty and eight. And Joel the son of Zichri *was* their overseer: and Judah the son of Senuah *was* second over the city.

10, 11 Of ^hthe priests: Jedaiah the son of Joarib, Jachin. Seraiah the son of Hilkiyah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Zadok, the son of Meraioth, the son of Ahitub, *was* the ruler of the house of God. And their brethren that did the work of the house *were* eight hundred twenty and two: and Adaiah the son of Jeroham, the son of Pelaliah, the son of Amzi, the son of Zechariah, the son of Pashur, the son of Malchiah, and his brethren, chief of the fathers, two hundred forty and two: and Amashai the son of Azareel, the son of Ahasai, the son of Meshillemoth, the son of Immer, and their brethren, mighty men of valour, an hundred twenty and eight: and their overseer *was* Zabdiel, ²the son of *one* of the great men.

15 Also of the Levites: Shemaiah the son of Hashub, the son of Azrikam, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Bunni; and Shabbethai and Jozabad, of the chief of the Levites, ³*had* the oversight of the ⁴outward business of the house of God. And Mattaniah the son of Micha, the son of ⁵Zabdi, the son of Asaph, *was* the principal to begin the thanksgiving in prayer: and Bakbukiah the second among his brethren, and Abda the son of Shammua, the son of Galal, the son of Jeduthun. All the Levites in the ⁴holy city *were* two hundred fourscore and four.

17 Moreover ⁴the porters: Akkub, Talmon, and their brethren that kept ⁴the gates, *were* an hundred seventy and two.

20 And the residue of Israel, of the priests *and* the Levites, *were* in all the cities of Judah, every one in his inheritance.

21 But ^mthe Nethinims dwelt in ⁵Ophel: and Ziha and Gispah *were* over the Nethinims.

22 The overseer also of the Levites at Jerusalem *was* Uzzi the son of ⁿBani, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Micha. Of the sons of Asaph, the singers *were* over the business of the house of God.

B. C. 445.

¹ 1 Chr. 9. 3.
⁹ Gen. 38. 29.
 Pharez.
 Ruth 4. 18.
 Matt. 1. 3.
 Luke 3. 33.
¹ Or, men of activity.
^h 1 Chr. 9. 10.
 Ezra 2. 56.
 Ezra 8. 16.
 ch. 10. 12.
 ch. 7. 39.
 ch. 12. 19.
² Or, the son of Haggedolim.
³ were over.
⁴ 2 Ki. 12. 15.
² Ki. 22. 7.
 1 Chr. 26. 28.
 2 Chr. 34. 13.
 ch. 2. 2.
 Fro. 23. 20.
 1 Cor. 4. 2.
⁵ 1 Chr. 9. 15.
 Zichri.
 ch. 7. 44.
 ch. 10. 12.
^k 1 Ki. 11. 13.
 Ezra 9. 8.
 Dan. 9. 24.
 Matt. 24. 15.
 Matt. 27. 53.
 Rev. 11. 2.
 Rev. 21. 2.
^l 1 Chr. 9. 17-22.
 ch. 7. 45.
 ch. 12. 25.
⁴ at the gates.
^m 2 Chr. 27. 3.
 Ezra 2. 43-53.
 ch. 3. 26.
 ch. 7. 46-56.
 ch. 10. 23.
⁵ Or, the tower.
ⁿ ch. 3. 17.
 ch. 8. 7.
 ch. 9. 4, 5.
 ch. 10. 13.

resided in Jerusalem. the Levites—these took possession of the cities allotted to them, according as they had opportunity. the Nethinims—a certain order of men, either Gibeonites or persons joined with them, who were devoted to the service of God. 4. at Jerusalem dwelt certain of the children of Judah. The discrepancy that is apparent between this and the list formerly given in 1 Chr. ix. 1-9, arose not only from the Jewish and Oriental practice of changing or modifying the names of persons from a change of circumstances, but from the alterations that must have been produced in the course of time. The catalogue in Chronicles contained those who came with the first detachment of returned exiles, while the list in this passage probably included also those who returned with Ezra and Nehemiah; or it was most probably made out afterwards, when several had died, or some, who had been

inserted as going on the journey, remained, and others came in their stead.

9. overseer—i. e., captain or chief.

11. the ruler of the house of God—assistant of the high priest (Num. iii. 32; 1 Chr. ix. 11; 2 Chr. xix. 11).

16. the oversight of the outward business of the house of God—i. e., those things which were done outside, or in the country, such as the collecting of the provisions (1 Chr. xxvi. 29). 17. the principal to begin the thanksgiving in prayer—i. e., the leader of the choir which chanted the public praise at the time of the morning and evening sacrifice. That service was always accompanied by some appropriate psalm, the sacred music being selected and guided by the person named.

22. Of the sons of Asaph, the singers were over the business of the house of God. They were selected to take charge of providing those things which

- 23 For ^oit was the king's commandment concerning them, that ⁶a certain portion should be for the singers, due for every day.
- 24 And Pethabiah the son of Meshezabeel, of the children of ^pZerah the son of Judah, was ²at the king's hand in all matters concerning the people.
- 25 And for the villages, with their fields, *some* of the children of Judah dwelt ⁷at Kirjath-arba, and *in* the villages thereof, and at Dibon, and *in* the villages thereof, and at ⁸Jekabzeel, and *in* the villages thereof, and at 27 Jeshua, and at Moladah, and at Beth-pheret, and at Hazar-shual, and at 28 Beer-sheba, and *in* the villages thereof, and at Ziklag, and at Mekonah, 29 and *in* the villages thereof, and at En-rimmon, and at Zareah, and at 30 Jarmuth, Zanoah, Adullam, and *in* their villages, at Lachish, and the fields thereof, at Azekah, and *in* the villages thereof. And they dwelt from Beer-sheba unto the valley of Hinnom.
- 31 The children also of Benjamin ⁷from Geba dwelt ⁸at Michmash, and 32 Aija, and Beth-el, and *in* their villages, and at Anathoth, Nob, Ananiah, 33 Hazor, Ramah, Gittaim, Hadid, Zeboim, Neballat, Lod, and Ono, the valley of craftsmen.
- 36 And of the Levites were divisions *in* Judah, and *in* Benjamin.
- 12 NOW these are the priests and the Levites that went up with Zerub-
2 babel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua: Seraiah, Jeremiah, Ezra, Amariah,
3 ¹Malluch, Hattush, ²Shechaniah, ³Rehum, ⁴Meremoth, Iddo, ⁵Ginnetho,
5 Abijah, ⁶Miamin, ⁷Maadiah, Bilgah, Shemaiah, and Joiarib, Jedaiah,
7 ⁸Sallu, Amok, Hilkiah, Jedaiah. These were the chief of the priests and
of their brethren in the days of Jeshua.
- 8 Moreover the Levites: Jeshua, Biunui, Kadmiel, Sherebiah, Judah, and Mattaniah, which was over ⁹the thanksgiving, he and his brethren.

B. C. 445.
^o Ezra 6 8, 9.
^p Or, a sure ordinance.
^p Gen. 38, 30, Zarah.
^q 1 Chr. 18, 17.
^r Gen. 23, 2.
^s Josh. 1 21, Kabzeel.
⁷ Or, of Geba.
⁸ Or, to Michmash.
 CHAP. 12.
¹ Or, Melicu, ver. 14.
² Or, Shebaniah.
³ Or, Harim.
⁴ Or, Meraioth.
⁵ Or, Ginnethon.
⁶ Or, Miniamin.
⁷ Or, Moadiah.
⁸ Or, Sallai.
⁹ That is, the psalms of thanksgiving.

were required for the interior of the temple and its service, whilst to others was committed the care of the "outward business of the house of God" (v. 16). This duty was very properly assigned to the sons of Asaph; for, though they were Levites, they did not repair in rotation to Jerusalem, as the other ministers of religion. Being permanent residents, and employed in duties which were comparatively light and easy, they were very competent to undertake this charge. 23, it was the king's commandment. It was the will of the Persian monarch in issuing his edict, that the temple service should be revived in all its religious fullness and solemnity; and as this special provision for the singers is said to have been by the king's commandment, the order was probably given at the request or suggestion of Ezra or Nehemiah.

24. Pethahiah . . . was at the king's hand in all matters concerning the people. This person was entrusted with judicial power either for the interest, or by the appointment, of the Persian monarch; and his duty consisted either in adjusting cases of civil dispute, or in regulating fiscal concerns.

25. some of the children of Judah dwelt at Kirjath-arba. Kirjath-arba is here mentioned without other variations of the name, which are given in the earlier historical books (Gen. xxv. 27; Josh. xiv. 15; xv. 13; Judg. i. 10). In a later age Hebron is the name by which the place was known; but in the latest times Kirjath-arba again becomes the popular designation. 26. Moladah (see on Josh. xv. 26)—in the south of Judah. The name is supposed to have been derived from Mylitta, a Phœnician and Babylonian goddess (see Fürst's 'Handbook,' *sub voce*; also Rawlinson's 'Herodotus,' i. 199). The whole region in which the villages here mentioned were situated had

been completely devastated by the Chaldean invasion; and, therefore, it must be assumed that these villages had been rebuilt, before "the children of Judah dwelt in them."

36. And of the Levites were divisions in Judah, and in Benjamin—rather, for the Levites; i. e., those who were not resident in Jerusalem were distributed in settlements throughout the provinces of Judah and Benjamin.

CHAP. XII. 1-9.—PRIESTS AND LEVITES WHO CAME UP WITH ZERUBBABEL.

1. these are the priests—according to v. 7, "the chief of the priests," the heads of the twenty-four courses into which the priesthood were divided (1 Chr. xxiv. 1-20). Only four of the courses returned from the captivity (ch. vii. 39-42; Ezra ii. 36-39). But these were divided by Zerubbabel, or Jeshua, into the original number of twenty-four. Twenty-two only are enumerated here, and no more than twenty in vv. 12-21. The discrepancy is owing to the extremely probable circumstance that two of the twenty-four courses had become extinct in Babylon; for none belonging to them are reported as having returned (vv. 2-5). Hattush and Maadiah may be omitted in the account of those persons' families (v. 12), for these had no sons. Shealtiel—or Salathiel, Ezra. This was a different person from the pious and patriotic leader. If he were the same person, he must now have reached a very patriarchal age; and this longevity was doubtless owing to his eminent piety and temperance, which are greatly conducive to the prolongation of life, but, above all, to the special blessing of God, who had preserved and strengthened him for the accomplishment of the important work he was called to undertake in that critical period of the Church's history. 4. Abijah—one of the ancestors of John the Baptist (Luke i. 5).

- 9 Also Bakkukiah and Uuni, their brethren, *were* over against them in the watches.
- 10 And Jeshua begat Joiakim, Joiakim also begat Eliashib, and Eliashib begat Joiada, and Joiada begat Jonathan, and Jonathan begat Jaddua.
- 11 And in the days of Joiakim were priests, the chief of the fathers: of 12 Seraiah, Meraiah; of Jeremiah, Hananiah; of Ezra, Meshullam; of 13 Amariah, Jehohanan; of Melicu, Jonathan; of Shebaniah, Joseph; of 14 Harim, Adnah; of Meraioth, Helkai; of Iddo, Zechariah; of Ginnethon, 15 Meshullam; of Abijah, Zichri; of Miniamin, of Moadiah, Piltai; of 16 Bilgah, Shammua; of Shemaiah, Jehonathan; and of Joiarib, Mattanai; 17 of Jedaiah, Uzzi; of Sallai, Kallai; of Amok, Eber; of Hilkiah, Hashabiah; of Jedaiah, Nethaneel.
- 22 The Levites, in the days of Eliashib, Joiada, and Johanan, and Jaddua, *were* recorded chief of the fathers: also the priests, to the reign of Darius the Persian. The sons of Levi, the chief of the fathers, *were* written in the book of ^athe Chronicles, even until the days of Johanan the son of 23 Eliashib. And the chief of the Levites: Hashabiah, Sherebiah, and Jeshua the son of Kadmiel, with their brethren over against them, to praise *and* to give ^bthanks, ^caccording to the commandment of David the man of God, ^award over against ward. Mattaniah, and Bakkukiah, 24 Obadiah, Meshullam, Talmon, Akkub, *were* porters, keeping the ward at 25 the ¹⁰thresholds of the gates. These *were* in the days of Joiakim the son of Jeshua, the son of Jozadak, and in the days of Nehemiah ^ethe governor, and of Ezra the priest, ^fthe scribe.
- 27 And at the ^gdedication of the wall of Jerusalem they sought the Levites out of all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem, to keep the dedication with gladness, ^hboth with thanksgivings, and with singing. 28 *with* cymbals, psalteries, and with harps. And the sons of the singers gathered themselves together, both out of the plain country round about 29 Jerusalem, and from the villages of Netophathi; also from the house of Gilgal, and out of the fields of Geba and Azmaveth: for the singers had 30 builded their villages round about Jerusalem. And the priests and the Levites ⁱpurified themselves, and purified the people, and the gates, and the wall.

B. C. 536.

^a 1 Chr. 9. 14.

^b ch. 8. 17.

Deut. 16. 11.

2 Sam. 6. 1. 2.

2 Chr. 29. 30.

Ezra 6. 16.

Ps. 98. 4, 6.

Ps. 100. 1, 2.

Phil. 4. 4.

^c 1 Chr. 23. 1.

1 Chr. 25. 1.

1 Chr. 26. 1.

^d Ezra 3. 10.

¹⁰ Or.

treasuries.

or assemblies.

^e ch. 8. 9.

^f Ezra 7. 6.

11.

^g Deut. 20. 5.

1's 30.

title

^h 1 Chr. 13. 3.

1 Chr. 27. 6.

2 Chr. 5. 13.

2 Chr. 7. 6.

Ezra 3. 10.

11.

ch. 15. 16.

28.

ch. 16. 5, 42.

ch. 25. 1, 6.

Ps. 81. 1-4.

Ps. 92. 1, 3.

Ps. 149. 3.

Ps. 150. 2, 5.

Rev. 5. 8.

ⁱ Gen. 25. 2.

Ex. 19. 10.

Num. 19. 2.

20.

2 Chr. 29. 5.

31.

9. their brethren, were over against them in the watches—*i. e.*, according to some, their stations—the places where they stood when officiating—“ward over against ward” (v. 24); or, according to others, in alternate watches, in course of rotation.

10-47.—SUCCESSION OF THE HIGH PRIESTS.

10. Jeshua begat Joiakim, &c. This enumeration was of great importance, not only as establishing their individual purity of descent, but because the chronology of the Jews was henceforth to be reckoned, not as formerly by the reigns of their kings, but by the successions of their high priests. 11. Jaddua. It is an opinion entertained by many commentators that this person was the high priest whose dignified appearance, solemn manner, and splendid costume, overawed and interested so strongly the proud mind of Alexander the Great; and if he were not this person, as some object that this Jaddua was not in office till a considerable period after the death of Nehemiah, it might probably be his father, called by the same name.

12. in the days of Joiakim were priests, the chief of the fathers—*i. e.*, as there had been priests in the days of Jeshua, so in the time of Joiakim, the son and successor of Jeshua, the sons of those persons filled the priestly office in room of their fathers, some of whom were still alive, though many were dead.

23. The sons of Levi . . . were written in the

book of the Chronicles—*i. e.*, the public registers in which the genealogies were kept with great regularity and exactness. 24. with their brethren over against them—*i. e.*, in separate choirs, to sing in alternate responses (see on Exod. xv. 20). ward over against ward—(see on 1 Chr. xxvi. 16).

27. at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem. This ceremony of consecrating the wall and gates of the city was an act of piety on the part of Nehemiah, not merely to thank God in a general way for having been enabled to bring the building to a happy completion, but on the special ground of that city being the place which He had chosen, and its containing the temple, which was hallowed by the manifestation of His presence, and anew set apart for His service. It was on these accounts that Jerusalem was called “the holy city;” and by this public and solemn act of religious observance, after a long period of neglect and desecration, it was, as it were, restored to its rightful proprietor. The dedication consisted in a solemn ceremonial, in which the leading authorities, accompanied by the Levitical singers, summoned from all parts of the country, and by a vast concourse of people, marched in imposing procession round the city walls, and, pausing at intervals to engage in united praises, prayer, and sacrifices, supplicated the continued presence, favour, and blessing on the “holy city.” *The assembly convened near the Jaffa Gate, where the procession com-*

- 31 Then I brought up the princes of Judah upon the wall, and appointed two great *companies of them that gave thanks, whereof one* went on the right hand upon the wall toward the dung gate: and after them went Hoshaiah, and half of the princes of Judah, and Azariah, Ezra, and Mesbullam, Judah, and Benjamin, and Shemaiah, and Jeremiah, and 35 *certain of the priests' sons with trumpets; namely, Zechariah the son of Jonathan, the son of Shemaiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Michaiah, the son of Zaccur, the son of Asaph; and his brethren, Shemaiah, and Azarael, Milalai, Gilalai, Maai, Nethaneel, and Judah, Hanani, with the musical instruments of David the man of God, and* 37 Ezra the scribe before them. And at the fountain gate, which was over against them, they went up by the stairs of the city of David, at the going up of the wall, above the house of David, even unto the water gate eastward.
- 38 And the other *company of them that gave thanks* went over against them, and I after them, and the half of the people upon the wall, from beyond the tower of the furnaces even unto the broad wall; and from above the gate of Ephraim, and above the old gate, and above the fish gate, and the tower of Hananeel, and the tower of Meah, even unto the sheep gate: and they stood still in the prison gate.
- 40 So stood the two *companies of them that gave thanks* in the house of God, and I, and the half of the rulers with me: and the priests; Eliakim, Maaseiah, Miniamin, Michaiah, Elioenai, Zechariah, and Hananiah, with trumpets; and Maaseiah, and Shemaiah, and Eleazar, and Uzzi, and Jehohanan, and Malchijah, and Elam, and Ezer. And the singers sang loud, with Jezrahiah their overseer. Also that day they offered great sacrifices, and rejoiced: for God had made them rejoice with great joy: the wives also and the children rejoiced: so that the joy of Jerusalem was heard even afar off.
- 44 And at that time were some appointed over the chambers for the treasures, for the offerings, for the first-fruits, and for the tithes, to gather into them, out of the fields of the cities, the portions of the law for the priests and Levites: for Judah rejoiced for the priests and for the Levites that waited. And both the singers and the porters kept the ward of their God, and the ward of the purification, according to the commandment of David, and of Solomon his son. For in the days of David and Asaph of old there were chief of the singers, and songs of

B. C. 445.
 j ch 2. 13.
 oh. 3. 13.
 k Num. 10. 2.
 Josh. 6. 4.
 2 Chr. 5. 12.
 2 Chr. 13. 12.
 l 1 Chr. 21. 5.
 2 Chr. 8. 14.
 Amos 6. 5.
 m ch. 2. 14.
 n 2 Sam. 5. 7-9.
 ch. 3. 15.
 o ch. 3. 20.
 ch. 8. 1, 3, 16.
 p ch. 3. 11.
 q ch. 3. 7.
 r 2 Ki. 11. 13.
 ch. 8. 16.
 s ch. 3. 6.
 t Jer. 32. 2.
 v Ps. 42. 4.
 u made their voice to be heard.
 1 Chr. 16. 8, 23.
 2 Chr. 23. 50.
 Ps. 30. 4.
 Ps. 81. 7.
 Eph. 5. 19.
 Col. 3. 16.
 v Ps. 9. 2.
 Ps. 92. 4.
 Ps. 126. 1.
 w 2 Chr. 13. 11.
 12.
 ch. 13. 5.
 x That is, appointed by the law.
 y for the joy of Judah.
 z that stood.
 a 1 Chr. 25. 1.

mences. Then (v. 31) I brought up the princes of Judah upon the wall (near the valley gate), and appointed two great companies of them that gave thanks, whereof one went on the right hand upon the wall toward the dung gate (through Beth-zo). And after them went Hoshaiah, and half of the princes of Judah. And (v. 37) at the fountain gate, which was over against them, they (descending by the tower of Siloam on the interior, and then re-ascending) went up by the stairs of the city of David, at the going up of the wall, above the house of David, even unto the water gate eastward (by the staircase of the rampart, having descended to dedicate the fountain structures). And the other company of them that gave thanks went over against them (both parties having started from the junction of the first and second walls), and I after them, and the half of the people upon the wall, from beyond the tower of the furnaces even unto the broad wall (beyond the corner gate). And from above the gate of Ephraim, and above the old gate (and the gate of Benjamin), and above the fish gate, and the tower of Hananeel, and the tower of Meah, even unto the sheep gate; and they stood still in the prison gate (or high gate at the east end of the bridge).

So stood the two companies of them that gave thanks in the house of God, and I, and half of the rulers with me (having thus performed the circuit of the investing walls), arrived in the courts of the temple (Barclay's 'City of the Great King').

43. the joy of Jerusalem was heard even afar off. The events of the day, viewed in connection with the now repaired and beautified state of the city, raised the popular feeling to the highest pitch of enthusiasm, and the fame of their rejoicings was spread far and near.

44. portions of the law—i. e., prescribed by the law. for Judah rejoiced for the priests and . . . Levites that waited. The cause of this general satisfaction was either the full restoration of the temple service and the re-organized provision for the permanent support of the ministry, or it was the pious character and eminent gifts of the guardians of religion. 45. the singers and the porters kept . . . the ward of the purification—i. e., took care that no unclean person was allowed to enter within the precincts of the sacred building. This was the official duty of the porters (2 Chr. xxiii. 19), with whom, owing to the pressure of circumstances, it was deemed expedient that

- 47 praise and thanksgiving unto God. And all Israel in the days of Zerubbabel, and in the days of Nehemiah, gave the portions of the singers and the porters, every day his portion: and they ¹⁵sanctified *holy things* unto the Levites; and the Levites sanctified *them* unto the children of Aaron.
- 13 ON that day ¹they read in the book of Moses in the ²audience of the people; and therein was found written, ^athat the Ammonite and the Moabite should not come into the congregation of God for ever; because they met not the children of Israel with bread and with water, but hired ^bBalaam against them, that he should curse them: ^chowbeit our God turned the curse into a blessing. Now it came to pass, when they had heard the law, ^dthat they separated from Israel all the mixed multitude.
- 4 And before this, Eliashib the priest, ³having the oversight of the chamber of the house of our God, *was* allied unto Tobiah: and he had prepared for him a great chamber, where aforetime they laid the meat offerings, the frankincense, and the vessels, and the tithes of the corn, the new wine, and the oil, ⁴(which was commanded to be given to the Levites, and the singers, and the porters,) and the offerings of the priests.
- 6 But in all this *time* was not I at Jerusalem: ^efor in the two and thirtieth year of Artaxerxes king of Babylon came I unto the king, and

B. C. 445.

¹⁵ That is, set apart.

CHAP. 13.

¹ there was read² ears.^a Deut. 23. 3.

Isa. 15. 10.

Jer. 43.

Amos 2. 1.

^b Num. 22. 5.

Josh. 24. 9.

^c Deut. 23. 5.

Mic. 6. 5.

^d ch. 9. 2

ch. 10. 28.

Jas. I. 27.

³ being set over.

ch. 12. 41.

⁴ the commandment of the Levites.

Num. 18. 21.

^e ch. 5. 14.

the singers should be associated as assistants. 47. all Israel . . . sanctified holy things unto the Levites, &c. The people, selecting the tithes and first-fruits, devoted them to the use of the Levites, to whom they belonged by appointment of the law. The Levites acted in the same way with the tithes due from them to the priests. Thus all classes of the people displayed a conscientious fidelity in paying the dues to the temple, and the servants of God who were appointed to minister in it.

CHAP. XIII. 1-9.—UPON THE READING OF THE LAW SEPARATION IS MADE FROM THE MIXED MULTITUDE.

1. On that day. This was not immediately consequent on the dedication of the city wall and gates, but after Nehemiah's return from the Persian court to Jerusalem, his absence having extended over a considerable period. The transaction here described probably took place on one of the periodical occasions for the public reading of the law, when the people's attention was particularly directed to some violations of it which called for immediate correction. There is another instance afforded, in addition to those which have already fallen under our notice, of the great advantage resulting from the public and periodical reading of the Divine law. It was an established provision for the religious instruction of the people, for diffusing a knowledge and a reverence for the sacred volume, as well as for removing those errors and corruptions which might, in the course of time, have crept in. the Ammonite and the Moabite should not come into the congregation of God for ever. This by no means implied the exclusion of proselytes from either of these nations from the privileges of worshipping the true God in Israel, but only that they could not be incorporated into the Israelitish kingdom, nor united in marriage relations with that people (Deut. xxiii. 3, 4). This appeal to the authority of the Divine law led to a dissolution of all heathen alliances (ch. ix. 2; Ezra x. 3). 3. separated from Israel all the mixed multitude [מִצְרַיִם]—the motley mass of foreigners with whom the Jews had contracted alliances. The word occurs

first in reference to the Egyptians who accompanied them at the departure from Egypt (Exod. xii. 38, and Lev. xxii. 10, 11).

4. before this. The practice of these mixed marriages, in open neglect or violation of the law, had become so common, that even the pontifical house, which ought to have set a better example, was polluted by such an impure mixture. Eliashib the priest, having the oversight of the chamber of . . . our God—the particular chamber or cell at the gates, where all things pertaining to the temple service were kept, was allied unto Tobiah. This person was the high priest (v. 28; also ch. iii. 1), who, by virtue of his dignified office, had the superintendence and control of the apartments attached to the temple. The laxity of his principles, as well as of his practice, is sufficiently apparent from his contracting a family connection with so notorious an enemy of Israel as Tobiah. But his obsequious attentions had carried him much farther; for, to accommodate so important a person as Tobiah on his occasional visits to Jerusalem, Eliashib had provided him a splendid apartment in the temple. The introduction of so gross an impropriety can be accounted for in no other way than by supposing that, in the absence of the priests and the cessation of the services, the temple was regarded as a common public building, which might, in the circumstances, be appropriated as a palatial residence. 6. But in all this time was not I at Jerusalem. Eliashib—concluding that, as Nehemiah had departed from Jerusalem, and, on the expiry of his allotted term of absence, had resigned his government, he had gone not to return—began to use great liberties, and, there being none left whose authority or frown he dreaded, allowed himself to do things most unworthy of his sacred office, and which, though in unison with his own irreligious character, he would not have dared to attempt during the residence of the pious governor. Nehemiah resided twelve years as governor of Jerusalem, and, having succeeded in repairing and re-fortifying the city, he, at the end of that period, returned to his duties in Shushan. in the two and thirtieth year of Artaxerxes king of Babylon. (See on Ezra vi. 22.) How long he remained there is not expressly said,

7 ⁵after certain days ⁶obtained I leave of the king: and I came to Jerusalem, and understood of the evil that Eliashib did for Tobiah, in
 8 preparing him a chamber in the courts of the house of God. And it grieved me sore: therefore ⁷I cast forth all the household stuff of Tobiah
 9 out of the chamber. Then I commanded, and they ⁸cleansed the chambers; and thither brought I again the vessels of the house of God, with the meat offering and the frankincense.

10 And I perceived that the portions of the Levites had ⁹not been given *them*: for the Levites and the singers, that did the work, were fled every
 11 one to ¹⁰his field. Then ¹¹contended I with the rulers, and said, ¹²Why is the house of God forsaken? And I gathered them together, and set them
 12 in their ¹³place. Then ¹⁴brought all Judah the tithe of the corn, and the
 13 new wine, and the oil, unto the ¹⁵treasuries. And I made treasurers over the treasuries, Shelemiah the priest, and Zadok the scribe; and of the Levites, Pedaiah: and ¹⁶next to them *was* Hanan the son of Zaccur, the son of Mattaniah: for they were counted ¹⁷faithful; and ¹⁸their office *was* to distribute unto their brethren.

14 Remember ¹⁹me, O my God, concerning this, and wipe not out my
 11 good deeds that I have done for the house of my God, and for the
 12 offices thereof.

15 In those days saw I in Judah *some* treading wine-presses ²⁰on the sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and lading asses; as also wine, grapes, and figs, and all *manner of* burdens, ²¹which they brought into Jerusalem on the sabbath day: and I testified *against them* in the day wherein they
 16 sold victuals. There dwelt men of Tyre also therein, which brought fish, and all manner of ware, and sold on the sabbath unto the children of
 17 Judah, and in Jerusalem. Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said unto them, What evil thing *is* this that ye do, and profane the

B. C. 445.
⁵ at the end of days.
⁶ Or I earnestly required.
⁷ Is 69. 9.
 Mark 11. 15-17.
 John 2. 13.
⁸ 2 Chr. 29. 5.
⁹ ch. 10. 37.
¹⁰ Mal. 3. 8.
¹¹ 1 Tim. 5. 17.
 18.
¹² Num. 35. 2.
¹³ Pro 28. 4.
¹⁴ 1 Sam 2. 17.
 ch. 10. 39.
¹⁵ standing.
¹⁶ ch. 12. 44.
¹⁷ Or, store-houses.
¹⁸ at their hand
¹⁹ 1 Cor. 4. 2.
²⁰ it was upon them.
²¹ ch. 5. 19.
²² kindnesses.
²³ Or observations.
²⁴ Ex. 20. 10.
²⁵ ch. 10. 31.
 Jer. 17. 21.

but "after certain days," which is a Scripture phraseology for a year or a number of years, he obtained leave to resume the government of Jerusalem; and, to his deep mortification and regret, found matters in the neglected and disorderly state here described. Such gross irregularities as were practised—such extraordinary corruptions as had crept in—evidently imply the lapse of a considerable time. Besides, they exhibit the character of Eliashib, the high priest, in a most unfavourable light; for whilst he ought, in his office, to have preserved the inviolable sanctity of the temple and its furniture, his influence had been directly exercised for evil; especially, he had given permission and countenance to a most indecent outrage—the appropriation of the best apartments in the sacred building to a heathen governor, one of the worst and most determined enemies of the people and the worship of God. The very first reform Nehemiah, on his second visit, resolved upon, was the stopping of this gross profanation; and the chamber which had been polluted by the residence of the idolatrous Ammonite was, after undergoing the process of ritual purification (Num. xv. 9), restored to its proper use—a storehouse for the sacred vessels.

10-14.—NEHEMIAH REFORMS THE OFFICES IN THE HOUSE OF GOD.

10. And I perceived that the portions of the Levites had not been given them. The people, disgusted with the malversations of Eliashib or the lax and irregular performance of the sacred rites, withheld the tithes, so that the ministers of religion were compelled for their livelihood to withdraw to their patrimonial possessions in the country; the temple services had ceased; all religious duties fallen into neglect; and the money put into the sacred treasury squandered in the

entertainment of an Ammonite heathen, an open and contemptuous enemy of God and his people. The return of the governor put an end to these disgraceful and profane proceedings. He administered a sharp rebuke to those priests, to whom the management of the temple and its services was committed (Eliashib not being mentioned, it is probable that he had died), for the total neglect of their duties, and the violation of the solemn promises which they had made to him at his departure. He upbraided them with the serious charge of having not only withheld from men their dues, but of having robbed God, by neglecting the care of His house and service. And thus, having roused them to a sense of duty, and incited them to testify their godly sorrow for their criminal negligence by renewed devotedness to their sacred work, Nehemiah restored the temple services, by recalling the dispersed Levites to the regular discharge of their duties, while the people at large, perceiving that their contributions would be no longer perverted to improper uses, willingly brought in their tithes as formerly. Men of integrity and good report were appointed to act as trustees of the sacred treasures, and thus order, regularity, and active service re-established in the temple.

15-31.—THE VIOLATION OF THE SABBATH.

15. In those days saw I in Judah *some* treading wine-presses on the sabbath. The cessation of the temple services was necessarily followed by a public profanation of the Sabbath, and this had gone so far that labour was carried on in the fields, and fish brought to the markets, on the sacred day. Nehemiah took the decisive step of ordering the city gates to be shut, and not to be opened, till the Sabbath was past; and in order to ensure the faithful execution of this order, he

- 18 sabbath day? Did not your fathers thus, and did not our God bring all this evil upon us, and upon this city? yet ye ¹³bring more wrath upon Israel by profaning the sabbath.
- 19 And it came to pass, that when the gates of Jerusalem ²began to be dark before the sabbath, I commanded that the gates should be shut, and charged that they should not be opened till after the sabbath: ⁷and *some* of my servants set I at the gates, *that* there should no burden be brought in on the sabbath day. So the merchants, and sellers of all kind of ware, lodged without Jerusalem once or twice. Then I testified against them, and said unto them, Why lodge ye ¹⁴about the wall? if ye do *so* again, I will lay hands on you. From that time forth came they no *more* on the sabbath.
- 22 And I commanded the Levites that ⁶they should cleanse themselves, and *that* they should come *and* keep the gates, to sanctify the sabbath day. Remember me, O my God, *concerning* this also, and spare me according to the ¹⁵greatness of thy mercy.
- 23 In those days also saw I Jews *that* ¹⁶had married wives of Ashdod, of Ammon, *and* of Moab: and their children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and ¹⁷could not speak in the Jews' language, but according to the language ¹⁸of each people. And I ¹⁶contended with them, and ¹⁹cursed them, and ²⁰smote certain of them, and plucked off their hair, and made them swear ²¹by God, *saying*, Ye shall not give your daughters unto their sons, nor take their daughters unto your sons, or for yourselves. Did ²²not Solomon king of Israel sin by these things? yet ²³among many nations was there no king like him, who was beloved of his God, and God made him king over all Israel: nevertheless even him did outlandish women cause to sin. Shall we then hearken unto you to do all this great evil, to ²⁴transgress against our God in marrying strange wives?
- 28 And *one* of the sons of ²⁵Joiada, the son of Eliashib the high priest, was son-in-law to Sanballat the Horonite: therefore I chased him from me. Remember ²⁶them, O my God, ²⁷because they have defiled the priesthood, and the ²⁸covenant of the priesthood, and of the Levites.
- 30 Thus ²⁹cleansed I them from all strangers, and ³⁰appointed the wards of the priests and the Levites, every one in his business; and for the wood offering, at times appointed, and for the first-fruits. Remember me, O my God, for good.

B. C. 431.
¹³ add fierce wrath.
⁷ Lev. 23 32.
¹⁷ Ex 31. 14-17.
 ch. 7. 3.
 Jer. 17. 21.
¹⁴ before the wall?
⁹ ch. 12 10.
¹⁸ Or multitude.
¹⁶ had made to dwell with them.
 Ezra 9. 2.
¹⁷ they discerned not to speak
¹⁸ of people and people.
¹⁶ Pro 28. 4.
¹⁹ Or, reviled them.
¹⁶ Deut 25. 2.
 Ezra 7. 25.
 Isa 50. 6.
²¹ Ezra 10. 5.
 ch 10. 29, 30.
²⁰ 1 Ki 11. 1.
²² 2 Sam 12. 24, 25.
 1 Ki 3. 13.
² Chr. 1. 12.
³ Ezra 10. 2.
² ch. 12. 10.
⁶ ch. 6. 14.
 1's 59. 6-13.
²⁰ for the delirings.
⁶ Mal 2. 4.
^c ch 10 39.
^d ch. 12. 1.

stationed some of his own servants as guards, to prevent the introduction of any commodities on that day. On the merchants and various dealers finding admission refused them, they set up booths outside the walls, in hopes of still driving a traffic with the peasantry, but the governor threatened, if they continued, to adopt violent measures for their removal. For this purpose a body of Levites was stationed as sentinels at the gate, with discretionary powers to protect the sanctification of the Sabbath.

24. could not speak in the Jews' language, but according to the language of each people—a mongrel dialect, imbibed from their mothers, together with foreign principles and habits. 25. cursed [כַּלְבַּיִם]—reproached them bitterly. smote . . . and plucked off their hair. To cut off the

hair of offenders seems to be a punishment rather disgraceful than severe; yet it is supposed that pain was added to disgrace, and that they tore off the hair with violence, as if they were plucking a bird alive.

31. Remember me, O my God, for good. This prayer for the Divine blessing, which Nehemiah frequently ejaculated and wrote, was an expression of his ardent wish or his desire to have the apostate priests punished, and his own zealot services acknowledged and rewarded, according to the spirit of the old dispensation. How long Nehemiah lived and governed after these important reformations, the sacred history does not inform us; and *Josephus* ('Antiquities,' b. xi., ch. v., sec. 8) says no more than that he had attained an advanced age at his death.

THE
BOOK OF ESTHER.

1 NOW it came to pass, in the days ^a of Ahasuerus, (this *is* Ahasuerus
2 seven and twenty provinces,) *that* in those days, when the king Ahasu-
erus ^b sat on the throne of his kingdom, which *was* in ^c Shushan the palace,
3 in the third year of his reign, he ^d made a feast unto all his princes and
his servants; the power of Persia and Media, the nobles and princes of
4 the provinces, *being* before him: when he showed the riches of his glori-
ous kingdom, and the honour of his excellent majesty, many days, *even*
an hundred and fourscore days.

B. C. 621.
CHAP. 1.
^a Ezra 7. 1.
^b 1 Ki. 1. 46.
Dan 4. 4.
^c Neh. 1. 1.
ch. 2. 3.
ch. 3. 15.
Dan. 8. 2.
^d Gen. 40. 10.
Mark 6. 21.

CHAP. I. 1-22.—AHASUERUS MAKES ROYAL FEASTS.

1. Ahasuerus [שְׁשַׁנְדָּרֻס] (see *Gesenius*, sub voce); the Septuagint has Ἀρταξέρξης. But it is now generally agreed amongst learned men (*Justi*, *Eichhorn*, *Rosenmüller*, *Milman*, &c.; see 'Introduction' to this book) that the Ahasuerus mentioned in this episode is the Xerxes who figures in Grecian history. Xerxes is called, in the cuneiform inscriptions on the ruins of Persepolis, Khshêrshê, according to *Grotefend* (in 'Heeren Ideen,' i., pp. 588, 692); or Khêarsha, according to *Saint Martin*, ('Journal Asiatic,' February, 1823, p. 83). *Herodotus* says (b. vi., 98) that Xερξης is equivalent to Ἀπίος, a warrior. *Reland* ('Dissert. de Vet. Ling. Persia,' sec. 154) says that it is composed of two Persian words, *Shir-Shah*—i. e., lion-king (*Rosenmüller*, 'Biblical Geography,' i., pp. 258, 259). This conclusion rests both on certain chronological data (see 'Introduction' to this book) and on the character of that celebrated monarch,—despotic, capricious, fickle, reckless of human lives, and immersed in sensual pleasures. These were exactly the attributes of him who is represented in this book as bearing the dynastic title of Ahasuerus; and on the assumption that this identification is well founded, the deliverance of the Jews, which is the grand subject of interest in this record, took place a few years before Ezra's departure for Jerusalem. this is Ahasuerus which reigned . . . over an hundred and seven and twenty provinces [שְׁשַׁנְדָּרֻס]—a district, under the jurisdiction of a prefect or viceroy. Such a governor in Persia was called a satrap, the etymology of which, according to *Sir John Malcolm* ('History of Persia'), is Chattrapati, 'lord of the umbrella.' *Herodotus* (b. iii., 89-97) divides Persia proper into twenty satrapies. But taking the empire at large, there was, of course, vastly greater numbers. Darius (Hystaspes) appointed a hundred and twenty governors (Dan. vi. 1, 2), and here Xerxes is described as reigning over a hundred and twenty-seven provinces (cf. *Josephus*, 'Antiquities,' b. xi., ch. vi., sec. 1); but there is no discrepancy in these statements; for the division was not so much a geographical distribution of the land, as a classification of the different tribes who inhabited the conquered lands, according to the amount of tribute respectively exacted of them. 'Asia Minor alone contained ten satrapies or provinces' ('Heeren Ideen,' part i., division i., pp. 175-181). The Ethiopians are expressly mentioned by *Herodotus* (b. vii., chs. lxi., lxx.) in the list of nations who were compelled to furnish a contingent of troops to the expedition of

Xerxes against Greece. 2. when the king Ahasuerus sat on the throne of his kingdom—i. e., in the third year of his reign, in Shushan the palace [שְׁשַׁנְדָּרֻס], a lily: 'Morcea Sisyrynchium, Ker. Iris Sisyrynchium' (*Linn.*). By some persons, it is supposed that the extraordinary abundance of that flower in the neighbourhood gave the name of Shushan, the City, to this locality. *Loftus*, also *Athenus* and *Stephen* of Byzantium, as cited by *Bochart* ('Sacred Geography,' part ii.; *Kinneir*, 'Memoir on the Persian Empire,' p. 98), says, 'Shus, in the Pehlevi, signifies "pleasant."' Susa, Sûs, or Shûsh, the capital of Susiana, and of all Persia, the favourite winter residence of the Persian kings. It has been attempted to prove that there were two cities of this name in the province of Susiana—one, the Shushan of Scripture, in the Bakhtigali mountains; the other, the Susa of the Greeks. It was supposed that the scriptural expression, "Shushan the palace" (cf. Dan. viii. 1, 2), was indicative of a distinction from some other city of the same name ('Journal of the Geographical Society,' vol. ix., p. 85), but the reasoning was based on fallacious grounds. That Shushan and Susa are one and the same we learn from the agreement of *Josephus* with Scripture (ch. i. 3, 8; iii. 15; Neh. i. 1; *Loftus*, 'Chaldea and Susiana,' p. 338). "In Shushan the palace" [שְׁשַׁנְדָּרֻס]—in Shushan, the citadel fortress. There was at Susa a remarkable edifice, the erection of which *Josephus* ascribes to Daniel (ch. viii. 27: cf. 'Antiquities,' b. x., ch. xi., sec. 7), distinguished for its vastness, elaborate architecture, and freshness of appearance—owing, as *Reland* says, to the hardness of the stone—which was, like the Pyramids of Egypt, used as a mausoleum for the Persian and Parthian kings, and the custody of which was committed by the will of the founder to the custody of a Jewish governor. The Jewish historian places this tower, as the present text of his history reads, at Ecbatana in Media; but *Jerome*, who professes to quote it verbatim from the copies in use in the fourth century, places it ('Commentary' on Dan. viii. 2) at Susa in Persia. *Josephus* calls the tower Baris (cf. 'Antiquities,' b. xv., ch. iii.), almost identical with the Hebrew original which we translate, "Shushan the palace" (see further, *Loftus*, 'Chaldea and Susiana,' p. 333; *Ker Porter's* 'Travels,' ii., pp. 411-414). 3. made a feast unto all his princes and his servants. Banquets on so grand a scale, and extending over so great a period, have not been unfrequently provided by the luxurious monarchs of Eastern countries, both in ancient (especially in Assyria and Babylon, Dan. v. 1; *Herodotus*, ix. 110; 'Dis. Sic.,' ii., 20: cf. *Botta's*

5 And when these days were expired, the king made a feast unto all the people that were ¹present in Shushan the palace, both unto great and 6 small, seven days, in the court of the garden of the king's palace; *where were white, green, and* ²*blue hangings, fastened with cords of fine linen and purple to silver rings and pillars of marble: the beds were of gold and silver, upon a pavement* ³*of red, and blue, and white, and black* 7 *marble. And they gave them drink in vessels of gold, (the vessels being diverse one from another,) and royal wine in abundance, according to* 8 *the state of the king. And the drinking was according to the law; none did compel: for so the king had appointed to all the officers of his house,*

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¹ found.
² Or, violet.
³ Eze. 23. 41.
³ Or, of porphyre, and marble, and alabaster, and stone of blue colour.

'Monuments,' plates 51 to 67; 107 to 114; 'Nineveh and its Remains,' ii., p. 244 and modern times. The early portion of this festive season, however, seems to have been dedicated to amusement, particularly an exhibition of the magnificence and treasures of the court, and it was closed by a special feast of seven days' continuance, given to all classes of the inhabitants, within the gardens of the royal palace. The ancient palace of Susa has been recently disinterred from an incumbent mass of earth and ruins; and in that palace, which is, beyond all doubt, the actual edifice referred to in this passage, there is a great hall of marble pillars. 'The position of the great colonnade corresponds with the account here given. It stands on an elevation in the centre of the mound, the remainder of which we may well imagine to have been occupied, after the Persian fashion, with a garden and fountains. Thus the colonnade would represent the "court of the garden of the king's palace," with its "pillars of marble." I am even inclined to believe the expression, "Shushan the palace," applies especially to this portion of the existing ruins, in contradistinction to the citadel and the city of Shushan' (*Loftus*, 'Chaldea and Susiana'). Or it might be the quadrangle, denominated by *Mr. Ferguson* the 'temple court,' at Khorsabad.

6. Where were white, green, and blue hangings, &c. [רר, fine white linen; Septuagint, *βυσσος*.] "Green" [כסם, cotton; Septuagint, *κάριανος*.] "And blue" [לילך]—cerulean purples, cloth dyed with a colouring matter obtained from the *helix Janthina* (Linn.), a species of mussel found in the Mediterranean. [Septuagint, *βάκυσος*.] fastened with cords of fine linen [בין, often used in later Hebrew synonymously with שש, the fine linen of Egypt]. 'The divan, or hall of audience in an Eastern palace, as also the room for receiving guests in private houses, is generally covered with a Persian carpet, round which are placed cushions of different shape and size, in cases of gold and silver work, or of scarlet cloth embroidered; these are occasionally moved into the courts and gardens, and placed under the Shamyah for the accommodation of company,' (*Forbes's* 'Oriental Mem.'). As to 'the beds of gold and silver,' they seem to have been in Persia the exclusive privilege of royalty. Couches of gold and silver are mentioned by *Herodotus* and *Diodorus Siculus* as used both amongst the Persians and the Parthians; and while beds of brass and iron were common, the corpse of Cyrus was found by Alexander deposited on a golden bedstead. It was customary amongst the Persians to recline at meals on "beds," or sofas, as we should call them. Sometimes temporary erections of this elegant and attractive character were made in gardens or on the flat roofs of the palaces. *Str John Chardin* ('Travels,' ii., p. 116) thus describes the nuptial feast of a Persian prince. 'The feast took place on a terrace of the

palace, which was enclosed with fine carved lattice work. It was covered with a pavilion, which rested upon fine pillars. This tent-palace was lined with gold and silver brocade, and fine painted linen; and, when lighted up with a great many torches, presented a very beautiful appearance, shading like figured vainscot' (cf. also *Della Valle's* description of a banquet given by Shah Abbas I. to the nobles of Persia on the news of a national victory over the Turks: 'Travels,' part ii.; see also 'Nineveh and Babylon,' p. 530). The fashion in the houses of the great, on festive occasions, was to decorate the chambers from the middle of the wall downwards with damask or velvet hangings of variegated colours suspended on hooks, or taken down at pleasure. The beds were of gold and silver—i. e., the couches on which, according to Oriental fashion, the guests reclined, and which were either formed of gold and silver, or inlaid with ornaments of those costly metals, stood on the elevated floor of parti-coloured marble. It must be mentioned as a remarkable confirmation of the truth of this record, which the Providence of God has furnished to the church in this sceptical age, that Susa, like Nineveh, has recently been exhumed from the accumulated rubbish of ages, and the very spot where the royal festivities were held has, within the last few years, been actually revealed. There have been discovered the remains of the ancient palace of Shushan, some of the marble columns in the garden, and the small coloured stones or painted tiles which formed the tessellated pavement. That pavement is still in existence; and in the marble pillars, in the sculpture, and the other relics of royal grandeur that have been found lying about the place, there has been obtained an unexpected confirmation of the truth of this singular record. The glory of the ancient autocrat of Persia has long ago passed away, and nothing but the relics of the sumptuous hospitality, which in so extensive a scale of even royal magnificence he practised, are found. The newspapers of 1853 informed us that the commissioners engaged under the mediation of England and Russia, in making the boundary-line between Persia and Turkey, made those discoveries at Shushan (see also *Loftus*, 'Chaldea and Susiana,' p. 304). 7. they gave them drink in vessels of gold. There is reason to believe from this account, as well as from ch. v. 6; vii. 2, 7, 8, where the drinking of wine occupies by far the most prominent place in the description, that this was a banquet rather than a feast. From accounts of travellers in modern Persia the same practice prevails. *Della Valle* gives an account of a royal banquet, which furnishes an exact parallel to the one that was held at Shushan the palace, 'where,' says that accurate reporter, 'though the wine-cup was always going round, no one was compelled to drink more than he pleased.' Notwithstanding this freedom from bacchanalian revelry and com-

- 9 that they should do according to every man's pleasure. Also Vashti the queen made a feast for the women *in* the royal house which *belonged* to king Ahasuerus.
- 10 On the seventh day, when the heart of the king was merry with wine, he commanded Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, and Abagtha, Zethar, and Carcas, the seven ⁴chamberlains that served in the presence
- 11 of Ahasuerus the king, to ⁵bring Vashti the queen before the king with the crown royal, to show the people and the princes her beauty: for she
- 12 *was* ⁶fair to look on. But the queen Vashti refused to come at the king's commandment ⁷by *his* chamberlains: therefore was the king very wroth, and his anger burned in him.
- 13 Then the king said to the ⁸wise men, which ⁹knew the times, (for
- 14 *so was* the king's manner toward all that knew law and judgment; and the next unto him *was* Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena, and Memucan, the ¹⁰seven princes of Persia and Media, which
- 15 saw the king's face, *and* which sat the first in the kingdom,) What ¹¹shall we do unto the queen Vashti according to law, because she hath not performed the commandment of the king Ahasuerus by the chamberlains?
- 16 And Memucan answered before the king and the princes, Vashti the queen hath not done wrong to the king only, but also to all the princes, and to all the people that *are* in all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus.
- 17 For *this* deed of the queen shall come abroad unto all women, so that they shall despise their husbands in their eyes, when it shall be reported, The king Ahasuerus commanded Vashti the queen to be brought in before him,
- 18 but she came not. *Likewise* shall the ladies of Persia and Media say this day unto all the king's princes, which have heard of the deed of the queen.
- 19 Thus *shall there arise* too much contempt and wrath. ¹²If it please the king, let there go a royal commandment ¹³from him, and let it be written among the laws of the Persians and the Medes, ¹⁴that it be not altered, That Vashti come no more before king Ahasuerus; and let the king give

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- ⁴ Or, eunuchs,
⁵ Pro. 16. 9.
 Pro. 23. 29,
 33
 Mark 6 21,
 22.
⁶ good of countenance.
¹ Sam. 25.3.
² Sam. 14. 25.
 Pro. 1. 31.
⁷ which was by the hand of his eunuchs.
⁸ Jer 10. 7.
 Dan. 2. 12.
 Dan. 4. 6, 7.
 Dan. 5. 7.
 Matt. 2. 1.
⁹ 1 Chr. 12. 32.
¹⁰ Ezra 7. 14.
 Matt. 16. 3.
¹¹ What to do
¹² If it be good with the king.
¹³ from before him.
¹⁴ that it pass not away.
 ch 8. 8.
 Dan 6. 8.

pulsion, 'banquets of wine' are more prominently noticed in this history than feasts. What number of guests were entertained at this feast in Shushan we are not informed. But if the rulers of all the 127 provinces, with their principal attendants, and the officers of Ahasuerus's court, were all present, the company must have been immense. And yet every guest drank out of a golden goblet different in design and form from the rest—a prodigal display of art which almost transcends imagination. 9. Also Vashti the queen made a feast for the women. The celebration was double; for, as according to the Oriental fashion the sexes do not intermingle in society, the court ladies were entertained in a separate apartment by the queen. She was in circumstances to provide a sumptuous entertainment on an extensive scale; for the dignified rank of queen was supported by ample revenues, not dependent on the good-will of the king, but fixed by the law and usage of the country (*Herodotus*, b. ii., 98; 'Athen. Deipn.', b. i., p. 33). She possessed great power over to a certain extent, use great freedom, she was as completely at the will of the king as the veriest slave in the country (*Herodotus*, b. ix., p. 111).

10. On the seventh day, when the heart of the king was merry with wine. As the feasts advanced, the drinking was more freely indulged in, so that the close was usually marked

by great excesses of revelry. he commanded . . . the seven chamberlains. These were the eunuchs who had charge of the royal harem. The refusal of Vashti to obey an order which required her to make an indecent exposure of herself before a company of drunken revellers was becoming both the modesty of her sex and her rank as queen; for, according to Persian customs, the queen, even more than the wives of other men, was secluded from the public gaze; and had not the king's blood been heated with wine, or his reason overpowered by force of offended pride, he would have perceived that his own honour as well as hers was consulted by her dignified conduct.

13. Then the king said to the wise men. These were probably the magi, without whose advice as to the proper time of doing a thing, the Persian kings never did take any step whatever; and the persons named in the following verse were the "seven counsellors" (see on Ezra vii. 14) who formed the state ministry. The eminence of their station in the Persian court is expressed by 'their seeing the king's face.' (this is metaphorically applied to the angels, Matt. xviii. 10; Luke i. 9). The combined wisdom of all, it seems, was enlisted to consult with the king what course should be taken after so unprecedented an occurrence as Vashti's disobedience of the royal summons. It is scarcely possible for us to imagine the astonishment produced by such a refusal in a country and a court where the will of the sovereign was absolute. The assembled grandes were petrified with horror at the daring affront; alarm for the consequences that might ensue to each of them whose authority was absolute and arbitrarily

20 her royal estate ¹¹ unto another that is better than she. And when the king's decree which he shall make shall be published throughout all his empire, (for it is great,) all the wives shall ^j give to their husbands honour, both to great and small.

21 And the saying ¹² pleased the king and the princes; and the king did
22 according to the word of Memucan: for he sent letters into all the king's provinces, ^k into every province according to the writing thereof, and to every people after their language, that every man should bear ^l rule in his own house; and ¹³ that it should be published according to the language of every people.

2 AFTER these things, when the wrath of king Ahasuerus was appeased, he remembered Vashti, and what she had done, and ^a what was

2 decreed against her. Then said the king's servants that ministered unto

3 him, Let ^b there be fair young virgins sought for the king; and let the king appoint officers in all the provinces of his kingdom, that they may gather together all the fair young virgins unto Shushan the palace, to the house of the women, ¹ unto the custody of Hege the king's chamberlain, keeper of the women; and let their things for purification be given

4 them: and let the maiden which pleaseth the king be queen instead of Vashti. And the thing pleased the king; and he did so.

5 Now in Shushan the palace there was a certain Jew, whose name was Mordecai, the son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, a Ben-

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¹¹ unto her companion.^j Eph. 5. 22.

Col. 3. 18.

¹ Fet. 3. 1.¹² was good

in the eyes

of the king.

ch. 2. 4.

^k ch. 8. 9.^l Eph 5. 22.¹³ that one

should

publish

it accord-

ing to the

language

of his

people.

CHAP. 2.

^a ch. 1. 19.^b Gen. 12. 14.

15.

¹ Ki. 1. 2.¹ unto the

hand.

exercised in his own household, next seized on their minds; and the sounds of bacchanalian revelry were hushed into deep and anxious consultation what punishment to inflict on the refractory queen. But a purpose was to be served by the flattery of the king and the enslavement of all women. The counsellors were too intoxicated or obsequious to oppose the courtly advice of Memucan. It was unanimously resolved, with a wise regard to the public interests of the nation, that the punishment of Vashti could be nothing short of degradation from her royal dignity. The doom was accordingly pronounced and made known in all parts of the empire.

CHAP. II. 1-20.—ESTHER CHOSEN TO BE QUEEN.

1. After these things, when the wrath of king Ahasuerus was appeased. On recovering from the violent excitement of his revelry and rage, the king was pierced with poignant regret for the unmerited treatment he had given to his beautiful and dignified queen. But, according to the law, which made the word of a Persian king irrevocable, she could not be restored. His counsellors, for their own sake, were solicitous to remove his disquietude, and hastened to recommend the adoption of all suitable means for gratifying their royal master with another consort of equal or superior attractions to those of his divorced queen. The Persian monarch could legally choose a wife only from six noble families (*Herodotus*, iii., 84). But, of course, in the exercise of absolute power, he could break through this restriction; and in existing circumstances, irritable, and depressed by the disastrous issue of his expedition into Greece, he was urged by his politic counsellors, who were desirous of diverting his mind from gloomy reflections, to search the kingdom for a queen. In the despotic countries of the East the custom obtains that, when an order is sent to a family for a young damsel to repair to the royal palace, the parents, however unwilling, dare not refuse the honour for their daughter; and although they know that when she is once into the royal harem they will never see her again, they are obliged to yield a silent and passive compliance. In some countries of the East, at the present day,

the method adopted by the Persian counsellors to procure a wife for their royal master continues to be pursued. From the 'Courier Russe,' June, 1868, copied into all the English newspapers, we learn that the young Emperor of China, having reached the age of fourteen, the time had come when a wife had to be chosen for him. One hundred and twenty young girls, from eleven to twelve years old, were admitted to the palace on an appointed evening (27th March), as candidates for the queenship. Seven were selected from the number, who had to submit to an examination before the empress mother—whose business it is, in the court of Peking, to make the choice. Letters from Peking (2d April) give the additional intelligence that the young lady upon whom the choice of the prince and his mother fell was born at Monkdon, in the province of Ching-King, that she has attained her eleventh year, and that she was extremely beautiful. On the occasion referred to in Shushan (*Herodotus*, b. vi., 32), a general search was commanded to be made for the greatest beauties throughout the empire, in the hope that, from their ranks, the disconsolate monarch might select one for the honour of succeeding to the royal honours of Vashti. The damsels, on arrival at the palace, were brought to the "house of the women" [מִבְּרַחֲתֵי הַנְּשִׂאִים]—i. e., the harem, a portion of the palace constituting an entire and separate domicile, and furnished largely, as the 'Targum' says, with baths, unguents, and every material conducive to luxury, ornament, and cleanliness. They were placed under the custody of "Hege the king's chamberlain, keeper of the women" [קַרְיָה], the chief eunuch,—usually a repulsive old man, on whom the court ladies are very dependent, and whose favour they are always desirous to secure.

5. Now in Shushan the palace there was a certain Jew. Mordecai held some office about the court. Besides his ancestors as here mentioned, the Targum on Esther reckons Uzza, one of the sons of Ehud (1 Chr. viii. 7). But 'his sitting at the king's gate' (v. 21) does not necessarily imply that he was in the humble condition of a porter;

- 6 jamite; who had been carried away from Jerusalem with the captivity
 7 Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away. And he
 brought up Hadassah, that is, Esther, his uncle's daughter: for she had
 neither father nor mother, and the maid was fair and beautiful; whom
 Mordecai, when her father and mother were dead, took for his own
 daughter.
- 8 So it came to pass, when the king's commandment and his decree was
 heard, and when many maidens were gathered together unto Shushan
 the palace, to the custody of Hegai, that Esther was brought also unto
 9 the king's house, to the custody of Hegai, keeper of the women. And
 the maiden pleased him, and she obtained kindness of him; and he
 speedily gave her her things for purification, with such things as belonged
 to her, and seven maidens, which were meet to be given her, out of the
 king's house: and he preferred her and her maids unto the best place
 10 of the house of the women. Esther had not showed her people nor her
 kindred: for Mordecai had charged her that she should not show it.
- 11 And Mordecai walked every day before the court of the women's house,
 to know how Esther did, and what should become of her.
- 12 Now when every maid's turn was come to go in to king Ahasuerus,
 after that she had been twelve months, according to the manner of the
 women, (for so were the days of their purifications accomplished, to wit,
 13 six months with oil of myrrh, and six months with sweet odours, and
 with other things for the purifying of the women;) then thus came every
 maiden unto the king; whatsoever she desired was given her to go with
 14 her out of the house of the women unto the king's house. In the evening
 she went, and on the morrow she returned into the second house of the
 women, to the custody of Shaashgaz the king's chamberlain, which kept
 the concubines: she came in unto the king no more, except the king
 delighted in her, and that she were called by name.
- 15 Now when the turn of Esther, the daughter of Abihail the uncle of

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^c 2 Ki. 24. 11,
 15.
 2 Chr. 36. 10
 20.
 Jer. 22. 24,
 28.
 Jer. 24. 1.
² Or. Je-
 hoiachin,
 2 Ki. 21. 6.
³ nourished,
 Eph. 6. 4.
⁴ fair of
 form, and
 good of
 coun-
 tenance,
 ch. 1. 11.
^d Gen. 39. 21,
 1 Ki. 8. 50.
 Ezra 7. 6.
 Neh. 2. 8.
 Ps. 106. 46,
 Pro. 16. 7.
 Dan. 1. 9.
⁵ her
 portions
⁶ he changed
 her.
^e Lev. 28. 37.
 Deut. 28. 65,
 ch. 3. 8.
 Eph. 6. 1.
⁷ to know
 the peace
 of Esther.
 Gen. 37. 14.
 1 Sam. 17.
 15.
 Acts 15. 36.

for, according to an institute of Cyrus, all state officers were required to wait in the outer courts, till they were summoned into the presence-chamber. He might therefore have been a person of some official dignity (*Shaw's 'Travels'*). This man had an orphan niece, born during the exile, under his care, who, being distinguished by great personal beauty, was one of the young damsels taken into the royal harem on this occasion, and had the good fortune at once to gain the good-will of the chief eunuch. Her sweet and amiable appearance made her a favourite with all who looked on her (v. 15, last clause). Her Hebrew name (v. 7) was Hadassah [from חַדְסָה, myrtle], which, on her introduction into the royal harem, was changed for Esther [אֶסְתֵּר, Persian, the star Venus], indicating beauty and good fortune (*Gesenius*).

9. he (Hegai) speedily gave her her things for purification, with such things as belonged to her (cf. v. 12). The seven maidens, one for every day of the week, were appointed to attend her in rotation. Their names are mentioned in the Chaldee paraphrase, as well as the day of waiting for each.

11. Mordecai walked every day before the court of the women's house. The harem is an inviolable sanctuary, and what is transacted within its walls is as much a secret to those without as if they were thousands of miles away; but hints were given him through the eunuchs.

12. Now when every maid's turn was come to go in to king Ahasuerus. A whole year was spent in preparation for the intended honour. Considering that this took place in a palace, the long period

prescribed, together with the profusion of costly and fragrant cosmetics employed, was probably required by state etiquette. At the same time, it is said that from the dirty and neglected way in which the girls of Georgia and Circassia are brought up in their humble homes, a long process of purification is absolutely necessary before these celebrated beauties are fit for being brought into the Turkish markets. Reasons of a similar kind may have originated the cleansing processes at Shushan. But fragrant perfumes were so indispensable a mark of royal gratification to the kings of Persia, that these were burnt before them whenever they went abroad; and it is most likely, therefore, that fondness for cosmetics led to the course described in this passage. In fact, perfumes were used profusely, without regard either to cost or to quality.

13. Then thus came every maiden unto the king. "Gynæceum, the women's apartment, was, in the Susa palace at any rate, a building distinct from the general edifice, separated from "the king's house" by a court. It was itself composed of at least three sets of apartments, viz., apartments for the virgins, who had not yet gone into the king, apartments for the concubines, and apartments for the queen-consort and the other wives. These different portions were under the supervision of different persons. Two eunuchs of distinction had the charge respectively of the "first" and of "the second house of the women." The queen-consort was, at any rate nominally, paramount in the third, her authority extending over all its inmates, male and female" (*Rawlinson's 'Ancient Monarchies,'* iv., p. 174).

Mordecai, who had taken her for his daughter, was come to go in unto the king, she required nothing but what Hegai the king's chamberlain, the keeper of the women, appointed. And Esther obtained favour in the sight of all them that looked upon her. So Esther was taken unto king Ahasuerus into his house royal, in the ⁹tenth month, which is the month Tebeth, in the seventh year of his reign. And the king loved Esther above all the women, and she obtained grace and ⁸favour ⁹in his sight more than all the virgins; so that he ⁸set the royal crown upon her head, and made her queen instead of Vashti. Then the king ¹made a great feast unto all his princes and his servants, *even* Esther's feast; and he made a ¹⁰release to the provinces, and gave gifts, according to the state of the king.

19 And when the virgins were gathered together the second time, 20 then Mordecai sat ¹in the king's gate. Esther had not *yet* showed her kindred nor her people, as Mordecai had charged her: for Esther did the commandment of Mordecai, like as when she was brought up with him.

21 In those days, while Mordecai sat in the king's gate, two of the king's chamberlains, ¹¹Bigthan and Teresh, of those which kept ¹²the door, were wroth, and sought to lay hand on the king Ahasuerus. And the thing was known to Mordecai, who ¹³told *it* unto Esther the queen; and Esther certified the king *thereof* in Mordecai's name. And when inquisition was made of the matter, it was found out; therefore they were both ¹⁴hanged on a tree: and it was written in ¹⁵the book of the Chronicles before the king.

3 AFTER these things did king Ahasuerus promote Haman the son of Hammedatha the ¹⁶Agagite, and advanced him, and set his seat above all the princes that *were* with him. And all the king's servants, that *were* in ¹⁷the king's gate, ¹⁸bowed, and revered Haman; for the king had so commanded concerning him: but Mordecai ¹⁹bowed not, nor did *him* reverence. Then the king's servants, which *were* in the king's gate, said unto Mordecai, Why transgressesst thou the king's commandment?

E. C 515
 / Gen 48. 16.
 Deut. 4. 6.
 7.
 Song 6. 9.
 a ch. 3. 7.
 ch. 8. 9.
 8 Or,
 kindness.
 9 before his eyes.
 Pro. 21. 1.
 A 1 Sam 2. 8.
 Ps. 75. 5.
 Ps 113. 7, 8.
 4 Gen. 29. 22.
 Judg 11. 10.
 ch. 1. 3.
 10 rest
 / ch 3. 2.
 ch. 5. 13.
 11 Or,
 Bi,thana,
 ch 6. 2
 12 the
 threshold.
 k ch 6. 2.
 Pro. 8. 12.
 Eccl 7. 9.
 Phil. 2. 4.
 l Gen. 40. 19.
 Deut 21. 22.
 m ch. 6. 1.
 CHAP. 3.
 a Num. 21. 7.
 1 Sam. 15. 8.
 b ch. 2. 19.
 c Gen. 41. 42.
 Deut 25. 19.
 Phil. 2. 10.
 d Ex. 1. 17.
 Ps. 15. 4.

17. the king loved Esther above all the women. The choice fell on Esther, who found favour in the eyes of Ahasuerus, and elevated her to the dignity of chief wife or queen. The other competitors had apartments assigned them in the royal harem, and were retained in the rank of secondary wives, of whom Oriental princes have a great number. he set the royal crown upon her head. This consisted only of a purple fillet, streaked with white, having the appearance of a crown of towers, bound round the forehead. 18. the king made a great feast [עָשָׂה מִסֵּעֵם לְכָל הַשָּׂרִים]; Septuagint, εποίησε τους γάμους]—made the marriage feast. The nuptials were celebrated by a magnificent entertainment; and, in honour of the auspicious occasion, "he made a release to the provinces, and gave gifts, according to the state of the king." The dotation of Persian queens consisted in consigning to them the revenue of certain cities, in various parts of the kingdom, for defraying their personal and domestic expenditure:—one city, for instance, to furnish head-dress, and ornaments for the face and neck, a second to provide sumptuous robes, and a city called Anthilla to supply embroidered shoes and sandals. Some of these imposts the king remitted or lessened at this time.

21-23.—MORDECAI, DISCOVERING A TREASON, IS RECORDED IN THE CHRONICLES.

21. In those days . . . two of the king's chamberlains . . . were wroth, &c. This secret conspiracy against the king's life probably arose out of revenge for the divorce of Vashti, in whose

interest, and at whose instigation, these eunuchs may have acted. Through the vigilance of Mordecai, whose fidelity, however, passed unnoticed, the design was frustrated, while the conspirators were condemned to be executed; and as the matter was recorded in the court annals, it became the occasion afterwards of Mordecai's preferment to the place of power and influence for which, in furtherance of the national interests of the Jews, divine Providence intended him.

CHAP. III. 1-15.—HAMAN, ADVANCED BY THE KING AND DESPISED BY MORDECAI, SEEKS REVENGE ON ALL THE JEWS.

1. After these things did king Ahasuerus promote Haman . . . and set his seat above all the princes—i. e., raised him to the rank of vizier, or prime confidential minister, whose pre-eminence in office and power appeared in the elevated state-chair appropriated to that supreme functionary. Such a distinction in seats was counted of vast importance in the formal court of Persia. 2. all the king's servants, that were in the king's gate, bowed, and revered Haman. Large mansions in the East are entered by a spacious vestibule or gateway, along the sides of which visitors sit, and are received by the master of the house; for none, except the nearest relatives or special friends, are admitted farther. There the officers of the ancient king of Persia waited till they were called, and did obeisance to the all-powerful minister of the day. but Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence. [The Septuagint has *ou*

4 Now it came to pass, when they spake daily unto him, and he hearkened not unto them, that they told Haman, to see whether Mordecai's matters would stand: for he had told them that he *was* a Jew.

5 And when Haman saw that Mordecai bowed ^cnot, nor did him reverence,

6 then was Haman ^ffull of wrath. And he thought scorn to lay hands on Mordecai alone; for they had showed him the people of Mordecai: wherefore Haman sought ^gto destroy all the Jews that *were* throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus, *even* the people of Mordecai.

7 In the first month, that *is*, the month Nisan, in the twelfth year of king Ahasuerus, ^hthey cast Pur, that *is*, the lot, before Haman from day to day, and from month to month, *to* the twelfth *month*, that *is*, the month Adar. And Haman said unto king Ahasuerus, There is a certain people scattered abroad, and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of thy kingdom; and ⁱtheir laws *are* diverse from all people, neither keep they the king's laws: therefore it *is* not ^lfor the king's profit to suffer them. If it please the king, let it be written ²that they may be destroyed; and I will ³pay ten thousand talents of silver to the hands of those that have the charge of the business, to bring *it* into the king's treasuries. And ^jthe king took his ^kring from his hand and gave it unto Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the Jews' ⁴enemy. And the king said unto Haman, The silver *is* given to thee, the people also, to do with them as it seemeth good to thee.

12 Then ⁵were the king's scribes called on the thirteenth day of the first month, and there was written, according to all that Haman had com-

B. C. 410
 c ch. 5. 9.
 d Gen 4. 4, 5.
 e ch. 1. 12.
 f Job 5. 2.
 g Pro. 12. 16.
 h Pro. 19. 19.
 i Pro 21. 24.
 j Pro. 27. 3.
 k Dan 5. 19.
 l Ps. 83. 4.
 m Rev. 12. 12.
 n ch. 9. 24.
 o Pro 16. 31.
 p Eze 21. 21, 22.
 q Matt. 27. 35.
 r Ezra 4. 13.
 s Acts 16. 20.
 t 1 meet, or, equal.
 u 2 to destroy them.
 v 3 weigh.
 w ch. 41. 42.
 x ch. 8. 2, 8.
 y 4 Or.
 z oppressor, ch. 7. 6.
 aa ch. 8. 9.
 ab 5 Or, secretaries.

προσεκύνει αὐτῷ, did not prostrate before him (cf. Josephus, 'Antiquities,' b. xi., ch. vi., sec. 5)]. The obsequious homage of prostration, not entirely foreign to the manners of the East, had not been claimed by former viziers; but this minion required that all subordinate officers of the court should bow before him with their faces to the earth. But to Mordecai it seemed that such an attitude of profound reverence was due only to God. Haman's being an Amalekite, one of a doomed and accursed race, was, doubtless, another element in the refusal; and on learning that the recusant was a Jew, whose non-conformity was grounded on religious scruples, the magnitude of the affront appeared so much the greater, as the example of Mordecai would be imitated by all his compatriots. Had the homage been a simple token of civil respect, Mordecai would not have refused it; but the Persian kings demanded a sort of adoration, which, it is well known, even the Greeks reckoned it degradation to express; and as Xerxes, in the height of his favouritism, had commanded the same honours to be given to the minister as to himself, this was the ground of Mordecai's refusal.

7. In the first month . . . they cast Pur—that is, the lot [פּוּר (Persian), explained in the Hebrew text by חֲבִילֵי אֶבֶן, a calculus or pebble, here, the lot]. In resorting to this method of ascertaining the most auspicious day for putting his atrocious scheme into execution, Haman acted as the kings and nobles of Persia have always done, never engaging in any enterprise without consulting the astrologers, and being satisfied as to the lucky hour. Vowing revenge, but scorning to lay hands on a single victim, he meditated the extirpation of the whole Jewish race, who, he knew, were sworn enemies of his countrymen; and by artfully representing them as a people who were aliens in manners and habits, and enemies to the rest of his subjects, procured the king's sanction of the intended massacre. One motive which he used in

urging his point was addressed to the king's cupidity. Fearing lest his master might object that the extermination of a numerous body of his subjects would seriously depress the public revenue, Haman promised to make up the loss. 9. I will pay ten thousand talents of silver . . . into the king's treasuries. This sum, reckoning by the Babylonish talent, will be about £2,119,000; but estimated according to the Jewish talent, it will considerably exceed £3,000,000—an immense contribution to be made out of a private fortune. But classic history makes mention of several persons whose resources seem almost incredible; especially of a Lydian who, in the days of Xerxes, possessed upwards of £4,000,000 sterling, besides ample estates and slaves. In modern times, similarly large fortunes have been possessed by individuals in the East. The prime minister of a late emperor of China was said to have accumulated more than £25,000,000 in money, jewels, furniture, and other valuables. Besides, it is probable that Haman expected to meet his large obligations to the king out of the property of the slaughtered Jews. I will pay . . . to the hands of those that have the charge of the business—i.e. the revenue-officers. 10. The king took his ring from his hand, and gave it unto Haman. There was a seal or signet in the ring. Notwithstanding Pliny's denial ('Hist. Nat.' b. xxxiii. 6), the fact is undoubted, that in the East the ring was frequently at the same time a seal (cf. Jer. xxii. 24). The bestowment of the ring, with the king's name and that of his kingdom engraven on it, was given with much ceremony, and it was equivalent to putting the sign manual to a royal edict.

12-15. Then were the king's scribes called . . . and there was written. The government secretaries were employed in making out the proclamation authorizing a universal massacre of the Jews on one day. It was translated into the dialects of all the people throughout the vast empire, and swift messengers sent to carry it into all the provinces, and, on the day appointed, all Jews

manded, unto the king's lieutenants, and to the governors that were over every province, and to the rulers of every people of every province according ^m to the writing thereof, and to every people after their language; ⁿ in the name of king Ahasuerus was it written, and sealed with the king's ring. And the letters were ^o sent by posts into all the king's provinces, to destroy, to kill, and to cause to perish, all Jews, both young and old, little children and women, ^p in one day, even upon the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month Adar, and ^q to take the spoil of them for a prey. The ^r copy of the writing, for a commandment to be given in every province, was published unto all people, that they should be ready against that day. The posts went out, being hastened by the king's commandment; and the decree was given in Shushan the palace. And the king and Haman ^s sat down to drink; but ^t the city Shushan was perplexed.

4 WHEN Mordecai perceived all that was done, Mordecai ^a rent his clothes, and put on sackcloth ^b with ashes, and went out into the midst of the city, and ^c cried with a loud and a bitter cry; and came even before the king's gate: for none might enter into the king's gate clothed with sackcloth. And in every province, whithersoever the king's commandment and his decree came, there was great mourning among the Jews, and fasting, and weeping, and wailing; and ¹ many lay in sackcloth and ashes.

4 So Esther's maids and her ² chamberlains came and told it her. Then was the queen exceedingly grieved; and she sent raiment to clothe Mordecai, and to take away his sackcloth from him; but he received it not.

5 Then called Esther for Hatach, one of the king's chamberlains, ³ whom he had appointed to attend upon her, and gave him a commandment to

6 Mordecai, to know what it was, and why it was. So Hatach went forth to Mordecai unto the street of the city, which was before the king's gate:

B. C. 510.

^m ch. 1. 22.
 ch. 8. 9.
ⁿ 1 Ki. 21. 8.
 ch. 8. 8, 10.
 Dan. 6. 8.
^o ch. 8. 10.
^p ch. 8. 12.
^q ch. 8. 11.
^r ch. 8. 13.
 14.
^s Gen. 37. 24, 25.
 Ps. 14. 4.
^t ro. 30. 23-24.
 ch. 8. 15.
^t ro. 29. 2.

CHAP. 4.

^a 2 Sam 1. 11.
 Job 1. 20.
^b Josh 7. 6.
 Eze. 27. 30.
^c Gen. 27. 34.
 Isa. 15. 4.
 Isa. 16. 9.
 Mic 1. 8.
¹ sackcloth and ashes were laid under many.
² eunuchs.
³ whom he had set before her.

were to be put to death, and their property confiscated—doubtless the means by which Haman hoped to pay his stipulated tribute into the exchequer. Haman had commanded, unto the king's lieutenants [שַׂרְיָדָי הַמְּדִינָה, satraps]—the governors or viceroys of the large provinces among the ancient Persians, possessing both civil and military power, and being in the provinces the representative of the sovereign, whose state and splendour they also rivalled. Single parts or subdivisions of these provinces were under procurators or prefects [called פְּרָיְדָי]; the satraps governed only whole provinces' (*Gesenius*). The edict is given at full length in the apocryphal additions to this book. To us it appears unaccountable how any sane monarch could have given his consent to the extirpation of a numerous class of his subjects. But such acts of frenzied barbarity have, alas, been not rarely authorized by careless and voluptuous despots, who have allowed their ears to be engrossed and their policy directed by haughty and selfish minions, who had their own passions to gratify, their own ends to serve. 15. the king and Haman sat down to drink; but the city Shushan was perplexed. The completeness of the word-painting in this verse is exquisite. The historian, by a simple stroke, has drawn a graphic picture of an Oriental despot wallowing with his favourite in sensual enjoyments, while his tyrannical cruelties were rending the hearts and homes of thousands of his subjects.

CHAP. IV. 1-14.—MORDECAI AND THE JEWS MOURN.

1. When Mordecai perceived all that was done. Relying on the irrevocable nature of a Persian monarch's decree (*Dan. vi. 15*), Haman made it known as soon as the royal sanction had been

obtained, and Mordecai was doubtless amongst the first to hear of it. On his own account, as well as on that of his countrymen, this astounding decree must have been indescribably distressing. The acts described in this passage are, according to the Oriental fashion, expressive of the most poignant sorrow; and his approach to the gate of the palace, under the impulse of irrepressible emotions, was to make an earnest though vain appeal to the royal mercy. Access, however, to the king's presence was, to a person in his disfigured state, impossible; "for none might enter into the king's gate clothed with sackcloth." But he found means of conveying intelligence of the horrid plot to queen Esther.

4. Then was the queen exceedingly grieved; and she sent raiment to clothe Mordecai. Her object in doing so was either to qualify him for resuming his former office, or else, perhaps, of fitting him to come near enough the palace to inform her of the cause of such sudden and extreme distress. 5. Then called Esther for Hatach, one of the king's chamberlains, whom he had appointed to attend upon her. Communication with the women in the harem is hardly ever to be obtained, and only through the medium of the keepers. The chief eunuch receives the message from the lips of the queen, conveys it to some inferior officer of the seraglio, and when the commission is executed, the subaltern communicates it to the superintendent, by whom it is delivered to the queen. This chief eunuch, usually an old man who has recommended himself by a long course of faithful service, is always appointed by the king, but it is his interest, as well as his duty, to ingratiate himself with the queen also; and, accordingly, we find Hatach rendering himself very serviceable in carrying on

7 and Mordecai told him of all that had happened unto him, and of ^dthe sum of the money that Haman had promised to pay to the king's
8 treasuries for the Jews, to destroy them: also he gave him ^ethe copy of the writing of the decree that was given at Shushan to destroy them, to show *it* unto Esther, and to declare *it* unto her, and to charge her that she should go in unto the king, to make ^fsupplication unto him, and to make request before him for her people.

9, And Hatach came and told Esther the words of Mordecai. Again
10 Esther spake unto Hatach, and gave him commandment unto Mordecai;
11 all the king's servants, and the people of the king's provinces, do know, that whosoever, whether man or woman, shall come unto the king into ^gthe inner court, who is not called, ^hthere is one law of his to put *him* to death, except ⁱsuch to whom the king shall hold out the golden sceptre, that he may live: but I have not been called to come in unto the king
12 these thirty days. And they told to Mordecai Esther's words.

13 Then Mordecai commanded to answer Esther, 'Think ^jnot with thyself
14 that thou shalt escape in the king's house more than all the Jews. For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, *then* shall there ^kenlargement and ^ldeliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou ^m'art come to the kingdom for *such* a time as this?

15, Then Esther bade *them* return Mordecai *this answer*; Go, gather
16 together all the Jews *that are* ⁿpresent in Shushan, and ^ofast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink ^pthree days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which *is* not
17 according to the law; and if I perish, I perish. So Mordecai ^qwent his way, and did according to all that Esther had commanded him.

5 NOW it came to pass ^ron the third day, that Esther put on *her* royal
apparel, and stood in ^sthe inner court of the king's house, over against

R. C. 510.
^d ch. 3. 9.
^e ch. 3. 11.
 15.
^f Job 9. 15.
 Pro. 15. 1.
 Eccl. 10. 4.
 Acts 12. 20.
^g ch. 5. 1.
^h Dan 2. 9.
ⁱ ch. 5. 2.
 ch. 8. 4.
^j Tr. 29. 25.
^k respiration.
 Job 9. 18.
^l Lev. 26. 42.
 Num. 23. 22-24.
 1 Sam. 12. 22.
 Jer. 30. 11.
 Amos 9. 8.
^m 2 Ki. 13. 5.
 Eccl. 3. 1.
 Isa. 14. 27.
 Isa. 41. 1, 8, 20.
 Isa. 54. 17.
ⁿ found.
^o Joel 1. 14.
 Joel 2. 12.
 Jon. 3. 4.
^p ch. 5. 1.
^q passed.
 CHAP. 5.
^r ch. 4. 16.
^s ch. 6. 4.

those private communications with Mordecai, who was thereby enabled to enlist her powerful influence. 8. charge her that she should go in unto the king. This language is exceedingly strong; and as it can scarcely be supposed that Mordecai was still using authority over Esther as his adopted daughter, he must be considered as imploring rather than commanding her, in the name of her brethren, and in the name of her God, to make a direct appeal to the feelings of her royal husband.

11. whosoever, whether man or woman, shall come unto the king into the inner court, who is not called. The Persian kings surrounded themselves with an almost impassable circle of forms. The law alluded to was first enacted by Deioces, king of Media, and afterwards, when the empires were united, adopted by the Persians, that all business should be transacted and petitions transmitted to the king through his ministers; and although the restriction was not intended, of course, to apply to the queen, yet from the strict and inflexible character of the Persian laws, and the extreme desire to exalt the majesty of the sovereign, even his favourite wife had not the privilege of *entrée* except by special favour and indulgence. Esther was suffering from the severity of this law; and as, from not being admitted for a whole month to the king's presence, she had reason to fear that the royal affections had become alienated from her, she had little hope of serving her country's cause in this awful emergency.

13. Then Mordecai commanded to answer Esther. His answer was to this effect, that Esther need not indulge the vain hope she would, from her royal connection, escape the general doom of her race; that he (Mordecai) confidently

believed God would interpose, and, if not through her, by some other deliverer, save His people; but that the duty evidently devolved on her, as there was great reason to believe that this was the design of Providence in her elevation to the dignity of queen; and therefore that she should go with a courageous heart, not doubting of success.

16. I also and my maidens. It is probable that she had surrounded herself with Jewish maidens, or women who were proselytes to that religion, so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law. The queen could take certain liberties, such as going unexpectedly into the royal presence, inviting him to a banquet, and employing his guards to carry out her discipline on female delinquents (*Herodotus*, b. ix., 112). But she had to humbly ask and obtain the king's sanction; and an intrusion into the royal presence was liable to be punished as a capital crime, unless the king extended the royal sceptre as a token of royal favour. The appeal of Mordecai was irresistible; and having appointed a solemn fast of three days, she expressed her firm resolution to make an appeal to the king, though she should perish in the attempt.

CHAP. V. 1-14.—ESTHER INVITES THE KING AND HAMAN TO A BANQUET.

1. Esther put on her royal apparel. It was not only natural, but, on such occasions, highly proper and expedient, that the queen should decorate herself in a style becoming her exalted station. On ordinary occasions she might reasonably set off her charms to as much advantage as possible; but on the present occasion, as she was desirous to secure the favour of one who sustained the twofold character of her husband and her sovereign, public as well as private considerations—a regard to her

the king's house: and the king sat upon his royal throne in the royal house, over against the gate of the house. And it was so, when the king saw Esther the queen standing in the court, *that* she obtained favour in his sight: and the king held out to Esther the golden sceptre that *was* in his hand. So Esther drew near, and touched the top of the sceptre. Then said the king unto her, What wilt thou, queen Esther? and what *is* thy request? *'it shall be even given thee to the half of the kingdom.* And Esther answered, *If it seem good unto the king, let the king and Haman come this day unto the banquet that I have prepared for him.* Then the king said, Cause Haman to make haste, that he may do as Esther hath said. So the king and Haman came to the banquet that Esther had prepared.

And the king said unto Esther at the banquet of wine, *What is thy petition? and it shall be granted thee: and what is thy request? even to the half of the kingdom it shall be performed.* Then answered Esther, and said, My petition and my request *is*; if I have found favour in the sight of the king, and if it please the king to grant my petition, and *to perform my request, let the king and Haman come to the banquet that I shall prepare for them, and I will do to-morrow as the king hath said.*

Then went Haman forth that day joyful and with a glad heart: but when Haman saw Mordecai in the king's gate, that *he stood not up, nor*

B. C. 510.

Gen. 32. 23.

Neh. 1. 11.

Ps. 116. 1.

Pro 21. 1.

Acts 7. 10.

Acts 10. 4.

d ch. 4. 11.

ch. 8. 4.

e Mark 6. 23.

f Gen. 27. 25.

Gen. 32. 20.

ch. 3. 15.

Ps. 112. 5.

1 Cor. 14.

20.

y ch. 7. 2.

h ch. 9. 12.

i to do.

j Job 20. 5.

Amos 6. 12.

13.

Luke 1. 25.

John 16. 20.

Jas. 4. 9.

k ch. 3. 5.

Ps. 15. 4.

Matt. 10.

23.

personal safety, no less than the preservation of her doomed countrymen—urged upon her the propriety of using every legitimate means of recommending herself to the favourable notice of Ahasnerus, especially decking her person with all the costly jewels and superb attire which had been the gifts of the royal liberality to her. the king sat upon his royal throne in the royal house, over against the gate of the house. The palace of this Persian king seems to have been built, like many more of the same quality and description, with an advanced cloister, over against the gate, made in the fashion of a large pent-house, supported only by one or two contiguous pillars in the front, or else in the centre. In such open structures as these, in the midst of their guards and counsellors, are the *bashaws*, kadis, and other great officers accustomed to distribute justice, and transact the public affairs of the provinces. In such a situation the Persian king was seated; and, at least in Shushan, "the house of the women" was separated from the "king's house" by the intervention of a "court." Similar was the position of the harem at Khorsabad ('Nineveh and Babylon,' p. 646; *Fergusson's* 'Palaces of Nineveh,' p. 254; *Botta*, 'Monumens de Nineve,' v., p. 42). The seat he occupied was not a throne, according to our ideas of one, but simply a chair, and so high that it required a footstool. It was made of gold, or, at least, inlaid with that metal, and covered with splendid tapestry, and no one save the king might sit down on it under pain of death. It is often found pictured on the Persepolitan monuments, and always of the same fashion. A fly-flapper usually attended at the side or back of the throne. 2. the king held out to Esther the golden sceptre that was in his hand. This golden sceptre receives an interesting illustration from the sculptured monuments of Persia and Assyria. In the bas-reliefs of Persepolis, copied by Sir Robert Ker Porter, we see king Darius enthroned in the midst of his court, and walking abroad in regal state; in either case he carries in his right hand a slender rod or wand, about equal in length to his own height, ornamented with a small knob at the summit. In the Assyrian alabasters, as well those

found at Nimroud as those from Khorsabad, 'the great king' is furnished with the same appendage of royalty—a slender rod, but destitute of any knob or ornament. On the Khorsabad reliefs the rod is painted red, *doubtless to represent gold*; proving that "the golden sceptre" was a simple wand of that precious metal, commonly held in the right hand, with one end resting on the ground, and that whether the king was sitting or walking. "The golden sceptre" has received little alteration or modification since ancient times (*Gosse*). It was extended to Esther as a token that not only her intrusion was pardoned, but that her visit was welcome, and a favourable reception given to the suit she had come to prefer. touched the top of the sceptre. This was the usual way of acknowledging the royal condescension, and at the same time expressing reverence and submission to the august majesty of the king. 3. it shall be even given thee to the half of the kingdom. This mode of speaking originated in the Persian custom of appropriating for the maintenance of great men, or royal favourites, one city for his bread, another for his wine, a third for his clothes, &c., so that the phrase denoted great liberality. 4. let the king and Haman come this day unto the banquet that I have prepared for him. There was great address in this procedure of Esther's; for, by showing such high respect to the king's favourite, she would the better insinuate herself into the royal affections; and gain a more suitable opportunity of making known her request.

3. let the king and Haman come to the banquet that I shall prepare. The king ate alone, and his guests in an adjoining hall; but they were admitted to sit with him at wine. 'Sometimes,' says *Mr. Rawlinson* ('Ancient Monarchies,' iv., p. 167), 'at a "banquet of wine," a certain number of privileged boon companions were received, who drank in the royal presence, not, however, of the same wine, nor on the same terms. The monarch reclined on a couch with golden feet, and sipped the rich wine of Helbon; the queen, when present, sat on a chair beside him; while the guests invited drank an inferior beverage seated upon the floor' (*Athenæus*, 'Deipno,' iv., p. 145). Such was

10 moved for him, he was full of indignation against Mordecai. Nevertheless Haman ^krefrained himself, and when he came home, he sent and
 11 ^lcalled for his friends, and Zeresh his wife. And Haman told them of ^mthe glory of his riches, and ⁿthe multitude of his children, and all *the things* wherein the king had promoted him, and how he had ^oadvanced
 12 him above the princes and servants of the king. Haman said moreover, Yea, Esther the queen did let no man come in with the king unto the banquet that she had prepared but myself; and ^pto-morrow an I invited
 13 unto her also with the king. Yet ^qall this availeth me nothing, so long
 14 as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate. Then said Zeresh his wife and all his friends unto him, Let a ^rgallows be made of fifty cubits high, and to-morrow ^sspeak thou unto the king that Mordecai may be hanged thereon: then go thou in merrily with the king unto the banquet. And the thing pleased Haman; and he caused ^tthe gallows to be made.

6 ON that night ^ucould not the king sleep; and he commanded to bring ^vthe book of records of the Chronicles; and they were read before the
 2 king. And it was found written, that Mordecai had told of ^wBigthana and Teresh, two of the king's chamberlains, the keepers of the ^xdoor, who sought to lay hand on the king Ahasuerus.

3 And the king said, ^yWhat honour and dignity hath been done to Mordecai for this? Then said the king's servants that ministered unto
 4 him, There is nothing done for him. And the king said, Who *is* in the court? Now Haman was come into ^zthe outward court of the king's house, ^{aa}to speak unto the king to hang Mordecai on the gallows that he
 5 had prepared for him. And the king's servants said unto him, Behold, Haman standeth in the court. And the king said, Let him come in.

6 So Haman came in. And the king said unto him, What shall be done unto the man ^{ab}whom the king delighteth to honour? Now Haman thought in his heart, To whom would the king delight to do honour more
 7 than to myself? And Haman answered the king, For the man ^{ac}whom

B. C. 510.
^k 2 Sam. 13.
 22.
^l 2 caused to come.
^m Dan 4 30.
 Mark 10 24.
 1 Tim. 6.24.
ⁿ ch. 9. 7.
^o ch. 3. 1.
^p Pro. 27. 1.
 1 Thes. 5. 2.
^q Job 5. 2.
^r tree.
 ch. 7. 9.
^s ch. 6. 4.
^t ch. 7. 10.
 1's. 59. 7.
 Iro. 1. 16.

CHAP. 6.
 1 the king's sleep fled away.
 Deut. 32.36.
^u ch. 2. 23.
 2 Or.
 Bigthan,
 ch. 2. 21.
^z threshold.
^{aa} Judg. 1. 12.
^{ab} ch. 5. 1.
^{ac} ch. 5. 14.
 4 in whose honour the king delighteth.
 5 in whose honour the king
 de ightheth.

the custom of the country. Haman being the only invited guest with the king and queen on the occasion referred to, it was natural that he should have been elated with the honour.

CHAP. VI. 1-14—AHASUERUS REWARDS MORDECAI FOR FORMER SERVICE.

1. the king . . . commanded to bring the book of records of the Chronicles. In Eastern courts there are scribes or officers whose duty it is to keep a journal of every occurrence worthy of notice. A book of this kind, abounding with anecdotes, is full of interest; and it has been a custom with Eastern kings, in all ages, frequently to cause the annals of the kingdom to be read to them. It is resorted to, not merely as a pastime to wile away the tedium of an hour, but a source of instruction to the monarch, by reviewing the important incidents of his own life, as well as those of his ancestors. There was, therefore, nothing uncommon in this Persian monarch calling for the court journal. But, in his being unable to sleep at that particular juncture, in his ordering the book then to be read to him, and in his attention having been specially directed to the important, and as yet unrewarded, services of Mordecai, the immediate interposition of Providence is distinctly visible.

3. the king's servants that ministered unto him. In some places of the East, particularly Persia and Hindostan, watchmen are included amongst the officers who compose the household establishment of the grandees, and one of them (the number being generally four, corresponding

to the watches of the night) is stationed near the bed of his master to guard it, and be ready, whenever he requires it, to tell him how far the night is advanced. Such officers, we are told by *Josephus* ('Antiquities,' b. xi., ch. vi., sec. 10), were in the court of Ahasuerus. For on that night on which the king could not sleep, and on which he called for the records of his kingdom, there was read over to him the conspiracy which Mordecai had discovered; the Jewish historian adds, 'the king bade the scribe who was reading stop, and having enquired of those who were appointed for the purpose, "what hour of the night it was," and having been informed it was already day, he ordered that, if they found any of his friends were already come, and standing before the court, they should tell him, that he might instantly bestow some reward upon Mordecai.'

4. Now Haman was come into the outward court. This was early in the morning. It is the invariable custom for kings in Eastern countries to transact business before the sun is hot, often in the open air, and so Haman was in all probability come officially to attend on his master.

6. What shall be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honour? In bestowing tokens of their favour, the kings of Persia do not at once, and as it were by their own will, determine the kind of honour that shall be awarded; but they turn to the courtier standing next in rank to themselves, and ask him what shall be done to the individual who has rendered the service specified; and according to the answer received,

8 the king delighteth to honour, ⁶ let the royal apparel be brought ⁷ which the king useth to wear, and ⁶ the horse that the king rideth upon, and the
 9 crown royal which is set upon his head: and let this apparel and horse be delivered to the hand of one of the king's most noble princes, that they may array the man *withal* whom the king delighteth to honour, and ⁸ bring him on horseback through the street of the city, ⁷ and proclaim before him, Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honour.

10 Then the king said to Haman, ⁹ Make haste, *and* take the apparel and the horse, as thou hast said, and do even so to Mordecai the Jew, that sitteth at the king's gate: ⁹ let nothing fail of all that thou hast spoken.

11 Then took Haman the apparel and the horse, and arrayed Mordecai, and brought him on horseback through the street of the city, and proclaimed before him, Thus shall it be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honour.

12 And Mordecai came again to the king's gate: but Haman ^bhasted to
 13 his house mourning, ⁱand having his head covered. And Haman told Zeresh his wife and all his friends every *thing* that had befallen him. Then said his wise men and Zeresh his wife unto him, If Mordecai *be* of the seed of the Jews, before whom thou hast begun to fall, thou shalt not prevail against him, but shalt surely fall before him.

14 And while they *were* yet talking with him, came the king's chamberlains, and hasted to bring Haman unto the banquet that Esther had prepared.

7 SO the king and Haman came ¹ to banquet with Esther the queen.
 2 And the king said again unto Esther on the second day, ^aat the banquet of wine, What *is* thy petition, queen Esther? and it shall be granted thee: and what *is* thy request? and it shall be performed, *even* to the half of the kingdom.

3 Then Esther the queen answered and said, If I have found favour in thy sight, O king, and if it please the king, let my life be given me at my
 4 petition, and my people at my request: for we are ^bsold, I and my people, ²to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish. But if we had been sold for bondmen and bondwomen, I had held my tongue, although the enemy could not countervail the king's damage.

5 Then the king Ahasuerus answered and said unto Esther the queen,

B. C. 510.
⁶ Let them bring the royal apparel.
⁷ wherewith the king clotheh himself.
⁸ 1 Ki. 1. 33.
⁹ cause him to ride.
¹ Gen. 41. 43.
 1 Ki. 1. 33.
 Zech. 9. 9.
⁹ Job 5. 11, 13.
 Dan. 4. 37.
 Luke 14. 11.
 Rev. 18. 7.
⁹ suffer not a whit to fall.
 2 Ki. 10. 10.
^b 2 Sam. 17. 23.
 1 Ki. 20. 43.
 2 Chr. 25. 21.
 ch. 2. 19.
 1 s. 131. 1.
ⁱ 2 Sam. 15. 30.
 Job 9. 21.
 Jer. 14. 3.
 CHAP. 7.
¹ to drink.
^a ch. 5. 6.
^b 1 Sam. 22. 23.
 ch 3. 9.
 ch 4. 7.
² that they should destroy, and kill, and cause to perish.

the royal mandate is issued. 8. the royal apparel . . . which the king useth to wear—made of purple interwoven with gold (*Xenophon*, 'Cyræpædia,' b. viii., ch. iii., sec. 13; *Quintus Curtius*, b. iii., ch. iii., p. 27; *Justin*, xii. 3). A coat which has been on the back of a king or prince is reckoned a most honourable gift, and is given with great ceremony. the horse that the king rideth upon. Persia was a country of horses, and the high-bred charger the king rode upon, usually brought from Armenia, remarkable for beauty and symmetry (*Herodotus*; b. vii., 40; cf. also b. iii., 106; b. iv., 189), acquired, in the eyes of his venal subjects, a sort of sacredness from that circumstance. and the crown royal which is set upon his head—either the royal turban, or, it may be, a tiara, with which, in state processions, the horse's head was adorned. In the Roman triumphal processions, horses were also crowned. 9. delivered to the hand of one of the king's most noble princes . . . array the man. On grand and public occasions, the royal steed is led by the highest subject through the principal streets of the city; a ceremony which may occupy several hours.

11. Then took Haman, &c. This sudden reverse, however painful to Haman as an individual, is

particularly characteristic of the Persian manners.

14. came the king's chamberlains, and hasted to bring Haman unto the banquet. Besides the invitation given to an entertainment, a message is always sent to the guests, immediately at the day and hour appointed, to announce that all things are ready.

CHAP. VII. 1-6.—ESTHER SUES FOR HER OWN LIFE AND THE LIFE OF HER PEOPLE.

4. we are sold, I and my people, to be destroyed—*i. e.*, by the cruel and perfidious scheme of that man who offered an immense sum of money to purchase our extermination. Esther dwelt on this contemplated atrocity in a variety of expressions, which both evinced the depth of her own emotions, and were intended to awaken similar feelings in the king's breast. But if we had been sold for bondmen and bondwomen, I had held my tongue. Though a great calamity to the Jews, the enslavement of that people might have enriched the national exchequer, and, at all events, the policy, if found from experience to be bad, could be altered. But the destruction of such a body of people would be an irreparable evil, and all the talents Haman might pour into the treasury could not compensate for the loss of their services.

Who is he, and where is he, ³that durst presume in his heart to do so?
 6 And Esther said, ⁴The adversary and enemy *is* this wicked Haman.
 7 Then Haman was afraid ⁵before the king and the queen. And the king, arising from the banquet of wine in his wrath, *went* into the palace garden: and ⁶Haman stood up to make request for his life to Esther the queen; for he saw that there was evil determined against him by the king.
 8 Then the king returned out of the palace garden into the place of the banquet of wine; and Haman was fallen upon ⁴the bed whereon Esther *was*. Then said the king, Will he force the queen also ⁶before me in the house? As the word went out of the king's mouth, they ⁶covered
 9 Haman's face. And ⁷Harbonah, one of the chamberlains, said before the king, Behold, also, ⁹the ⁷gallows, fifty cubits high, which Haman had made for Mordecai, who ⁴had spoken good for the king, standeth in the
 10 house of Haman. Then the king said, Hang him thereon. So ¹they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then was the king's wrath pacified.
 8 ON that day did the king Ahasuerus give the house of Haman, the Jews' enemy, unto Esther the queen: and Mordecai came before the
 2 king; for Esther had told what ⁶he *was* unto her. And the king took off ²his ring, which he had taken from Haman, and gave it unto Mordecai. And Esther set Mordecai over the house of Haman.
 3 And Esther spake yet again before the king, and fell down at his feet, ¹and besought him with tears to put away the mischief of Haman the
 4 Agagite, and his device that he had devised against the Jews. Then ¹the king held out the golden sceptre toward Esther. So Esther arose,

B. C. 510.
³ whose heart hath filled him
⁴ The man adversary.
⁵ (i. e. at the presence of.
⁶ Fro. 1
 1 To 23. 11.
^d ch. 1. 6.
⁶ with me.
^e Job 9. 24.
^f ch. 1. 10.
⁷ ch. 5. 14.
 Ps. 7. 16.
 Fro. 11. 5.
⁷ tree.
^h ch. 2. 21-23.
 ch. 6. 3.
ⁱ ch. 9. 25.
 Ps. 7. 15.
 Ps. 9. 15.
 Ps. 37. 35.
 CHAP. 8.
^a ch. 2. 7.
^b Gen. 41. 42.
¹ and she wept and besought him.
^c ch. 4. 11.
 ch. 5. 2.

7-10.—THE KING CAUSES HAMAN TO BE HANGED ON HIS OWN GALLOWES.

7. he saw that there was evil determined against him by the king. When the king of Persia orders an offender to be executed, and then rises and goes into the women's apartment, it is a sign that no mercy is to be hoped for. Even the sudden rising of the king in anger was the same as if he had pronounced sentence.

8. Haman was fallen upon the bed whereon Esther was. We do not know the precise form of the couches on which the Persians reclined at table. But it is probable that they were not very different from those used by the Greeks and Romans. Haman, perhaps, at first stood up to beg pardon of Esther; but driven in his extremity to resort to an attitude of the most earnest supplication, he fell prostrate on the couch where the queen was recumbent. The king returning that instant, was fired at what seemed an outrage on female modesty, they covered Haman's face. The import of this striking action is, that a criminal is unworthy any longer to look on the face of the king, and hence, when malefactors are consigned to their doom in Persia, the first thing is to cover the face with a veil or napkin.

9. Harbonah, one of the chamberlains, said before the king, Behold also, the gallows [הַגָּלוּת]—behold the tree. This eunuch had probably been the messenger sent with the invitation to Haman, and on that occasion had seen the gallows. The information he now volunteered, as well, it may be, from abhorrence of Haman's cold-blooded conspiracy as from sympathy with his amiable mistress, involved with her people in imminent peril. 10. So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared. He has not been the only plotter of mischief whose feet have been taken in the net which they hid (Ps. ix. 15). But never was condemnation more just, and retribu-

tion more merited, than the execution of that gigantic criminal.

CHAP. VIII. 1-6.—MORDECAI ADVANCED.

1. On that day did the king Ahasuerus give the house of Haman . . . unto Esther. His property was confiscated, and everything belonging to him, as some compensation for the peril to which the queen had been exposed. In the East, says *Chardin*, the disgrace of a governor, or other great man, has always involved the forfeiture of his property to the crown. So we find in the decrees of Cyrus, reported by *Josephus* ('Antiquities,' b. xii., ch. i.), that transgressors were to be crucified, and their goods to be forfeited to the king. Mordecai came before the king—*i. e.*, was introduced at court, and appointed one of the seven counselors. Esther displayed great prudence and address in acknowledging Mordecai's relation to her at the moment most fitted to be of eminent service to him. 2. the king took off his ring . . . and gave it unto Mordecai—by that act transferring to him all the power and authority (cf. Gen. xli. 42) which the ring symbolized, and promoting him to the high dignity which Haman had formerly filled. Esther set Mordecai over the house of Haman—as her steward, or factor, to manage that large and opulent estate which had been assigned to her.

3. Esther spake yet again before the king, and fell down at his feet. The king was then not reclining at table, but sitting on a divan, most probably in the Persian attitude, leaning back against the cushions, and one foot under him, besought him with tears to put away the mischief of Haman—*i. e.*, to repeal the sanguinary edict which, at the secret instigation of Haman, had been recently passed (ch. iii. 12). 4. Then the king held out the golden sceptre toward Esther—in token that her request was accepted, and that she needed no longer to maintain the

B. C. 510.

2 the device, ch. 3. 12, 13.
 3 Or, who wrote.
 4 be able that I may see.
 d Neh. 2. 3. ch. 7. 4. Ps 137. 6.
 e Fro. 13. 22. / ch. 1. 19.
 f Dan. 6. 5. 12, 15.
 2 Tim. 2. 19- Heb. 6. 17. 18.
 g ch. 3. 12. h ch. 1. 1.
 i 2 Ki. 18. 26. ch. 1. 22. ch. 3. 12. Dan. 4. 1. 1 Cor. 14. 9-11.
 j 1 Ki. 21. 8. ch. 3. 12, 13. Ecol. 8. 4. Dan. 4. 1.
 k Ps. 37, 14, 15. Pa. 68. 23. Ps. 137. 8. Ps. 149. 6. 9. Eze. 39. 10.

5 and stood before the king, and said, If it please the king, and if I have found favour in his sight, and the thing seem right before the king, and I be pleasing in his eyes, let it be written to reverse the letters devised by Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, which he wrote to destroy the Jews which are in all the king's provinces: for how can I endure to see the evil that shall come unto my people? or how can I endure to see the destruction of my kindred?
 7 Then the king Ahasuerus said unto Esther the queen, and to Mordecai the Jew, Behold, I have given Esther the house of Haman, and him they have hanged upon the gallows, because he laid his hand upon the Jews.
 8 Write ye also for the Jews, as it liketh you, in the king's name, and seal it with the king's ring: for the writing which is written in the king's name, and sealed with the king's ring, may no man reverse.
 9 Then were the king's scribes called at that time in the third month, that is, the month Sivan, on the three and twentieth day thereof; and it was written (according to all that Mordecai commanded) unto the Jews, and to the lieutenants, and the deputies and rulers of the provinces which are from India unto Ethiopia, an hundred twenty and seven provinces, unto every province according to the writing thereof, and unto every people after their language, and to the Jews according to their writing, and according to their language.
 10 And he wrote in the king Ahasuerus' name, and sealed it with the king's ring; and sent letters by posts on horseback, and riders on mules,
 11 camels, and young dromedaries: wherein the king granted the Jews which were in every city to gather themselves together, and to stand for their life, to destroy, to slay, and to cause to perish, all the power of the people and province that would assault them, both little ones and women,

humble attitude of a suppliant. 5. reverse the letters devised by Haman . . . to destroy the Jews. The whole conduct of Esther in this matter is characterized by great tact; and the variety of expressions by which she describes her willing submission to her royal husband, the address with which she rolls the whole infamy of the meditated massacre on Haman, and the argument she draws, from the king's sanction being surreptitiously obtained, that the decree should be immediately reversed—all indicate the queen's wisdom and skill; and she succeeded in this point also.

7-14.—AHASUERUS GRANTS TO THE JEWS TO DEFEND THEMSELVES.

8. Write . . . in the king's name, and seal it with the king's ring. Hence it is evident that the royal ring had a seal in it which, being affixed to any document, authenticated it with the stamp of royal authority, which . . . may no man reverse. This is added as the reason why he could not comply with the queen's request for a direct reversal or recall of Haman's letters—viz., that the laws of the Medes and Persians, once passed, were irrevocable.

9. it was written . . . to the lieutenants [לְשָׂרֵי הַמְּדִינֹת]—the satraps (see on ch. iii. 12; Ezra (viii. 36). and the deputies [וְלְשָׂרֵי הַמְּדִינֹת]—and the prefects or governors of parts of provinces, and rulers of the provinces [וְלְשָׂרֵי הַמְּדִינֹת]—and viceroys of the districts or provinces. In Daniel (iii. 2, 3, 27) the satraps rank first, the sagans next, and the pechahs third, in order of the public officials; while in this book—a later period—the satraps, the pechahs, and the "princes of the provinces," are mentioned, but not the sagans.

10. sent letters by posts on horseback [בְּפָרָסִים]—by horses. and riders on mules [וְעַל הַמְּלָחִים]—the

steeds or coursers of a fleetier race than the former (Bochart, 'Hierozoicon,' i. p. 95). camels [וְעַל הַמְּלָחִים] mules; which meaning is further defined by בְּנֵי תְּרָסִים, sons of mares. There is no and, in the Hebrew text connecting this with the preceding word, as our translators have inserted]. The last word Rammac, which occurs here only in the plural, is improperly rendered "young dromedaries." Rechesh, the word preceding it, which is translated "mules" (vv. 10, 14), is rendered in our English version "dromedaries" (1 Ki. iv. 28) and "swift beasts" (Mic. i. 13). There can be no doubt that it points to some very fleet species of horse; and perhaps, as the swiftest quadruped of Persia, a dromedary may be meant. The name "camel" and "dromedary" are descriptive of the same animal; if the creature when young promises to be light and handsome, it is trained for 'a swift dromedary,' or for the race, as the syllable 'drom' [δρῶμος] signifies, and the strong or clumsy of the breed become the camels or burden-carriers. A camel, with its load of from 300 to 400 pounds, goes at the rate of five or six miles an hour; while the dromedary, with its rider, will continue rapid running at the rate of eight or nine miles an hour for twenty hours in succession. Burckhardt says that twelve miles an hour is the most rapid travelling a dromedary is known to perform. The business being very urgent, the swiftest kind of beast would be employed; and so young dromedaries also are used to carry expresses, being remarkable for the nimbleness and ease of their movements. Animals of this description could convey the new rescript of Ahasuerus over the length and breadth of the Persian empire in time to relieve the unhappy Jews from the ban under which they lay. 11. the king granted the Jews . . . to stand for their life . . . to slay . . . all . . . that would assault them.

- 12 and ¹to take the spoil of them for a prey, upon ^mone day, in all the provinces of king Ahasuerus, *namely*, upon the thirteenth *day* of the twelfth month, which *is* the month Adar.
- 13 The ⁿcopy of the writing for a commandment to be given in every province *was* ^spublished unto all people, and that the Jews should be ready
- 14 against that day to *avenge* themselves on their enemies. *So* the posts that rode upon mules *and* camels went out, being hastened and pressed on by the king's commandment. And the decree was given at Shushan the palace.
- 15 And Mordecai went out from the presence of the king in royal apparel of ^oblue and white, and with a great crown of gold, and with a garment of fine linen and purple: and ^othe city of Shushan rejoiced and was glad.
- 16, The Jews had ^plight, and gladness, and joy, and honour. And in every
- 17 province, and in every city, whithersoever the king's commandment and his decree came, the Jews had joy and gladness, a feast ^qand a good day. And many of the people of the land ^rbecame Jews; for ^sthe fear of the Jews fell upon them.
- 9 NOW ^ain the twelfth month, that *is*, the month Adar, on the thirteenth day of the same, ^bwhen the king's commandment and his decree drew near to be put in execution, in the day that the enemies of the Jews hoped to have power over them, (though it was turned to the contrary, that the
- 2 Jews had ^crule over them that hated them,) the Jews ^agathered themselves together in their cities, throughout all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus, to lay hand on such as ^csought their hurt: and no man could
- 3 withstand them; for ^dthe fear of them fell upon all people. And all the rulers of the provinces, and the lieutenants, and the deputies, and ¹officers of the king, ^ehelped the Jews; because the fear of Mordecai fell upon
- 4 them. For Mordecai *was* great in the king's house, and his fame went out throughout all the provinces: for this man Mordecai ^hwaxed greater and greater.
- 5 Thus the Jews smote all their enemies with the stroke of the sword, and slaughter, and destruction, and did ²what they would unto those

B. C. 510.
 1 ch. 9. 10, 15, 16.
 2 ch. 3. 13.
 ch. 9. 1.
 3 ch. 3 14, 15.
 4 revealed.
 5 Or, violet.
 6 ch. 3. 15.
 7 ro. 23. 12, 28.
 8 ro. 29. 2.
 9 Ps. 97. 11.
 10 Ps. 112. 4.
 11 1 Sam. 26. 8.
 12 ch. 9. 19, 22.
 13 Ps. 18. 43.
 14 Gen. 35. 5.
 15 Ex. 15. 16.
 16 Deut. 2. 25.
 17 Deut. 11. 25.
 ch. 9. 2.

CHAP. IX.
 a ch. 8. 12.
 b ch. 3. 13.
 c 2 Sam. 22. 41.
 d ch. 8. 11.
 e Ps. 71. 13.
 f Ex. 23. 27.
 1 those which did the business that belonged to the king.
 2 ro. 16. 7.
 3 2 Sam. 3. 1.
 4 according to their will.

The fixed and unalterable character claimed for Persian edicts often placed the king in a very awkward dilemma; for, however bitterly he might regret things done in a moment of haste and thoughtlessness, it was beyond even his power to prevent the consequences. This was the reason on account of which the king was laid under a necessity not to reverse but to issue a contradictory edict; according to which it was enacted that, if pursuant to the first decree the Jews were assaulted, they might, by virtue of the second, defend themselves, and even slay their enemies. However strange, and even ridiculous, this mode of procedure may appear, it was the only one which, from the peculiarities of court etiquette in Persia, could be adopted. Instances occur in sacred (Dan. vi. 14), no less than profane, history. Many passages of the Bible attest the truth of this, particularly the well-known incident of Daniel's being cast into the den of lions, in conformity with the rash decree of Darius, though, as it afterwards appeared, contrary to the personal desire of that monarch. That the law of Persia has undergone no change in this respect, and the power of the monarch is not less immutable, appears from many anecdotes related in the books of modern travellers through that country.

15-17.—MORDECAI'S HONOURS, AND THE JEWS' JOY.

15. Mordecai went out . . . in royal apparel. He was invested with the *khelaa* of official honour. A dress of blue and white was held in great

estimation among the Persians: so that Mordecai, whom the king delighted to honour, was in fact arrayed in the royal dress and insignia. The variety and the kind of insignia worn by a favourite at once makes known to the people the particular dignity to which he has been raised. 16. The Jews had light, and gladness, and joy, and honour. The literal added to the metaphorical expressions explain the meaning the images are intended to convey, and the redundancy of expression indicates the greatness of the prosperity and rejoicing.

CHAP. IX. 1-19.—THE JEWS SLAY THEIR ENEMIES, WITH THE TEN SONS OF HAMAN.

1. in the twelfth month . . . on the thirteenth day of the same. This was the day which Haman's superstitious advisers had led him to select as the most fortunate for the execution of his exterminating scheme against the Jews. 2. The Jews gathered themselves . . . no man could withstand them. The tables were now turned in their favour; and though their enemies made their long-meditated attack, they were not only at liberty to act on the defensive, but through the powerful influence enlisted on their side at court, together with the blessing of God, they were everywhere victorious. the fear of them fell upon all people. This impression arose not alone from the consciousness of the all-powerful vizier being their countryman, but from the hand of God appearing so visibly interposed to effect their strange and unexpected deliverance.

5. Thus the Jews smote all their enemies.

- 6 that hated them. And in Shushan the palace the Jews slew and de-
 7 stroyed five hundred men. And Parshandatha, and Dalphon, and
 8 Aspatha, and Poratha, and Adalia, and Aridatha, and Parmashta, and
 10 Arisai, and Aridai, and Vajezatha, the ⁱten sons of Haman the son of
 Hammedatha, the enemy of the Jews, slew them; ^jbut on the spoil laid
 they not their hand.
- 11 On that day the number of those that were slain in Shushan the palace
 12 ^kwas brought before the king. And the king said unto Esther the queen,
 The Jews have slain and destroyed five hundred men in Shushan the
 palace, and the ten sons of Haman; what have they done in the rest of the
 king's provinces? Now, ^lwhat *is* thy petition? and it shall be granted
 thee; or what *is* thy request further? and it shall be done.
- 13 Then said Esther, If it please the king, let it be granted to the Jews
 which *are* in Shushan to do to-morrow also ^maccording unto this day's
 14 decree, and ⁿlet Haman's ten sons ^obe hanged upon the gallows. And
 the king commanded it so to be done: and the decree was given at
 15 Shushan; and they hanged Haman's ten sons. For the Jews that *were*
 in Shushan gathered ^pthemselves together on the fourteenth day also of
 the month Adar, and slew three hundred men at Shushan: but on the
 prey they laid not their hand.
- 16 But the other Jews that *were* in the king's provinces ^qgathered them-
 selves together, and stood for their lives, and had rest from their enemies,
 and slew of their foes seventy and five thousand ^r(but they laid not
 17 their hands on the prey,) on the thirteenth day of the month Adar; and
 on the fourteenth day ^sof the same rested they, and made it a day of
 18 feasting and gladness. But the Jews that *were* at Shushan assembled
 together on the thirteenth *day* thereof, and on the fourteenth thereof;
 and on the fifteenth *day* of the same they rested, and made it a day of
 19 feasting and gladness. Therefore the Jews of the villages, that dwelt in
 the unwall'd towns, made the fourteenth day of the month Adar ^ta day
 of gladness and feasting, ^uand a good day, and of ^vsending portions one
 to another.
- 20 And Mordecai wrote these things, and sent letters unto all the Jews
 that *were* in all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus, *both* nigh and far,

B. C. 510.
 Ex. 20. 5.
 ch. 5. 11.
 Job 14. 19.
 Job 27. 13-
 15.
 Ps 21. 10.
 Gen 14. 23.
 ch. 8. 11.
 Rom. 12. 17.
 Phil 4. 8.
 came.
 ch. 5. 6.
 ch. 7. 2.
 ch. 8. 11.
 let men
 hang.
 Deut. 21. 23.
 Josh 8. 29.
 Sam. 21. 6,
 9.
 ch. 8. 11.
 Ps. 118. 7-
 12.
 Lev. 26. 7,
 8.
 ch. 8. 11
 1 Thes. 5.
 22.
 in it.
 Deut. 16. 11,
 14.
 Neh. 8. 10-
 12.
 ch. 8. 17.
 Ps. 118. 11-
 16.
 Luke 11. 41.
 Rev. 11. 10.
 1 Sam. 25. 8.
 Neh. 8. 10.
 ch. 8. 17.
 Neh. 8. 10,
 12.
 Rev. 11. 10.

The effect of the two antagonistic decrees was, in the meantime, to raise a fierce and bloody war between the Jews and their enemies throughout the Persian empire; but through the dread of Esther and Mordecai, the provincial governors universally favoured their cause, so that their enemies fell in great numbers.

13. let it be granted to the Jews which are in Shushan to do to-morrow also according unto this day's decree. Their enemies, adroitly concealing themselves for the first day, might have returned on the next, when they imagined that the privilege of the Jews was expired; so that that people would have been surprised and slain. The extension of the decree to another day, at the queen's special desire, has exposed her to the charge of being actuated by a cruel and vindictive disposition. But her conduct in making this request is capable of full vindication, on the ground (1.) that Haman's sons having taken a prominent part in avenging their father's fall, and having been previously slain in the *mêlée*, the order for the exposure of their dead bodies on the gallows was only intended to brand them with public infamy for their malice and hatred to the Jews; and (2.) the anti-Jewish party having, in all probability, been instigated through the arts or influence of Haman to acts of spiteful and wanton oppression, the existing state of feeling amongst

the natives required some vigorous and decisive measure to prevent the outbreak of future aggressions. The very circumstance of their slaying 500 Jews in the immediate vicinity of the court (vv. 6, 15) is a proof of the daring energy and deep-rooted malice by which multitudes were actuated against the Jews. To order an extension, therefore, of the permissive edict to the Jews to defend themselves, was perhaps no more than affording an opportunity for their enemies to be publicly known; and though it led to so awful a slaughter of 75,000 of their enemies, there is reason to believe that these were chiefly Amalekites, in the fall of whom on this occasion the prophecies (Exod. xvii. 14, 16; Deut. xxv. 19) against that doomed race were accomplished.

19. a day of . . . feasting . . . and of sending portions one to another. The princes and people of the East not only invite their friends to feasts, but it is their custom to send a portion of the banquet to those that cannot well come to it, especially their relations, and those who are detained at home in a state of sorrow or distress.

20-32.—THE TWO DAYS OF PURIM MADE FESTIVAL.

20. Mordecai wrote these things. Commentators are not agreed what is particularly meant by "these things,"—whether the letters following, or an account of these marvellous events, to be

- 21 to establish *this* among them, that they should 'keep the fourteenth day
 22 of the month Adar, and the fifteenth day of the same, yearly, as the days
 wherein the Jews rested from their enemies, and the month which was
 "turned unto them from sorrow to joy, and from mourning into a good
 day; that they should make them days of feasting and joy, and of 'send-
 23 ing portions one to another, and gifts to the poor. And the Jews under-
 took to do as they had begun, and as Mordecai had written unto them;
 24 because Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the enemy of all
 the Jews, "had devised against the Jews to destroy them, and had cast
 25 Pur, that *is*, the lot, to 'consume them, and to destroy them; but 'when
Esther came before the king, he commanded by letters, that his wicked
 device, which he devised against the Jews, should "return upon his own
 26 head, and that he and his sons should be hanged on the gallows. Where-
 fore they called these days Purim, after the name of ^sPur. Therefore for
 all the words of this letter, and of *that* which they had seen concerning
 27 this matter, and which had come unto them, the Jews ordained, and took
 upon them, and upon their seed, and upon all such as ^yjoined themselves
 unto them, so as it should not ^zfail, that they would keep these two days
 according to their writing, and according to their *appointed* time, every
 28 year; and *that* these days *should be* remembered and kept throughout
 every generation, every family, every province, and every city; and *that*
 these days of Purim should not ¹⁰fail from among the Jews, nor the
 memorial of them ¹¹perish from their seed.
- 29 Then Esther the queen, ²the daughter of Abihail, and Mordecai the
 Jew, wrote with ¹²all authority, to confirm this ^asecond letter of Purim.
 30 And he sent the letters unto all the Jews, to ^bthe hundred twenty and
 seven provinces of the kingdom of Ahasuerus, *with* words of peace and
 31 truth, to confirm these days of Purim in their times *appointed*, according
 as Mordecai the Jew and Esther the queen had enjoined them, and as
 they had decreed for themselves, and for their seed, the matters of the
 32 fastings and their cry. And the decree of Esther confirmed these mat-
 ters of Purim; and it was written in the book.
- 10 AND the king Ahasuerus laid a tribute upon the land, and *upon* ^athe
 2 isles of the sea. And all the acts of his power, and of his might, and the

B. C. 502.
 4 Ps. 31. 11.
 Ps. 145. 4.
 " Ps. 30. 11.
 Matt 5. 4.
 John 16.20-
 24.
 " Neh. 9. 11.
 Acts 2. 41-
 46.
 " ch. 3. 6, 7.
 6 crush.
 7 when she
 came.
 ch. 7. 5.
 ch. 8. 3.
 " 1 Sam. 24.
 12, 13.
 ch. 7. 10.
 1 s. 7. 16.
 Ps. 37. 12,
 13.
 Ps. 103. 17.
 Ps. 140. 9.
 Ps. 141. 10.
 Matt 21.14.
 8 That is,
 lot.
 y ch. 8. 17.
 Isa. 56. 3,
 6.
 Zech. 2. 11.
 9 pass.
 10 pass.
 11 be ended.
 z ch. 2. 15.
 12 all
 strength.
 a ch. 8. 10.
 b ch. 1. 1.
 CHAP. 10.
 a Gen. 10. 5.
 1 s 72. 10.
 Isa. 24. 15.

preserved in the families of the Jewish people, and transmitted from one generation to another.
 22. that they should make them days of feasting
 and joy. [The Septuagint renders, ἀγαθὰς ἡμέρας
 γάμων καὶ εὐφροσύνης, good days of feasts (*lit.*,
 marriage feasts) and merriment.] 26. they called
 these days Purim, after the name of Pur.
 Pur, in the Persian language, signifies lot;
 and the feast of Purim or lots has a reference
 to the time having been pitched upon by Haman
 through the decision of the lot. In consequence
 of the signal national deliverance which divine
 Providence gave them from the infamous machina-
 tions of Haman, Mordecai ordered the Jews to
 commemorate that event by an anniversary
 festival which was to last for two days, in ac-
 cordance with the two days' war of defence they
 had to maintain. There was at first a slight
 difference in the time of this festival; for the
 Jews in the provinces, having defended them-
 selves against their enemies on the thirteenth,
 devoted the fourteenth to festivity; whereas
 their brethren in Shushan, having extended that
 work over two days, did not observe their thank-
 giving feast till the fifteenth. But this was
 remedied by authority, which fixed the fourteenth
 and fifteenth of Adar. It became a season of
 sunny memories to the universal body of the
 Jews; and, by the letters of Mordecai, dispersed
 through all parts of the Persian empire, it was

established as an annual feast, the celebration of
 which is kept up still. On both days of the feast
 the modern Jews read over the Megillah, or Book
 of Esther, in their synagogues. The copy read
 must not be printed, but written on vellum in
 the form of a roll; and the names of the ten sons
 of Haman are written on it in a peculiar manner,
 being ranged, they say, like so many bodies on a
 gibbet. The reader must pronounce all these
 names in one breath. Whenever Haman's name
 is pronounced, they make a terrible noise in the
 synagogue. Some drum with their feet on the
 floor, and the boys have mallets with which they
 knock and make a noise. They prepare them-
 selves for their carnival by a previous fast,
 which should continue three days, in imitation of
 Esther's; but they have mostly reduced it to one
 day (*Jenning's 'Jewish Antiquities'*). The fifth
 of September is the feast of Purim. Amongst
 those who came for medical assistance was a poor
 woman whose face was much injured from the
 gunpowder fired by one of those who were rejoic-
 ing in the feast of Purim ('*Journal of a Missionary
 Tour in Palestine,*' by *Rev. James Barclay*).

CHAP. X. 1-3.—AHASUERUS' GREATNESS. MOR-
 DECAI'S ADVANCEMENT.

1. Ahasuerus laid a tribute upon the land, and
 upon the isles of the sea [עַל הַיָּם]. This phrase
 was used specifically to designate the known isles
 of the Mediterranean, the coasts of Greece, Italy,

declaration of the greatness of Mordecai, whereunto the king ¹advanced him, *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of 3 Media and Persia? For Mordecai the Jew *was* ^b next unto king Ahasuerus, and great among the Jews, and accepted of the multitude of his brethren, ^c seeking the wealth of his people, and speaking peace to all his seed.

B. C. 485.

¹ made him

great.

ch. 8. 15.

ch. 9. 4.

^b Gen. 41. 40.^c Neh. 2. 10.

and Spain, with the western countries visited by the Phenicians. In the crippled state of Persia, after the unfortunate expedition into Greece, Xerxes could not lay a tribute upon the nations of western Europe, and the phrase, therefore, must be considered as bearing a more restricted meaning, viz., the islands in the Persian Gulf, &c. The notice of this tribute is a natural and appropriate conclusion of the book of Esther; and without the mention of some such fact, there would have been a want in the filling up or completeness of this record, which would have detracted very much from its value as a historical document. It was with a view to defray the expenditure, to repair the ruin of his expedition into Greece, that he "laid a tribute upon the land, and upon the isles of the sea." Thus between the first verse of this last chapter, and the narrative contained at the commencement of this book, there is one of those minute coincidences on which *Paley*, in his 'Horæ Paulinæ,' insists as affording that strong, because an undesigned, evidence of the truth and authenticity of the book—viz., that it is consistent with itself. Neither the nature nor the amount of the tax has been recorded, only it was not a local tribute, but one exacted from all parts of his vast empire. 2. the declaration of the greatness of Mordecai. The experience of this pious and excellent Jew verified the statement, "he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." From sitting contentedly at the king's gate, he was raised to the dignity of highest subject, the powerful ruler of the kingdom. Acting uniformly on the great principles of truth and righteousness, his greatness rested on a firm foundation. His faith was openly avowed, and his influence as a professor of the true religion was of the greatest usefulness for promoting the welfare of the Jewish people, as well as for advancing the glory of God. 3. Mordecai . . . was next unto king Ahasuerus . . . great among the Jews, &c. The elevation of this pious and patriotic Jew to the possession of the highest official power was of very great importance to the suffering church at that period, for it enabled him, who all along possessed the disposition, now to direct the royal influence

and authority in promoting the interests and extending the privileges of his exiled countrymen. Viewed in this light, the providence of God is plainly traceable in all the steps that led to his unexpected advancement; and this providential interposition is all the more remarkable that, as in the analogous case of Joseph, it was displayed in making the ordinary and natural course of things lead to the most marvellous results. To use the pious words of an eminent prelate, "Though in the whole of this episode there was no extraordinary manifestation of God's power, no particular cause or agent that was in its working advanced above the ordinary pitch of nature, yet the contrivance—and suiting these ordinary agents appointed by God—is in itself more admirable than if the same end had been effected by means that were truly miraculous." The sudden advancement of individuals from obscurity and neglect to the highest stations of power and influence is, in Eastern courts, no extraordinary nor unfrequent occurrence. The caprice, the weak partiality, of the reigning sovereign, or, it may be, his penetrating discernment in discovering latent energy and talent, has often "raised the beggar from the dunghill, and set him among princes." Some of the all-powerful viziers in modern Persia, and not a few of the beys in Egypt, have been elevated to their respective dignities in this manner. And therefore the advancement of 'Mordecai, who was next to Ahasuerus, and great among the Jews,' was in perfect accordance with the rapid revolution of 'the wheel of fortune' in that part of the world. But, considering all the circumstances of Mordecai's advancement, not only his gaining the favour of the king, but his being "accepted of the multitude of his brethren," it was beyond all controversy the doing of the Lord, and was truly marvellous in His people's eyes. accepted of the multitude of his brethren. Far from being envious of his grandeur, they blessed God for the elevation to official power of so good a man. speaking peace to all his seed. While his administration was conducted with a mild and impartial hand, he showed a peculiarly warm and friendly feeling to all his countrymen, when asked for his counsel or his aid.

